

<p>1 Wednesday, 25 April 2012 2 (10.07 am) 3 Statement by LORD JUSTICE LEVESON 4 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: On Monday afternoon, I said this: 5 "I understand the very real public interest in the 6 issues that will be ventilated by the evidence. I also 7 recognise the freedom that permits what is said to be 8 discussed and the subject of comment in whatever way is 9 thought fit, and I shall be interested to see how it is 10 covered. For my part, I shall approach the relationship 11 between the press and politicians from an entirely 12 non-partisan judicial perspective, which I have no doubt 13 is the reason that I was given this remit. I would hope 14 that this approach will be made clear." 15 When I said those words, I had in mind some of the 16 evidence that I anticipated we would hear, including 17 that which we did in fact hear yesterday. In the light 18 of the reaction and considerable commentary last night 19 and this morning, it's appropriate for me to say 20 a little more. 21 This necessarily involves explaining something of 22 the judicial process. I understand entirely the reason 23 for some of the reaction to the evidence yesterday, and 24 in particular, to the emails about which Mr Murdoch was 25 asked, but I am acutely aware, from considerable</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 1</p>	<p>1 help him do that. 2 MR JAY: Yes. 3 MR KEITH RUPERT MURDOCH (sworn) 4 Questions by MR JAY 5 MR JAY: Your full name please, Mr Murdoch? 6 A. Keith Rupert Murdoch. 7 Q. In front of you, I believe you'll see a witness 8 statement you signed and dated 12 April of this year, 9 with 44 exhibits. There's a declaration of truth on it. 10 Are you content that the Inquiry receives your statement 11 as your formal testimony? 12 A. I am. 13 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Mr Murdoch, as I've said to a number 14 of other witnesses, indeed to many other witnesses, I am 15 very grateful for the obvious care that you have taken 16 in the preparation of your evidence, and the material 17 that you've placed before the Inquiry, and I wanted to 18 record that. 19 A. Thank you, sir. 20 MR JAY: You are the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of 21 News Corporation, a company incorporated in the 22 United States. 23 A. Yes. 24 Q. With total assets of \$60 billion and a total annual 25 revenue of \$34 billion; is that right?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 3</p>
<p>1 experience, that documents such as these cannot always 2 be taken at face value and can frequently bear more than 3 one interpretation. 4 I am absolutely not taking sides or expressing any 5 opinion, but I am prepared to say that it is very 6 important to hear every side of the story before drawing 7 conclusions. In due course we will hear all the 8 relevant evidence from all the relevant witnesses, and 9 when I report, I will then make the findings that are 10 necessary for me to fulfil the terms of reference that 11 the Prime Minister set for me. In the meantime, 12 although I have seen requests for other inquiries and 13 other investigations, it seems to me that the better 14 course is to allow this Inquiry to proceed. When it is 15 concluded, there will doubtless be opportunities for 16 consideration to be given to any further investigation 17 that is then considered necessary. 18 MR JAY: Sir, the witness today is Mr Rupert Murdoch, 19 please. 20 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Thank you. 21 I am very conscious that the material which 22 Mr Murdoch has provided has come in different tranches, 23 and having regard to the experience that we've seen with 24 some witnesses, I think it would be very helpful, if 25 you're moving from bundle to bundle, if somebody could</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 2</p>	<p>1 A. Yes, approximately, yes. 2 Q. For our purposes, if we can be more parochial, 3 approximately 8 per cent of News Corp's revenues are 4 generated in the United Kingdom, 60 per cent by 5 News International; is that right? 6 A. It is right. 7 Q. Anyone who wants greater detail may look at your witness 8 statement when it's published in due course. 9 Would it be fair to say that you have been following 10 British politics for at least 60 years, Mr Murdoch? 11 A. Yes, I suppose so. With a varying intensity. 12 Q. You say that you welcome this Inquiry. It follows then 13 that rumours that you have not forgiven Mr Cameron for 14 setting it up are untrue; is that right? 15 A. Did I say that? In my witness statement? 16 Q. You have said in your witness statement you welcome this 17 Inquiry. 18 A. Yes. 19 Q. I'm putting to you rumours, which you would say are 20 presumably untrue -- 21 A. I know -- 22 Q. -- that you haven't forgiven him for setting up this 23 Inquiry. Are those rumours untrue? 24 A. Untrue. 25 Q. Why do you say there's a need for this Inquiry,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 4</p>

<p>1 Mr Murdoch?</p> <p>2 A. Well, I think the need is really obvious. There have</p> <p>3 been some abuses shown. I would say there are many</p> <p>4 other abuses, but we can all go into that in time. And,</p> <p>5 you know, the state of media in this country is of</p> <p>6 absolutely vital interest to all its citizens.</p> <p>7 Q. Do you --</p> <p>8 A. So I think -- frankly I welcomed the opportunity because</p> <p>9 I wanted to put certain myths to bed.</p> <p>10 Q. Yes. You used the term "abuses". Is it your perception</p> <p>11 or understanding that abuses go further than the issue</p> <p>12 of phone hacking or are they limited to the issue of</p> <p>13 phone hacking?</p> <p>14 A. Oh, they go further.</p> <p>15 Q. Okay. We'll come back to that in due course.</p> <p>16 May I ask you about your business philosophy, which</p> <p>17 you cover in your statement, and can I see if we can</p> <p>18 crystallise out of what you say three main points.</p> <p>19 First, you have an intuitive instinct for acquiring</p> <p>20 businesses which you believe will be successful;</p> <p>21 secondly, and perhaps more importantly, you have</p> <p>22 a long-term perspective; and thirdly, you have a deep</p> <p>23 flair for and understanding of the possibilities of</p> <p>24 technology.</p> <p>25 Mr Murdoch, do I have that right?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 5</p>	<p>1 25 October 1999. We needn't turn it up. This is you</p> <p>2 speaking:</p> <p>3 "What does libertarian mean? As much individual</p> <p>4 responsibility as possible, as little government as</p> <p>5 possible, as few rules as possible. But I'm not saying</p> <p>6 it should be taken to the absolute limit."</p> <p>7 So is the gist of that: few rules, but not no rules?</p> <p>8 A. Oh, clearly there are necessary rules in a working</p> <p>9 society, but they can be overdone.</p> <p>10 Q. Some recent tweets of yours betray a hostile approach to</p> <p>11 right wingers and toffs. Who were you referring to?</p> <p>12 A. That was rather a load -- don't take my tweets too</p> <p>13 seriously. I think I was really saying that the</p> <p>14 extremists on both sides were piling in on me.</p> <p>15 Q. You referred to myths about you, Mr Murdoch. Is it your</p> <p>16 feeling that there is a lot of mythology around and</p> <p>17 about you, which really needs to be debunked?</p> <p>18 A. Yes.</p> <p>19 Q. Okay. We'll see how we get on over the course of today.</p> <p>20 Can I say what the plan is: we're going to focus on the</p> <p>21 political issues first, and the approach will be broadly</p> <p>22 speaking chronological, otherwise we'll lose track of</p> <p>23 where we are. Then I will go to the issue of phone</p> <p>24 hacking, and then we'll look at some broader questions.</p> <p>25 Are you content with that?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 7</p>
<p>1 A. Can I make very slight amendments?</p> <p>2 Q. Certainly.</p> <p>3 A. I would say that my -- all my interests, whether</p> <p>4 intuitive or otherwise, have been confined to the media,</p> <p>5 not just any business. Long-term, I think you're</p> <p>6 absolutely right. I have -- I think just about</p> <p>7 everything I've done in terms of major moves by the</p> <p>8 company, particularly one we're doing at the moment, is</p> <p>9 very long-term in view. And, you know, sometimes I've</p> <p>10 been right and sometimes I've been wrong, at great cost.</p> <p>11 Q. May I ask you briefly about your political philosophy?</p> <p>12 Would it be fair to say that you always have been</p> <p>13 a great admirer of Baroness Thatcher and what she stands</p> <p>14 for?</p> <p>15 A. Yes, I was -- I became that after she was elected. And</p> <p>16 I remain a great admirer.</p> <p>17 Q. The Sun supported her in the 1979 election, so</p> <p>18 presumably your support for Mrs Thatcher crystallised in</p> <p>19 your mind before that election. Would that be right?</p> <p>20 A. Well, I think all newspapers were much the same. We'd</p> <p>21 just come through the most terrible winter of</p> <p>22 discontent, the strikes, disruptions to the whole</p> <p>23 society. And I think we all wanted a change.</p> <p>24 Q. Can I put one quote to you. It's indeed from you. An</p> <p>25 interview by Mr William Shawcross in Time magazine,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 6</p>	<p>1 A. Yes indeed.</p> <p>2 Q. Thank you. The acquisition of the Times and</p> <p>3 Sunday Times, which is a separate vignette in the case</p> <p>4 but which I do need to cover and your witness statement</p> <p>5 addresses, you bid for those papers and five lesser</p> <p>6 titles at the end of 1980, didn't you, Mr Murdoch?</p> <p>7 A. Yes. I thought there were three lesser titles, but</p> <p>8 perhaps I've forgotten.</p> <p>9 Q. We won't argue about how many. At that stage, you</p> <p>10 having acquired the News of the World in 1968 and the</p> <p>11 Sun in 1969, you had slightly over 30 per cent of the UK</p> <p>12 newspaper market; is that correct?</p> <p>13 A. Well, the Sun must have been a more sudden success than</p> <p>14 I thought, from memory, to have reached 30 per cent</p> <p>15 within ten years, but I'll take your figure.</p> <p>16 Q. Okay. The deadline for the purchase, if it was going to</p> <p>17 take place, was March 1981, and by way of background,</p> <p>18 the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, Mr John</p> <p>19 Biffen, was obliged by statute to refer the case to the</p> <p>20 Monopolies and Mergers Commission unless in his opinion</p> <p>21 each title was not economic as a going concern and the</p> <p>22 case was one of urgency. That's the background position</p> <p>23 on the law.</p> <p>24 Can I invite you, please, now to look at the</p> <p>25 first --</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 8</p>

<p>1 A. I think we put in exhibits to prove that he said that.</p> <p>2 Q. Yes. That's what --</p> <p>3 A. And indeed that Thomsons made that very strong.</p> <p>4 Q. The Fair Trading Act says that. It's whether the Times</p> <p>5 and the Sunday Times were not economic as going concerns</p> <p>6 which may be an issue, but can we look, please, at</p> <p>7 a document evidencing a lunch at Chequers with Baroness</p> <p>8 Thatcher on 5 January 1981. It's your exhibit KRM14,</p> <p>9 which may well be tab 15 in that bundle.</p> <p>10 You'll see that Mr Ingham, who is Mrs Thatcher's</p> <p>11 press secretary, noted this, it's our number 01626,</p> <p>12 addressed to the Prime Minister:</p> <p>13 "Attached is a record of the salient points of your</p> <p>14 lunch yesterday with Rupert Murdoch. In line with your</p> <p>15 wishes, the attached has not gone outside Number 10 and</p> <p>16 is, of course, to be treated commercial -- in</p> <p>17 confidence."</p> <p>18 This is a document which didn't enter the public</p> <p>19 domain until March of this year, Mr Murdoch. Do you</p> <p>20 understand that?</p> <p>21 A. Yes.</p> <p>22 Q. According to The History of the Times, The Murdoch</p> <p>23 Years, published by Harper Collins in 2005, page 28, you</p> <p>24 previously had had no recollection whatsoever of this</p> <p>25 lunch; is that right?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 9</p>	<p>1 closed these two great titles if she couldn't sell them,</p> <p>2 but there seemed to be two purposes behind the lunch.</p> <p>3 One was to brief Mrs Thatcher or give her your thoughts</p> <p>4 about the -- what is described here as the "embryonic</p> <p>5 and developing Reagan administration". Do you see that</p> <p>6 in paragraph 2?</p> <p>7 A. Yes, I think it shows that at least the conversation for</p> <p>8 some time was taken up by me gossiping about Australian</p> <p>9 and American politics, yes.</p> <p>10 Q. The three of you, if I can put it in this way, President</p> <p>11 Elect Reagan, Baroness Thatcher and you were all of</p> <p>12 course on the same page politically, weren't you?</p> <p>13 A. I guess that's fair. Yes, this was just before his</p> <p>14 inauguration.</p> <p>15 Q. Indeed it was. Was it part of the purpose of this</p> <p>16 meeting, if one can talk almost psychologically, to</p> <p>17 demonstrate to Mrs Thatcher how very much you were "one</p> <p>18 of us"? "One of us" is Baroness Thatcher's term, but</p> <p>19 was that part of your purpose?</p> <p>20 A. No.</p> <p>21 Q. Of course you appreciated the importance of</p> <p>22 a face-to-face meeting. That's why you requested it; is</p> <p>23 that right?</p> <p>24 A. Yes.</p> <p>25 Q. And as Mr Ingham says, if you --</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 11</p>
<p>1 A. That's correct. I still don't, to be honest. But</p> <p>2 I totally accept Mr Ingham's minutes, detailed minutes,</p> <p>3 which sound to me to be correct.</p> <p>4 Q. Well, it was quite a --</p> <p>5 A. I think I'd asked Mrs Thatcher could I see her and she</p> <p>6 said, "Well, why don't you come to lunch on Sunday?"</p> <p>7 Q. Yes. According to Mr Ingham's note, this is our</p> <p>8 page 01627, it was quite an intimate occasion. If one</p> <p>9 looks at the few numbers of people there, there was</p> <p>10 obviously the Prime Minister, Mr Thatcher, Mr Ingham and</p> <p>11 you, and the meeting was at your request. Do you see</p> <p>12 that?</p> <p>13 A. Yes.</p> <p>14 Q. I hope you don't mind if I tease you about this, that</p> <p>15 when you told a Select Committee on 19 July last year</p> <p>16 that you wished politicians would leave you alone, you</p> <p>17 weren't, of course, referring to this meeting, were you?</p> <p>18 A. No.</p> <p>19 Q. What we see --</p> <p>20 A. I think this meeting was to inform the chief executive</p> <p>21 of a company of the likelihood of a change of ownership</p> <p>22 of a great iconic asset. I thought it was quite</p> <p>23 appropriate.</p> <p>24 Q. Of course, Mrs Thatcher knew that was probable, or</p> <p>25 I suppose one outcome was that Lord Thomson might have</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 10</p>	<p>1 A. The purpose was not to tell her about Mr Reagan.</p> <p>2 Q. Pardon me?</p> <p>3 A. The purpose was not to tell her about President Reagan.</p> <p>4 Q. She knew all of this anyway.</p> <p>5 A. Yes.</p> <p>6 Q. Paragraph 4:</p> <p>7 "The main purpose of Mr Murdoch's visit was to brief</p> <p>8 the Prime Minister on his bid [that's your bid] for</p> <p>9 Times Newspapers."</p> <p>10 And then you explained to her what your bid amounted</p> <p>11 to in financial terms, and then you treated her to some</p> <p>12 speculations about who else had bid, is that fair?</p> <p>13 A. Yes, that was pure speculation. I don't think Thomson</p> <p>14 told me of anyone -- some had announced bids, like</p> <p>15 Captain Maxwell who was always bidding for things.</p> <p>16 Q. Why was it important to you that Mrs Thatcher understand</p> <p>17 the nature and quality of your bid?</p> <p>18 A. Well, as I said, this was the movement of a great</p> <p>19 institution which was under threat of closure, and</p> <p>20 I thought it was perfectly right that she should know</p> <p>21 what was at stake.</p> <p>22 Q. She knew that anyway, Mr Murdoch. What you were seeking</p> <p>23 to demonstrate --</p> <p>24 A. No, I don't think she did know that there would be great</p> <p>25 problems with the unions or there would be great -- or</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 12</p>

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<p>1 there could be -- the sort of extent of the costs and 2 the risks. I'm not sure she was interested. 3 Q. Were you seeking to demonstrate to her that you were the 4 right man to acquire these great papers because you had 5 the qualities and charisma to take the papers forward 6 and, equally importantly, you had the will to crush the 7 unions? 8 A. No, I didn't have the will to crush the unions. I might 9 have had the desire, but that took several years. 10 Q. Right. If we substitute "desire" for "will", are we in 11 agreement? 12 A. Yes, I don't think it was apposite at this meeting 13 particularly, but yes. We could get into the whole 14 question of Wapping later. 15 Q. If you look at paragraph 10, Mr Murdoch, 01629, you 16 explained to Mr Thatcher that some 50 million of 17 News Group's resources could be at risk and that such an 18 amount "could finish us". Do you remember saying that? 19 A. I don't remember saying that, but I probably did. It 20 was a gross underestimate. 21 Q. And you talked about the financial position of the 22 Times, but you didn't mention, did you, the financial 23 position of the Sunday Times? 24 A. I said Times Newspapers. 25 Q. So you meant both? Pardon me.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 13</p>	<p>1 Q. But you wouldn't have been so undeft and cack-handed to 2 have asked directly, would you, Mr Murdoch? 3 A. I hope not. I've never asked a Prime Minister for 4 anything. 5 Q. But it operates at a far more sophisticated level, 6 doesn't it? You see her, you seek to demonstrate to 7 her -- she probably knew it anyway -- that you were 8 precisely on the same page politically as her, that you 9 were "one of us", and the understanding was that to the 10 extent to which she might help, she would. Is that not 11 fair? 12 A. No, I didn't expect any help from her. Nor did I ask 13 for any. 14 Q. Were you concerned at this stage that you might not 15 acquire the company? 16 A. Oh yes. It was quite easy I could have been outbid. 17 Q. Or there could have been a referral to the Monopolies 18 and Mergers Commission which would have created 19 uncertainty? 20 A. That didn't worry me in the least. As I think my 21 statement shows and as the back-up material, which 22 I hope will be put on the web along with this. 23 Q. Yes, it all will, Mr Murdoch. But you thanked 24 Mrs Thatcher for her lunch on 15 January -- 25 A. Yes, I was a little slow in writing to thank her, yes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 15</p>
<p>1 Was it your view that the Sunday Times was not 2 economic as a going concern? 3 A. I didn't know. I thought that it certainly had a great 4 position on Sunday, but its economics and its staff and 5 everything were all intertwined together with the Times, 6 which resulted in a big net loss. 7 Q. If you look at the Sunday Times separately, SG Warburg 8 had advised, as you knew, that in 1982 and onwards, the 9 paper would make a profit. You knew that, didn't you? 10 A. I didn't see that Warburg -- I don't remember seeing it. 11 But did it contribute a profit to the pool of Times 12 Newspapers? Yes. 13 Q. Okay. And finally on this note, paragraph 12, 14 page 01630: 15 "The Prime Minister thanked Mr Murdoch for keeping 16 her posted on his operations. She did no more than wish 17 him well in his bid, noting the need for much improved 18 arrangements in Fleet Street affecting manning and the 19 introduction of new technology." 20 So you would wish to point out that no express 21 favours were offered to you by Mrs Thatcher; is that 22 right? 23 A. And none asked. I think if I'd asked for anything, 24 Mr Ingham's very full note certainly would have recorded 25 that.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 14</p>	<p>1 Q. And then another document shows that Thomson's analysis 2 was that you were the favourite, their internal analysis 3 of the respective bids, because of your qualities as 4 a manager, because of your youth and vigour and various 5 other factors. Do you recall that? It's in this 6 bundle. 7 A. I've seen that letter from Sir Denis Hamilton, yes. 8 Q. The next stage, undertakings were offered by you. Can 9 I ask you, please, to look at those. They are, I think, 10 at tab 7 of the bundle in front of you. It's KRM6. 11 A. Excuse me. Yes. 12 Q. Do you have those? In particular, page 01467, which is 13 the fourth undertaking headed "Maintenance of editorial 14 independence", do you have that? 15 A. Yes. 16 Q. You undertook to bind yourself to preserve the separate 17 identities of the Times and the Sunday Times and to 18 maintain the independence and authority of their editors 19 in the appointment and control of their staff over the 20 political policy of the separate newspapers, and then in 21 all respects to maintain the titles as editorially 22 independent newspapers of high quality. Do you accept, 23 Mr Murdoch, that the very fact -- 24 A. But that was, if I may interrupt you, to continue 25 Lord Thomson's arrangement which exactly he made when he</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 16</p>

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<p>1 took -- put the two together. I did undertake to expand</p> <p>2 the number of independent directors from four to six.</p> <p>3 Q. Yes, you did. Is the very fact that undertakings are</p> <p>4 offered itself an indication of the power proprietors</p> <p>5 are capable of exercising over their editors?</p> <p>6 A. Yes, I think sometimes it's overestimated, but certainly</p> <p>7 they have power. Let's face it, if an editor is sending</p> <p>8 a newspaper broke, it is the responsibility of the</p> <p>9 proprietor to step in for the sake of the journalists,</p> <p>10 for the sake of everybody. And particularly his</p> <p>11 responsibility to his many thousands of shareholders.</p> <p>12 That didn't apply to the Thomsons, which were private.</p> <p>13 Q. The next stage is on 26 January, Thomsons wrote to the</p> <p>14 Secretary of State pointing this out. I'll just read it</p> <p>15 out, it's page 01589:</p> <p>16 "We cannot, however, emphasise too strongly that if</p> <p>17 there is a reference to the Commission [that's the</p> <p>18 Monopolies and Mergers Commission] of the</p> <p>19 News International proposal, that proposal automatically</p> <p>20 lapses because its conditions cannot be met."</p> <p>21 Was that your understanding?</p> <p>22 A. That they wrote that?</p> <p>23 Q. Yes.</p> <p>24 A. Yes.</p> <p>25 Q. So if there were a reference, you would then, if the MMC</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 17</p>	<p>1 Q. Yes. You told Mr Biffen, and I'm sure this is a point</p> <p>2 you wish to bring out, paragraph 2 of this minute:</p> <p>3 "Mr Murdoch said that the report that his bid would</p> <p>4 lapse if it was referred to the MMC was totally</p> <p>5 misleading. He claimed that when he said that he was</p> <p>6 merely responding to the Thomson deadline. He still</p> <p>7 assumed it would be difficult for Thomsons to negotiate</p> <p>8 extended deadlines with the union, however if they</p> <p>9 managed to do this, he was prepared to co-operate with</p> <p>10 an MMC negotiation. At the same time, he did point out</p> <p>11 that a reference would create problems, both for</p> <p>12 himself, as it would delay his own negotiations with the</p> <p>13 unions, and for Thomsons, as the uncertainty would cause</p> <p>14 loss of advertising revenue, which would make their</p> <p>15 overall losses even greater."</p> <p>16 So the fair interpretation of that is that you</p> <p>17 weren't placing any obstacle in the way of a reference</p> <p>18 to the MMC, but you were pointing out the commercial</p> <p>19 disadvantages of such a reference; would you agree?</p> <p>20 A. If that note is right, then you're correct, yes, Mr Jay.</p> <p>21 Q. The Secretary of State's position at this meeting was</p> <p>22 that he was minded to refer to the MMC really for</p> <p>23 political reasons, if I can be forgiven for putting it</p> <p>24 in those terms. He felt that such an act would defuse</p> <p>25 any criticism of the bid. Did he communicate that to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 19</p>
<p>1 allowed the bid to proceed, have to renegotiate the</p> <p>2 price; was that the position, to your knowledge?</p> <p>3 A. I saw Mr Biffen, I think the record will show, and told</p> <p>4 him that I didn't mind in the least any reference, but</p> <p>5 if it went on a long time, I reserved the right -- and</p> <p>6 the paper bled a lot more money, I reserved the right to</p> <p>7 renegotiate the price.</p> <p>8 Q. Yes. That's a fair summary, but it's right that the</p> <p>9 relevant --</p> <p>10 A. I think the cabinet minister's minutes, which we have</p> <p>11 submitted, show that.</p> <p>12 Q. We're taking it in stages, Mr Murdoch.</p> <p>13 A. I'm sorry.</p> <p>14 Q. We're going to cover this. The minute of the meeting</p> <p>15 with the Secretary of State on 26 January is at tab 66</p> <p>16 of this bundle. Sorry, it's being placed in front of</p> <p>17 you. It's in a separate file.</p> <p>18 A. Thank you.</p> <p>19 Q. This is an important document. I don't think it's yet</p> <p>20 on the Lextranet system, so it can't be displayed.</p> <p>21 I may be right about that. But you were accompanied by</p> <p>22 Mr Searby, who was your Australian Queen's Counsel,</p> <p>23 I think?</p> <p>24 A. He was also at the time, I think, chairman of the</p> <p>25 company, my lifelong friend.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 18</p>	<p>1 you?</p> <p>2 A. I don't remember.</p> <p>3 Q. But you assured Mr Biffen that you would not withdraw</p> <p>4 the bid if Thomsons agreed to extend their deadlines.</p> <p>5 That was on the hypothesis of a referral to the MMC?</p> <p>6 A. That is correct.</p> <p>7 Q. Mr Biffen's position at that stage -- and we don't know</p> <p>8 what time of the day it was on 26 January -- was that he</p> <p>9 was minded to refer, and of course we cannot know what</p> <p>10 conversation, if any, he had with Mrs Thatcher between</p> <p>11 that point in time and the cabinet meeting which took</p> <p>12 place later that afternoon.</p> <p>13 We're now back to KRM16, which I think is tab 17 of</p> <p>14 the first file.</p> <p>15 A. 17?</p> <p>16 Q. Some of the handwriting is quite small. I'm going to do</p> <p>17 my best to paraphrase this fairly. The first page is</p> <p>18 01637. The advice from the Attorney General was that</p> <p>19 the general rule under the Fair Trading Act was there</p> <p>20 must be a reference unless both exceptions applied,</p> <p>21 namely each paper was not a going concern and the matter</p> <p>22 was urgent.</p> <p>23 If you look at page 01638, where the typeface gets</p> <p>24 smaller, the discussions at cabinet were on the basis</p> <p>25 that the Times was not economic as a going concern, but</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 20</p>

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<p>1 in relation to the Sunday Times the position was less 2 clearcut.</p> <p>3 And then there's a summary, Mr Biffen summarised the 4 effect of the meeting we've just seen which took place 5 earlier that day. We can see why it was decided --</p> <p>6 A. Was it with me?</p> <p>7 Q. With you?</p> <p>8 A. Mr Biffen's discussion with me?</p> <p>9 Q. Yes. Mr Biffen has accurately summarised here tab 66, 10 which is the discussion he had with you.</p> <p>11 The real reason why they decided not to refer, apart 12 from, I'm sure, assessing in good faith that both 13 conditions were met, if you look on the right-hand side, 14 it is difficult to read:</p> <p>15 "In discussion it was suggested that if the 16 Secretary of State for Trade were to refer the bid to 17 the MMC it was unlikely that the Thomson organisation 18 would in practice refuse to extend their deadline. In 19 the circumstances, there seemed, however, little 20 advantage to be gained from a reference, and 21 considerable risks and costs in making it.</p> <p>22 "The Thomson organisation has taken the view that no 23 suitable alternative purchaser has made a bid. Those 24 who are now pressing for a reference were mainly 25 concerned that this would enable greater authority to be</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 21</p>	<p>1 in cabinet, that line was taken. Would you agree with 2 that, Mr Murdoch?</p> <p>3 A. Not really. That seems to be a fair reading from it, 4 but frankly it was Thomsons who put the gun to the head 5 of Mr Biffen. It is very clear from the correspondence 6 that we've seen.</p> <p>7 Q. Okay.</p> <p>8 A. Everyone must look at that damage to Thomsons, that 9 they'd had a 12-month strike from the unions and lost 10 it, during which time they had paid the journalists 11 fully, and as soon as the printers came back, the 12 journalists went out for three months, and so they 13 became very, very embittered.</p> <p>14 Q. There was a debate in the House of Commons on 15 27 January, which was the following day.</p> <p>16 Unsurprisingly, there was a great deal of concern 17 expressed eloquently in particular by Mr John Smith, the 18 late Mr Smith, who was the shadow DTI minister. They 19 were making the point quite strongly that if you looked 20 at the Sunday Times by itself, it was a going concern 21 and it was quite artificial, as Mr Biffen was doing, 22 just to look at the 11 months of 1980 and refuse to look 23 at likely future performance in 1982 and 1983 and 24 following. Do you understand that?</p> <p>25 A. I understand what you're saying, yes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 23</p>
<p>1 put behind the undertakings on the independence of the 2 papers and their editorial freedom, which Mr Murdoch had 3 already given. Their concern on this count should be 4 met if the Secretary of State for Trade were able to 5 assure them that if he were to give his consent without 6 a reference, he could entrench these undertakings in his 7 consent."</p> <p>8 So one view might be that the cabinet decision was 9 predicated on the basis that there was no commercial 10 advantage in referring to the MMC. Indeed, there was 11 every commercial disadvantage in making the reference 12 since it would increase uncertainty and it may cause 13 Thomson to withdraw the bid altogether, or refuse to 14 accept your offer altogether. Was that part of your 15 assessment?</p> <p>16 A. It certainly is now that you've shown me all this, yes. 17 Yes.</p> <p>18 Q. Would it be fair to say that what you were doing here, 19 first of all with Mrs Thatcher, you were impressing on 20 her your qualities vis-a-vis the acquisition of these 21 papers. Mr Biffen, on 26 January, although you didn't 22 put a gun to his head and say, "If you refer, I back 23 out", you far more subtly suggested to him that there 24 were real commercial disadvantages if he did refer. You 25 got that message across to Mr Biffen, and unsurprisingly</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 22</p>	<p>1 Q. Presumably you, Mr Murdoch, who would be interested in 2 the long-term perspective, were doing that very 3 calculation. In other words, you were looking carefully 4 at what the predictions were for future years, and you 5 weren't looking just at the 11 months of 1980. Is that 6 right?</p> <p>7 A. No, I thought the Sunday Times was a very, very fine 8 newspaper. I was a great admirer of the Sunday Times. 9 I didn't know the internal accounting of Thomsons.</p> <p>10 Q. But when Mr Biffen said to Parliament, "I do not believe 11 that I was entitled to take a view on future prospects 12 upon existing experience" -- pardon me, that was in 13 a separate letter to Mr Smith -- if you'd heard that, 14 you would have laughed inwardly, wouldn't you, 15 Mr Murdoch, because that's exactly how you -- you 16 operate exactly the other way around? You do take 17 a view of future prospects, because that's what a shrewd 18 businessman does, would you not agree?</p> <p>19 A. Yes, but I was looking at Times Newspapers together.</p> <p>20 Q. Commercially that would be right, but legally, of 21 course, one had to look at them separately, wouldn't 22 you?</p> <p>23 A. No, it was one company.</p> <p>24 Q. Mr Biffen made it clear to Parliament that he was 25 looking at each of them separately. I mean, that's</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 24</p>

6 (Pages 21 to 24)

<p>1 clear from the left-hand column on page 01602, although 2 it's not necessary to turn it up, but I can see your 3 position, that whatever the legal analysis, you would 4 look at them as one unit; is that right? 5 A. Yes. 6 Q. Mr Aitken in the debate said something about you, which 7 I think I should put. If you look at page 01606, on the 8 right-hand side -- are you with me, Mr Murdoch? 9 A. Excuse me, Mr Jay. 1606? Yes. 10 Q. 01606. 11 A. I have it. 12 Q. On the right-hand side. He said this right in the 13 middle of the right-hand column: 14 "That is no isolated example. One could give 15 numerous examples of resignations by reporters, of the 16 Australian Press Council upholding allegations of bias 17 by Murdoch papers in their political reporting and of 18 Mr Murdoch openly pushing his commercial interests by 19 using his newspaper powers. I read the Australian 20 papers every day for the best part of three years when 21 I was writing a book on Australia ..." 22 A. I'm sorry, Mr Jay. 23 Q. You're not with me? 24 A. 1606? 25 Q. 01606?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 25</p>	<p>1 we have never pushed our commercial interests in our 2 newspapers. 3 Q. Some points arising out of Sir Harold Evans' book "Good 4 Times, Bad Times". To the extent to which you need to 5 look at the page, we can provide you with the relevant 6 extracts. In the bundle we have, it is tab 5. His 7 analysis of you at xvii, this is the preface to the July 8 2011 edition which was written shortly after the Select 9 Committee attendance on 19 July. The last paragraph: 10 "How much Rupert Murdoch knew ..." 11 That's -- 12 A. I'm sorry. Can you set me the context of that again? 13 This is from Mr Evans' book? 14 Q. Yes. 15 A. But you then switched to the Select Committee? 16 Q. I'm just saying he wrote this preface very shortly after 17 19 July last year, which is when you gave evidence to 18 the Select Committee. Do you follow me? 19 A. No. That I wrote what Mr -- from Mr Evans' book? 20 Q. No, no. This is Sir Harold Evans writing an updated 21 preface, if you like, to his book. 22 A. Oh. I had not read that before. 23 Q. It's his contemporary reflections, if you like, on what 24 happened before the Select Committee, but he's speaking 25 about phone hacking and he's saying:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 27</p>
<p>1 A. Who were we quoting, Mr Aitken? 2 Q. Mr Aitken. 3 A. Oh well. 4 Q. He said he was profoundly unhappy, but was he accurate, 5 at least as regards the facts he states here? 6 A. Certainly not. 7 Q. So there weren't resignations of reporters, were there? 8 A. Oh no, we certainly had some upheaval because in 1975, 9 I believe, the Queen, through the Governor General, 10 dismissed the Australian government, and we took the 11 attitude in the Australian newspaper very strongly and 12 legally that he was within his rights. And that caused 13 a lot of upset there. The more radical journalists 14 thought it was outrageous that the Queen or the Governor 15 General should do that, whereas in fact -- I won't go 16 into all the rights and wrongs, the government had lost 17 its majority in the Senate and couldn't get supplies 18 through so had no money to operate. 19 Q. What about the Australian Press Council upholding 20 allegations of bias by Murdoch papers in their political 21 reporting? Was that at least factually right? 22 A. No. 23 Q. And of you openly pushing your commercial interests by 24 using your newspaper powers; is that right? 25 A. No. I take a particularly strong pride in the fact that</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 26</p>	<p>1 "How much Rupert Murdoch knew and when he knew it 2 may not be pinned down because he exercises what the 3 sociologist Max Weber defined as 'charismatic authority' 4 where policy derives from how the leader is perceived by 5 others rather than by instructions or traditions." 6 Do you feel he has a point there? 7 A. No, I was going to say when you laid out my three 8 principles of government, I meant to add that we have a 9 very large company and I do run that company with 10 a great deal of decentralisation. I don't think I have 11 any aura. 12 Q. But this issue of aura, charisma, it's Sir Harold Evans' 13 view, you know it's Mr Andrew Neil's view, it's the Sun 14 King analogy, page 214 of your disclosure, indeed a lot 15 of people have come up with the same -- 16 A. That's two you've just mentioned. 17 Q. Okay, we have two so far, but we'll find some more as we 18 proceed. But it's a common theme. Do you think it has 19 any validity at all as to -- it may not be a bad thing 20 at all. It may be part of your success that this is how 21 you operate, but do you feel it's right or wrong? 22 A. No, I do try very hard to set an example of ethical 23 behaviour and make it quite clear that I expect it. One 24 can describe that in a number of ways. But do I do it 25 via an aura or charisma? I don't think so.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 28</p>

7 (Pages 25 to 28)

<p>1 Q. Okay.</p> <p>2 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Can we try it this way, Mr Murdoch?</p> <p>3 A. Yes, sir.</p> <p>4 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: That you have been on the stage, on</p> <p>5 the world stage of the press for many, many years. You</p> <p>6 have seen many editors come and go. Your press</p> <p>7 interests have extended. It wouldn't be at all</p> <p>8 surprising, would it, if those who worked for you</p> <p>9 recognised that you had an appreciation of events that</p> <p>10 it would be important for them to understand and that</p> <p>11 they should therefore take a different line only with</p> <p>12 caution, because of their respect for your views?</p> <p>13 A. Well, I would hope so. I think that we have not had</p> <p>14 that many -- our editors have generally been very</p> <p>15 long-serving. I invite you to have all the living ones</p> <p>16 up here.</p> <p>17 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I wasn't seeking to suggest you'd had</p> <p>18 a big turnover. I was seeking to suggest that in 40</p> <p>19 years or 50 years, over the many, many papers that</p> <p>20 you've been responsible for and that you've owned, you</p> <p>21 have seen many, many editors.</p> <p>22 A. Yes.</p> <p>23 MR JAY: At page 144 of Sir Harold Evans' book, where he's</p> <p>24 quoting from the Thomson-Warburg assessment of your bid,</p> <p>25 the pros and cons of the seven finalists, as they were</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 29</p>	<p>1 A. Yes, I think we expanded to a new young public.</p> <p>2 I thought the opportunity for the Sun was to go against</p> <p>3 the Mirror, whose leader had said he wanted to get rid</p> <p>4 of the elves, which is sort of putting down his working</p> <p>5 class readership, and we thought there was a real</p> <p>6 opportunity here.</p> <p>7 Q. We're looking at standards here. Is it your view,</p> <p>8 Mr Murdoch, that the standards of the tabloid press, if</p> <p>9 one were to take the period 1968 to date, have steadily</p> <p>10 improved?</p> <p>11 A. Well, I think the Sun has never been a better paper than</p> <p>12 it is today. I couldn't say the same for my</p> <p>13 competitors, but we won't go into that.</p> <p>14 Q. The other reservation expressed here, "... he</p> <p>15 undoubtedly has been deeply and often involved in the</p> <p>16 editorial function", of course, we're looking here at</p> <p>17 the period 1968 to 1981. We're not looking at recent</p> <p>18 history, but would that be a fair observation?</p> <p>19 A. Well, 1968, when I came here, I didn't really have</p> <p>20 enough to do with the News of the World. That was my</p> <p>21 fault. The Sun, the starting of the Sun, again, but</p> <p>22 gradually, yes. And then in 1974, or I think it was the</p> <p>23 end of 1973, we were all so, all of us, carried away by</p> <p>24 the success of the Sun, we said, "Let's try in America",</p> <p>25 where we did very badly. But we certainly took our eye</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 31</p>
<p>1 described, are set out, but your qualities are set out,</p> <p>2 but reservations --</p> <p>3 A. Page xvii?</p> <p>4 Q. Page 144.</p> <p>5 A. Oh.</p> <p>6 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: It's actually the next page. No, no,</p> <p>7 you're fingers are -- now it's that page.</p> <p>8 A. This page, thank you.</p> <p>9 MR JAY: In the smaller print, paragraph 1.</p> <p>10 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I'm sorry, mine are on both sides,</p> <p>11 yours aren't.</p> <p>12 A. Thank you, sir.</p> <p>13 MR JAY: I'm working from the book itself:</p> <p>14 "Reservations: Mr Murdoch's arrival in England has</p> <p>15 had some deteriorating effect on the standards of the</p> <p>16 daily tabloid press ..."</p> <p>17 Do you feel that that's a fair observation?</p> <p>18 A. No, absolutely not.</p> <p>19 Q. Well, without attributing cause and effect, do you think</p> <p>20 that between 1968 and 1981 the standards of the tabloid</p> <p>21 press had deteriorated?</p> <p>22 A. No.</p> <p>23 Q. So this is completely wrong, is it?</p> <p>24 A. Well, it's a matter of opinion, but I think it's wrong.</p> <p>25 Q. Do you think the standards had improved?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 30</p>	<p>1 off. It was not a continuous thing throughout that</p> <p>2 period.</p> <p>3 Q. But surely your main objective was to --</p> <p>4 A. I've even forgotten who -- well, I think it was</p> <p>5 basically Sir Larry Lamb who was editor through that</p> <p>6 period, and he was a very, very brilliant journalist.</p> <p>7 Q. Wasn't it your main objective, Mr Murdoch, to improve</p> <p>8 the commercial appeal of these papers, the Sun and the</p> <p>9 News of the World, and you weren't really concerned with</p> <p>10 the ethical side of its product? Would that be a fair</p> <p>11 observation?</p> <p>12 A. No. It was always to tell the truth, certainly to</p> <p>13 interest the public, to get their attention, but always</p> <p>14 to tell the truth.</p> <p>15 Q. So the touchstones are: truthfulness and write that</p> <p>16 which is interesting to the public. Is that it?</p> <p>17 A. Yes. I have great respect for the British public, and</p> <p>18 I try to carry that through it.</p> <p>19 Q. So the public, or put another way the market, they're</p> <p>20 the best arbiters of what should be in and outside</p> <p>21 newspapers? Is that fair?</p> <p>22 A. Yes, I think so, absolutely.</p> <p>23 Q. Okay. I'm sure Sir Harold Evans would want me, if he</p> <p>24 were metaphorically standing behind me, to put many</p> <p>25 points arising out of this book, but there just isn't</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 32</p>

<p>1 time, but there's one point I should put because it's</p> <p>2 relevant to the terms of reference. Just bear with me,</p> <p>3 Mr Murdoch.</p> <p>4 A. I'm afraid --</p> <p>5 Q. It's page 534.</p> <p>6 A. -- I've never read the book, I'm sorry.</p> <p>7 Q. If you look at the last six lines --</p> <p>8 A. Yes.</p> <p>9 Q. -- he says this:</p> <p>10 "In my year as editor of the Times, Murdoch broke</p> <p>11 all these guarantees. He put his point of view very</p> <p>12 simply to the home editor of the Times, Fred Emery, when</p> <p>13 he summoned him from holiday on 4 March to his office</p> <p>14 shortly before asking for my resignation."</p> <p>15 This is 4 March 1983. You apparently said this:</p> <p>16 "I give instruction to my editors all round the</p> <p>17 world, why shouldn't I in London?"</p> <p>18 Do you remember saying that?</p> <p>19 A. No, I don't. I do remember meeting Mr Emery and I don't</p> <p>20 know what he told Mr Evans, but I know what he told me,</p> <p>21 which was, "You are facing an insurrection in the staff</p> <p>22 against Mr Evans".</p> <p>23 Q. So the anonymous editor, in terms of your witness</p> <p>24 statement, because you don't identify him when you say</p> <p>25 you had to in effect remove him --</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 33</p>	<p>1 turned out a great paper.</p> <p>2 Q. According to Mr Emery, you also said this in relation to</p> <p>3 the undertakings you gave to the Secretary of State:</p> <p>4 "They're not worth the paper they're written on."</p> <p>5 Did you say that?</p> <p>6 A. No.</p> <p>7 Q. Did you think that?</p> <p>8 A. No.</p> <p>9 Q. So this is completely --</p> <p>10 A. Certainly not. It was an Act of Parliament.</p> <p>11 Q. Well, Sir Harold Evans was replaced by Mr Charles</p> <p>12 Douglas-Home, who was the nephew of the prime minister</p> <p>13 in the --</p> <p>14 A. He was the long-serving deputy editor.</p> <p>15 Q. And the paper was safely returned to the Tory fold,</p> <p>16 wasn't it?</p> <p>17 A. I think you're putting that as though that was the</p> <p>18 motive, which wasn't.</p> <p>19 Q. Okay.</p> <p>20 A. I only remember ever talking to Mr Evans about policy</p> <p>21 once, when he came to me, shut the door behind him and</p> <p>22 said, "Look, tell me what you want to say -- what do you</p> <p>23 want me to say, and it needn't leave this room, but</p> <p>24 I will do it", and I said to him, "Harry, that is not my</p> <p>25 job. All I would say to you", and this is the nearest</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 35</p>
<p>1 A. It was no doubt Mr Evans.</p> <p>2 Q. Pardon me?</p> <p>3 A. He was saying "you are facing an insurrection" on the</p> <p>4 Times, a staff insurrection.</p> <p>5 Q. Mr Murdoch, in your witness statement you don't identify</p> <p>6 the editor but you refer to an anonymous editor who had</p> <p>7 to be let go because there was in effect a staff</p> <p>8 insurrection. Were you intending to refer to Sir Harold</p> <p>9 Evans?</p> <p>10 A. I was indeed. I'm sorry for that omission.</p> <p>11 Q. It's not an omission, it's just you didn't give his name</p> <p>12 in the witness statement for fear perhaps of</p> <p>13 embarrassment.</p> <p>14 A. He was the only editor of the Times that we have ever</p> <p>15 asked to leave.</p> <p>16 Q. Was that really the reason, though, for, as it were,</p> <p>17 getting rid of him? He had, after all, been</p> <p>18 a brilliantly successful editor of the Sunday Times for</p> <p>19 over a decade, hadn't he, and had shown his worth?</p> <p>20 A. Yes, I would say so. He had great assistants who he</p> <p>21 didn't get on with. I think there was Mr Bruce Page who</p> <p>22 ran the Insight team and did all the great work on</p> <p>23 thalidomide and so on but never really got the credit</p> <p>24 for it, but never mind. The Sunday Times was fine and</p> <p>25 between Sir Denis Hamilton and Sir Harry Evans, they</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 34</p>	<p>1 thing I ever came to an instruction, was "please be</p> <p>2 consistent. Don't change sides day by day". I'm not</p> <p>3 talking political sides, but on issues.</p> <p>4 Q. According to Roy Greenslade's book "Press Gang",</p> <p>5 Mr Douglas-Home told Mr Greenslade that you were one of</p> <p>6 the main powers behind the Thatcher throne. Do you feel</p> <p>7 that's right or not?</p> <p>8 A. Doesn't sound like Mr Douglas-Home to me, he was</p> <p>9 a pretty modest individual, but I don't know.</p> <p>10 Q. But were you one of the main powers behind --</p> <p>11 A. Whether I was?</p> <p>12 Q. Yes.</p> <p>13 A. No.</p> <p>14 Q. Lance Price's book "Where Power Lies" page 254 --</p> <p>15 A. We were probably -- not the Times. The Sun. If you</p> <p>16 want to judge my thinking, look at the Sun.</p> <p>17 Q. I think the point was you personally, not the Sun, the</p> <p>18 Sunday Times or the Times. You personally were one of</p> <p>19 the main powers behind the Thatcher throne. Do you</p> <p>20 think that's right?</p> <p>21 A. No.</p> <p>22 Q. Did you consult with her regularly on every important</p> <p>23 matter of policy?</p> <p>24 A. Certainly not.</p> <p>25 Q. On the issue of editorial control, you've given us some</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 36</p>

<p>1 insight of a meeting you had with Mr Evans when he was 2 editor. You were interviewed in the context of the 3 House of Lords' first report on communications, where 4 they set out at appendix 4 a summary of an interview 5 which took place in September 2007. I just put one 6 point to you, which is -- or maybe two. Paragraph 49 of 7 the appendix --</p> <p>8 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Where is that? 9 MR JAY: Just bear with me. Tab 18, I think. 10 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Thank you. 11 A. 49? 12 MR JAY: Yes. 13 A. Yes. 14 Q. "Mr Murdoch did not disguise the fact that he is hands 15 on both economically and editorially. He says that 'the 16 law' prevents him from instructing the editors of the 17 Times and the Sunday Times. The independent board is 18 there to make sure he cannot interfere and he never says 19 'do this or that' although he often asks 'what are you 20 doing'. He explained that he 'nominates' the editors of 21 these two papers but that the nominations are subject to 22 approval of the independent board. His first 23 appointment of an Editor of the Times split the board 24 but was not rejected. 25 "50. He distinguishes between the Times and the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 37</p>	<p>1 Do they have it right? 2 A. Page 51? 3 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Paragraph 50, actually. 4 A. 50, I'm sorry. 5 MR JAY: No, it's my mistake. Last sentence of 50. 6 A. It's not over the Times and the Sunday Times? 7 Q. No, no, no, Sun and the News of the World. 8 A. Yes. Well, I never much interfere with the News of the 9 World, I'm sorry to say, but -- yes. 10 Q. These are political issues, they're not sort of 11 managerial issues, but you would agree with this 12 sentence, would you? 13 A. Yes, I'm interested, I'm a curious person who is 14 interested in the great issues of the day, and I'm not 15 good at holding my tongue. 16 Q. But you did say you're sorry to say that you didn't 17 intervene in relation to the News of the World. Why did 18 you say that? 19 A. I'm not disowning it or saying it wasn't my 20 responsibility to, but I was always closer to the Sun. 21 It was a daily paper, there was something more urgent 22 about it. 23 Q. Did you have any role, Mr Murdoch, in relation to the 24 publication of the Hitler diaries in 1983? 25 A. I'm sorry to say yes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 39</p>
<p>1 Sunday Times and the Sun and the News of the World (and 2 makes the same distinction between the New York Post and 3 the Wall Street Journal). For the Sun and News of the 4 World he explained that he is a 'traditional 5 proprietor'. He exercises editorial control on major 6 issues -- like which party to back in a general election 7 or policy on Europe." 8 Now, have your interlocutors faithfully recorded 9 what you told them? 10 A. Yes. I had -- I never gave instructions to the editor 11 of the Times or the Sunday Times. I didn't say, "What 12 are you doing? What are you saying?" Sometimes when 13 I was available on a Saturday, I would call and say, 14 "What's the news today?" It was idle curiosity, 15 perhaps. Other times I'd ring on a Tuesday, from 16 New York, when the Sunday Times would come in, and 17 I would say, "That was a damn fine newspaper you had 18 this week." I probably wouldn't have read the 19 editorial. 20 Q. I think the big point, Mr Murdoch, is the last sentence 21 of 51 [sic], in relation to the Sun and the News of the 22 World as it then was: 23 "He exercises editorial control on major issues -- 24 like which party to back in a general election or policy 25 on Europe."</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 38</p>	<p>1 Q. Is it fair to say that Lord Dacre -- that's the 2 historian Hugh Trevor-Roper before he was ennobled, not 3 Paul Dacre -- that Lord Dacre was beginning to express 4 doubts about the authenticity of the diaries and you 5 overruled him? 6 A. No, that is a very small part of the story. When the 7 editor told me very excitedly that they'd bought the -- 8 these rights, British rights to these documents from 9 a very, very reputable German publisher, Bertelsmann, he 10 got Lord Dacre to go to Switzerland to examine those 11 diaries and Lord Dacre, after some hours with them, 12 declared he thought they were genuine. 13 Later, when it got closer to the time of 14 publication, very close to the time of publication, 15 I think people were debating it, Lord Dacre then did 16 show doubts. And I think a majority of us felt we 17 should go ahead, and I take full responsibility for it. 18 It was a major mistake I made, one I'll have to live 19 with for the rest of my life. 20 Q. Okay. 21 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Mr Murdoch, this is a bit of 22 a marathon rather than a sprint, so I think we'll take 23 a break for a few minutes now, just to give the 24 shorthand writer a break and you a break. 25 A. Thank you, sir.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 40</p>

10 (Pages 37 to 40)

<p>1 (11.09 am) 2 (A short break) 3 (11.19 am) 4 MR JAY: We're still on the theme of influence over editors. 5 Rebekah Wade, as she then was, told the House of Lords 6 committee in relation to you: 7 "I think it would be fair to say that before any 8 appointment, he knew me pretty well. He would be aware 9 of my views, both social views, cultural views and 10 political views." 11 From your perspective, do you feel that you did know 12 Rebekah Wade's social views, cultural views and 13 political views before you appointed her? 14 A. I certainly knew a lot of them, yes. 15 Q. Okay. You've drawn attention to a piece in the 16 New Statesman by Alice Miles, who worked for the Times, 17 I think, for ten years. She makes the point that you 18 had no influence at the time over editorial policy. So 19 we note her view. She does say this, though: 20 "You have only to look at online forums today to see 21 that the tabloid pursuit of gossip, scandal and cheap 22 titillation reflects rather than drives people's 23 naturally grubby or lowbrow instincts." 24 Do you agree with her or not? 25 A. No, I think that's a rather elitist view. But no, Page 41</p>	<p>1 I don't think they're entitled to the same privacy as 2 the ordinary men in the street. If we're going to have 3 a transparent society, a transparent democracy, let's 4 have everything out in the open. 5 Q. Do you agree with the opinion which underlines the 6 secondary part of Alice Miles' proposition, that the 7 tabloids do pursue gossip, scandal and cheap 8 titillation? 9 A. I think that's an overstatement, but ... (shakes head). 10 Um ... no. Not -- look, there is some of it, but we're 11 not perfect. I'm not saying we are or that our 12 competitors are, but we're nothing to what you see on 13 the Internet every day, which I might say has an 14 ever-growing following. 15 Q. I may come back to that point in due course, Mr Murdoch. 16 A. It's a bigger subject for later. 17 Q. Yes. Just a few points in the 1980s, we need to bring 18 ourselves up to the 1990s -- 19 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Just before you leave the topic of 20 privacy, you don't see a distinction, Mr Murdoch, 21 between, for example, politicians and, one might say, 22 newspaper proprietors -- and one might even include 23 judges, I'd have to think about that -- in those who 24 hold themselves out or are held out as exercising 25 positions of influence, and on the other hand somebody Page 43</p>
<p>1 I have to say that so much of that material is provided 2 by paid public relations agents working for those people 3 that it's our job also to look behind what we're being 4 told. 5 Q. So you say, well, you're fed a load of material by paid 6 publicists. In order to rectify the balance, as it 7 were, it is not inappropriate to use intrusive means to 8 pry into the lives of celebrities; is that fair? 9 A. I didn't say that. 10 Q. No. 11 A. I think it's perfectly fair -- I don't believe in using 12 hacking, I don't believe in using private detectives or 13 whatever, I think that's just a lazy way of reporters 14 not doing their job, but I think it is fair, when people 15 are held up as great -- or had themselves held up as 16 iconic figures or great actors, that they be looked at. 17 And sometimes -- we've just seen an example of it 18 with Mr Simon Cowell, he wanted to have it all 19 himself -- but no, I think people -- you know, a lot of 20 these people are very big in the lives of ordinary 21 people, big television stars, film stars, and of course 22 I must include politicians. 23 If we're getting into the issue of privacy, I think 24 people in public positions have public responsibilities, 25 and I'll even include press proprietors in that. Page 42</p>	<p>1 who is famous because they are a good actor or because 2 they are a film star or because they've written a book? 3 You don't see any distinction between the two? They 4 don't hold themselves out as influences on the public, 5 it's just that they're rather good at what they do. 6 A. I think people who hold great responsibility -- I mean, 7 I really welcome -- welcomed, I was jealous of the Daily 8 Telegraph buying all the personal expense accounts of -- 9 admittedly through second and third parties, but of the 10 Members of Parliament. I think the Sunday Times 11 followed later with members of the House of Lords. And 12 I thought that was a great public service. I have to 13 say that I'm disappointed the editor of the Times didn't 14 buy them when they were offered to him first, but -- and 15 obviously the Director of Public Prosecutions has 16 decided that was in the public interest and not 17 something to prosecute. 18 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I think the Telegraph would argue 19 that it wasn't illegal, but that's a slightly different 20 point. The question I'm asking -- 21 A. They would indeed. 22 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: The question I'm asking you is 23 whether there is a distinction, because you raised it -- 24 A. They were gained illegally but not by them. I mean, 25 there were -- okay. Page 44</p>

11 (Pages 41 to 44)

<p>1 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: No, whether there is a distinction 2 between those who hold themselves out as being a public 3 figure, like politicians or like newspaper proprietors, 4 or affect the public, and those who don't come into that 5 category, like people who've achieved fame, if you like, 6 made money, if you like, because they are very good at 7 what they do, whether it be acting or inventing 8 something or in films or writing. They don't hold 9 themselves out as having any public influence. If you 10 do, I accept that's different --</p> <p>11 A. Yes, there is a difference. It's a difficult subject. 12 But I do think that politicians do hold themselves out 13 as public figures and they're certainly people of great 14 responsibility and sometimes it's right to look behind 15 the facade. I think they have to be prepared for that.</p> <p>16 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I don't think I disagree with that, 17 because it may be we'll come back to it. Okay.</p> <p>18 MR JAY: Mr Murdoch, the 1980s, one frankly wouldn't, given 19 your perspective on the world, expect you to have 20 supported Neil Kinnock's Labour Party. Do you regret 21 any of the Sun's constant attacks on him?</p> <p>22 A. I don't remember them. I remember the famous front page 23 on the day of the election, which I thought was 24 absolutely brilliant. Our problem with the Labour Party 25 then -- I mean, I think we would have supported the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 45</p>	<p>1 1987, a dinner you attended at Clifton in the evening, 2 which is reported by Mr Woodrow Wyatt. He says this: 3 "Rupert turned up and sat near to us at one stage. 4 When Ken Livingstone appeared on the screen and put the 5 Labour defeat to the dreadful lies and smears of the 6 media, Rupert cried out, 'That's me', and was 7 delighted." 8 Is that true?</p> <p>9 A. I remember that party, I mean that I was very late for 10 it, and if I said that, then I'm afraid that was the 11 influence of alcohol.</p> <p>12 Q. It didn't reflect any part of your thinking then, 13 Mr Murdoch; is that right?</p> <p>14 A. It was a joke.</p> <p>15 Q. An external observer might observe that Mrs Thatcher 16 might have won anyway, but let's not go into that. 17 Can I deal with one point --</p> <p>18 A. I wasn't planning victory. It was just a stupid, 19 light-hearted remark.</p> <p>20 Q. Okay. Can I deal with one point which arises out of the 21 merger of Sky Television and BSB, which took place on 22 4 November 1990. On 1 November 1990, the Broadcasting 23 Act of that year was passed. Do you recall that, 24 Mr Murdoch?</p> <p>25 A. Yes, I accept it.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 47</p>
<p>1 Labour Party in that election if it had a different 2 policy, but you remember the famous clause 4, which was 3 the socialisation of everything in the country, 4 nationalisation, all the means of production, et cetera, 5 et cetera. We were certainly against that, and if there 6 were personal attacks on Mr Kinnock I would apologise 7 for that, I don't remember them, but he was the 8 personification of the leadership of the Labour Party 9 and it was fair to attack his policies, and even 10 sometimes the way he expressed himself.</p> <p>11 Q. Clause 4 had been part of the Labour Party's 12 constitution, I think, since its inception. That would 13 be a reason for never supporting the Labour Party, yet 14 the Sun did until 1979, didn't it?</p> <p>15 A. That could mean -- yes. There was the failure of the 16 Heath government, there was the support of Mr Harold 17 Wilson. I don't remember whether Mr Callaghan ever 18 stood for election.</p> <p>19 Q. 1976 he was Prime Minister.</p> <p>20 A. Hm? He was -- yes, okay.</p> <p>21 Q. Holding though --</p> <p>22 A. We had very good relations with him and with Mr Wilson. 23 There was no thought of pursuing clause 4 with them. Or 24 by them.</p> <p>25 Q. Mr Murdoch, can I take you to polling day on 11 June</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 46</p>	<p>1 Q. It preserved the exemptions, if I can be forgiven for 2 simplifying it grossly, in relation to the provision of 3 non-domestic satellite services, and of course Sky, 4 which was your company, was operating out of Luxembourg, 5 wasn't it?</p> <p>6 A. Yes. Well, we were broadcasting on a Luxembourg-owned 7 satellite.</p> <p>8 Q. That's right, so it was non-domestic for these purposes 9 and the Act preserved the status quo, although there was 10 plenty of opposition to it from the Labour Party, do you 11 follow me?</p> <p>12 A. I take your word for it. I don't remember it.</p> <p>13 Q. Do you remember a discussion on 31 March 1990 with 14 Mr Wyatt? Maybe I should --</p> <p>15 A. No. I think he might have been Lord Wyatt by then, but 16 no, I don't.</p> <p>17 Q. It's in his diaries --</p> <p>18 A. I went to a few dinner parties he gave, which he always 19 had interesting people at.</p> <p>20 Q. This was at your flat, apparently. It was a Saturday, 21 31 March. It's page 262 of volume -- pardon me, I have 22 to be sure which volume it is. I think it's volume 2, 23 which in the bundle is going to be tab 15. It was the 24 day of the anti-poll tax riots in Trafalgar Square. 25 That may enable you to locate it in time.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 48</p>

12 (Pages 45 to 48)

<p>1 A. I know what you're referring to. I remember the poll 2 tax and the controversy. 3 Q. Really, if I can invite you to look at page 265, you see 4 the extract about halfway through that page: 5 "I told him" -- the "I" here is Lord Wyatt, the 6 "him" is you -- "I was fairly confident that he would be 7 all right when the Bill ..." that's the Broadcasting 8 Bill -- 9 A. Where are you? I'm sorry. 10 Q. Are you with me? 11 A. I'm not on the exact quote. 12 Q. It's page 265 of volume 2. 13 A. Oh, 265. 14 Q. 265. 15 A. Yes? 16 Q. "I told him I was fairly confident that he would be all 17 right when the Bill came to the Lords [this is the 18 Broadcasting Bill] because it is now backed by the 19 government. Margaret is very keen on preserving your 20 position [that's the exemption I referred to]. She 21 knows how much she depends on your support. Likewise 22 you depend on hers in this matter." 23 Did Lord Wyatt say that, or something like that? 24 A. I have no memory of that, and if I'm right, he was 25 writing this many years afterwards and I wouldn't put Page 49</p>	<p>1 aren't you? 2 A. If you're talking about newspapers alone, yes. Well, 3 put it this way: I go to election every year, Mr Jay -- 4 every day. People can stop buying my newspapers any 5 time. Often do, I'm afraid. And it is only natural for 6 politicians to reach out to editors and sometimes 7 proprietors, if they're available, to explain what 8 they're doing and hoping that it makes an impression and 9 it gets through, but I was only one of several. And 10 today I am only one of several, as I think we've seen 11 demonstrated the last few days. 12 Q. The Sunday Times in November 1990 endorsed Mr Heseltine 13 against Mrs Thatcher, do you remember that? 14 A. Yes. 15 Q. Mr Andrew Neil in his book makes it clear that that was 16 his, that's to say Andrew Neil's decision and not your 17 decision, do you follow me? 18 A. Yes. 19 Q. Out of fairness to you, he says this: 20 "He [that's you] kept to the letter of his promises 21 to Parliament of editorial independence when he bought 22 Times Newspapers in 1981." 23 But do you agree that your four other titles 24 supported Mrs Thatcher? 25 A. Well, I think the Sun and the News of the World did. Page 51</p>
<p>1 too much weight on Lord Wyatt's fantasies. 2 Q. Rightly or wrongly he was dictating these memoirs -- 3 A. He liked to give the impression that he was close to 4 Mrs Thatcher. I don't really believe that Mrs Thatcher 5 had that much time on her hands, but never mind. 6 Q. But it's really the point he's making that Mrs Thatcher 7 depended on your support and you depended on her 8 support, this is her support in the commercial arena, 9 because of your interests in what was then just Sky 10 Television plc, but was to become, the following year -- 11 or sorry, later this year, the merger of the two 12 companies. Do you see that? 13 A. I see what he's saying. I don't agree with it. 14 Q. Okay. I will move on, if I may, to 1990, the November 15 of that year. 16 A. You know, Mrs Thatcher had much more than me supporting 17 her in the press. Other big newspapers. And editorials 18 don't get read by that much -- many people. It's -- but 19 there was the Daily Telegraph there, which even then was 20 the mouthpiece of the Tory Party, and the Daily Mail. 21 There were a lot of different opinions being put, but 22 I was not the only one supporting her. 23 Q. Although your company consistently had about 36 per cent 24 of the newspaper market, didn't it? You were the 25 biggest player in 1990, you're the biggest player now, Page 50</p>	<p>1 I don't remember where the Times was. But I certainly 2 don't remember the Times coming out for Mr Heseltine or 3 anyone else, but I don't know. 4 Q. Okay. Mr Neil, having been very fair to you in his 5 book, makes it clear that it was -- 6 A. In parts of his book. 7 Q. Yes, he's less fair in other parts, but the point I'm 8 making is that it may go to the credibility of what he 9 says that he's not consistently hostile to you. He 10 reports there a telephone conversation he had with you 11 in November 1990 over the Thatcher/Heseltine issue, 12 where you said this: 13 "It's your decision [in other words Mr Neil's 14 decision] but the paper will be seen to have turned tail 15 when the going got rough. Heseltine would be 16 disastrous." 17 And then this is the most important part: 18 "We owe Thatcher a lot as a company. Don't go 19 overboard in your attacks on her." 20 Do you think you said that? 21 A. I don't think so. I certainly have no memory of it. 22 Q. "We owe Thatcher a lot as a company" -- 23 A. My memory of that is that the first I knew of it was 24 when I read it in the paper. I don't remember any 25 preliminary discussion with Mr Neil about that, his Page 52</p>

13 (Pages 49 to 52)

<p>1 editorial.</p> <p>2 Q. There's a difference between Mr Neil making the</p> <p>3 decision, which he did, and you having a discussion with</p> <p>4 him about it, which would not be improper --</p> <p>5 A. No, but I don't think I had one.</p> <p>6 Q. Okay. So on this point you part company with Mr Neil;</p> <p>7 is that right?</p> <p>8 A. Yes.</p> <p>9 Q. In 1992, the famous headline, "It's the Sun wot won it",</p> <p>10 did you appreciate that headline?</p> <p>11 A. No.</p> <p>12 Q. Did you --</p> <p>13 A. I understand that Mr MacKenzie said I gave him</p> <p>14 a terrible bollocking.</p> <p>15 Q. Yes.</p> <p>16 A. I don't remember it. I thought it was a little</p> <p>17 overenthusiastic, but my son, who is here today and was</p> <p>18 apparently beside me, said I did indeed give him a hell</p> <p>19 of a bollocking.</p> <p>20 Q. That's very frank, Mr Murdoch, but the point may be</p> <p>21 this, that you would not want it to appear that</p> <p>22 newspapers did have this influence over voters, because</p> <p>23 that might be said to be anti-democratic. Would you</p> <p>24 agree with that?</p> <p>25 A. I think saying anti-democratic is too strong a word, but</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 53</p>	<p>1 it?</p> <p>2 A. That's what they say afterwards, yes. That was</p> <p>3 obviously their intent, or would have been their intent,</p> <p>4 if they'd carried through. I doubt it, but ...</p> <p>5 Q. So the support the Sun gave to the Tory Party, not that</p> <p>6 it was the strongest support, because you, to put it</p> <p>7 bluntly, weren't that appreciative of Sir John Major --</p> <p>8 A. Or his government. Well, we were reading in all the</p> <p>9 papers of cabinet divisions.</p> <p>10 Q. But part of the reason for supporting the Conservative</p> <p>11 Party in that election, apart from macro-economic</p> <p>12 considerations, was that a Labour victory would have</p> <p>13 been disastrous to your commercial interests in this</p> <p>14 country, wouldn't it?</p> <p>15 A. No. If you're -- I didn't know Mr Kinnock had those</p> <p>16 plans to move against us afterwards. If he ever did,</p> <p>17 really. You know, people say things in defeat which</p> <p>18 come to them suddenly, but it was certainly not part of</p> <p>19 his policy before the election.</p> <p>20 Q. Well, it was part of his manifesto, and he was extremely</p> <p>21 angry after the election. I think it was on 13 April</p> <p>22 1992, he blamed his defeat on you, to put it bluntly.</p> <p>23 It's reasonable to suppose that, had he got in, he would</p> <p>24 have been right after you and your company, wouldn't he?</p> <p>25 A. Well, I hope not.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 55</p>
<p>1 I just thought it was tasteless and wrong for us. It</p> <p>2 was wrong in fact. We don't have that sort of power.</p> <p>3 I think if you -- well, you can't do it now, but if you</p> <p>4 go after an election and you see a newspaper that's</p> <p>5 taken a very strong line, particularly the Sun, and ask</p> <p>6 their readers how did they vote, there would be no</p> <p>7 unanimity. It may be 60/40 one way. Whatever. I think</p> <p>8 some papers you can recognise as having very strong</p> <p>9 Conservative roots and some very strong Labour roots,</p> <p>10 but you can't say that of the Sun. I think we're</p> <p>11 perhaps the only independent newspaper in the business.</p> <p>12 Q. I just want to explore with you a little bit the factors</p> <p>13 which might go into the decision of the Sun to support</p> <p>14 certain parties. If one looks at the 1992 election,</p> <p>15 that was Mr Kinnock's last election, the Labour Party</p> <p>16 manifesto included a commitment to:</p> <p>17 "Establish an urgent inquiry by the Monopolies and</p> <p>18 Mergers Commission into the concentration of media</p> <p>19 ownership."</p> <p>20 So, in other words, they were out to get you. Do</p> <p>21 you follow me?</p> <p>22 A. Sounds like that.</p> <p>23 Q. So it's self-evident that had the Labour Party won that</p> <p>24 election, that would have been heavily disadvantageous</p> <p>25 to the commercial interests of your company, wouldn't</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 54</p>	<p>1 Q. You might hope not, but I'm afraid, Mr Murdoch, it would</p> <p>2 have happened, wouldn't it, and you well knew it would</p> <p>3 have happened?</p> <p>4 A. I don't think so. I don't think politicians always act</p> <p>5 so irresponsibly as that.</p> <p>6 Q. I'm not commenting on the merits of the policy, I'm</p> <p>7 commenting just on the fact of the policy.</p> <p>8 A. Yes, but I am only commenting on the likelihood of it</p> <p>9 being followed -- whether it would be followed or not.</p> <p>10 Q. Is it fair to say --</p> <p>11 A. We're dealing in hypotheticals.</p> <p>12 Q. Is it fair to say that you generally back the winning</p> <p>13 side?</p> <p>14 A. No. I'm trying to think when we didn't, but that's</p> <p>15 certainly true -- the last election in America, both the</p> <p>16 Wall Street Journal and the New York Post certainly</p> <p>17 opposed the almost certain victory of President Obama.</p> <p>18 Q. I'm talking about the United Kingdom --</p> <p>19 A. I realise that. We work on the same principles</p> <p>20 everywhere.</p> <p>21 Q. Of course, no one is omniscient and you might get it</p> <p>22 wrong. I'm not saying that you always back the winning</p> <p>23 side --</p> <p>24 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: But your point in relation to America</p> <p>25 is rather different, isn't it, Mr Murdoch, because what</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 56</p>

14 (Pages 53 to 56)

<p>1 you're saying is that you recognised that the then 2 Democratic candidate was going to win, but you still 3 were going to say, "We don't think he should". 4 That's -- 5 A. That's how I see it. 6 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Yes, but that's rather different from 7 your deliberately trying to find the winning candidate. 8 A. I'm just saying I don't try to find the winning 9 candidate. I try to judge the candidates on the issues. 10 MR JAY: Because it is said about you that you like to back 11 the winning side because that is the best way to foment 12 your commercial interests. Would you agree with that or 13 not? 14 A. No, I wouldn't. I never let my commercial interests, 15 whatever they are, enter into any consideration of 16 elections. Give me an instance. 17 Q. Well, we'll have a look at -- very soon, actually -- 18 what happened in the run-up to the 1997 election, but 19 can I just deal with one point? Lord Patten, currently 20 Chairman of the BBC, gave evidence to us in January, and 21 he commented that he felt it was demeaning that so many 22 politicians -- and I think he was largely identifying 23 Conservative politicians -- were close to you and trying 24 to curry favour with you. That's my words, not his. 25 Did you sense that at the time or not? Page 57</p>	<p>1 share, and have done since the acquisition of the Times 2 papers in 1981, and secondly, the Sun is so important 3 because it's emblematic and there are so many floating 4 voters, and therefore, whereas a Times reader is 5 unlikely to be impacted one way or another by 6 endorsement of a particular political party by the 7 Times, a Sun reader might be, or at least that is the 8 perception. Do you agree with that? 9 A. I think when you add figures like this, in fairness to 10 me, you have to really exclude the Times. Has the Sun 11 got a large audience? Yes, certainly. Do people follow 12 everything we say? Certainly not. We hope that by 13 raising issues and so on we can have influence on things 14 we believe in, but it's not political parties as such. 15 We try to -- our approach to public affairs is to take 16 issues by issues. 17 Q. I think your evidence is this, Mr Murdoch. You are 18 completely oblivious to the commercial benefits to your 19 company of a particular party winning an election; is 20 that really the position? 21 A. Yes, absolutely. 22 Q. So this is an entirely, as it were, I'm not saying 23 idealistic approach, because that would be putting it 24 too high, but in one sense its political and ideological 25 and commercial considerations are wholly subordinated, Page 59</p>
<p>1 A. No, I don't know many politicians. I can't think who 2 he'd be thinking about. 1997? 3 Q. 1992, Mr Murdoch. Lord Patten was Chairman of the 4 Conservative Party in 1992 and he ran that election for 5 them and he was just -- 6 A. Not very well, it would seem. Well, I take that back. 7 He lost it. 8 Q. No, he won it, Mr Murdoch. He won it. 9 A. 1992? 10 Q. Yes. He won. He didn't win by very much, but they won, 11 the Conservative Party. 12 A. Oh, we're back to the Major government? 13 Q. Yes. 14 A. Yes. I had met Mr Major. I don't remember meeting -- 15 I no doubt did, but I don't remember meeting any leading 16 figures at the time. I didn't know Mr Heseltine, 17 I didn't know Mr Portillo. I just don't know. 18 Q. Did you not wonder at any stage -- and we're looking now 19 at 1992 -- why it was that politicians were so keen to 20 win your support? 21 A. Politicians, let's be clear, always seek the support of 22 all newspapers and all media outlets, and I think that 23 is part of democracy. 24 Q. Yes, but with you, Mr Murdoch, it's slightly more 25 pointed than that. First of all, you own the greatest Page 58</p>	<p>1 is that fair? 2 A. Absolutely. I have no commercial interests except the 3 newspaper. I love newspapers. 4 Q. But don't you, put another way, owe some duty to your 5 shareholders, at least, to further the best interests of 6 your companies? 7 A. Well, they tell me so. They'd like me to get rid of 8 them all. 9 Q. Okay. Can we look at the rise of Tony Blair, if I can 10 put it in those terms. He was elected Labour leader 11 21 July 1994. On 9 August 1994, according to 12 Mr Mullins' book, "A Walk-On Part", I think you can take 13 it from me, you said publicly that you could imagine 14 backing Mr Blair. Do you remember saying that or at 15 least thinking that? 16 A. I don't remember it, but it's quite possible. 17 Q. Because by that stage you had lost faith with the Major 18 government, hadn't you? 19 A. Yes. We'd had many, many, many years of Tory 20 government. 21 Q. That's right. 22 A. And I think it's good for a democracy to change. 23 Q. And it was pretty obvious, as the years wore on, that 24 the Labour Party was going to win convincingly, wasn't 25 it? Page 60</p>

15 (Pages 57 to 60)

<p>1 A. I don't remember that at all.</p> <p>2 Q. Well, they won by a landslide, I think, of 164 seats on</p> <p>3 1 May 1997 --</p> <p>4 A. That only became apparent very much later. I certainly</p> <p>5 didn't -- can't say I knew that three years before.</p> <p>6 Q. No. The precise nature of the landslide, maybe not, but</p> <p>7 it was obvious to any political observer that Blair was</p> <p>8 going to win, wasn't it, long before that election?</p> <p>9 A. It might have been to you. It wasn't to me. A lot of</p> <p>10 things can happen in politics in three years.</p> <p>11 Q. I see. Do you remember a private dinner on 15 September</p> <p>12 1994, arranged by Gus Fischer who was an employee of</p> <p>13 News International, at a place called Mosimann's?</p> <p>14 A. No. I made reference to it, but I have frankly no</p> <p>15 reference -- I don't even know where Mosimann's is.</p> <p>16 Q. It's described by Mr Neil as a "fancy private restaurant</p> <p>17 club in a former Belgravia church". Does that help at</p> <p>18 all?</p> <p>19 A. No, it doesn't.</p> <p>20 Q. This is noted in Mr Neil's book. The edition I'm</p> <p>21 working from -- but I'm afraid there are two editions --</p> <p>22 it's page 209, it's tab 10. It might be a different</p> <p>23 page in your version, might be 169 in your version. Can</p> <p>24 I ask which version is that? Is that the -- okay.</p> <p>25 A. 209?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 61</p>	<p>1 Q. Well, the Labour Party policy at the 1997 election, its</p> <p>2 policy under government, was certainly not the policy</p> <p>3 that the Kinnock Labour Party had threatened to</p> <p>4 implement in 1992, was it?</p> <p>5 A. No.</p> <p>6 Q. And then reading on with Mr Neil:</p> <p>7 "... Rupert that his newspapers were not wedded to</p> <p>8 the Tories."</p> <p>9 Might you have said that?</p> <p>10 A. Oh certainly.</p> <p>11 Q. And then Mr Neil continues --</p> <p>12 A. I wasn't wedded to Labour, either.</p> <p>13 Q. No, that becomes clear:</p> <p>14 "The union issue was not resolved: Labour remains</p> <p>15 committed to giving workers the legal right to</p> <p>16 collective bargaining if over 50 per cent of any</p> <p>17 workforce votes for union recognition."</p> <p>18 That was something that you had in your mind in</p> <p>19 2004, didn't you, Labour Party policy on unions?</p> <p>20 A. Probably. It was a very large issue in this country,</p> <p>21 and how strikes could be called, whether it had to be</p> <p>22 a majority of all the workers or just the people present</p> <p>23 and so on.</p> <p>24 Q. And then according to Mr Neil's source -- of course, we</p> <p>25 don't know who that is, because I don't think Mr Neil</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 63</p>
<p>1 Q. Yes. It's the bottom of the page, 209. Sir, in your</p> <p>2 version, it might be page 169, confusingly.</p> <p>3 This is the bottom of the page:</p> <p>4 "The dinner went very well. Blair discovered Rupert</p> <p>5 was not the ogre his party had painted and Rupert found</p> <p>6 what Blair had to say a refreshing change from the usual</p> <p>7 Labour nostrums."</p> <p>8 So far so good?</p> <p>9 A. I think I've already said I don't remember the dinner,</p> <p>10 but it sounds quite like a very possible conversation.</p> <p>11 Q. "Both revelled in being self-styled radicals, impatient</p> <p>12 with the old Britain."</p> <p>13 Correct? Certainly as regards you?</p> <p>14 A. That would describe me, certainly.</p> <p>15 Q. Yes.</p> <p>16 "Blair indicated that media ownership rules would</p> <p>17 not be onerous under Labour ..."</p> <p>18 Did he say that?</p> <p>19 A. I have no memory of that.</p> <p>20 Q. But, as it happens, media ownership rules were not</p> <p>21 onerous under Labour, so it might be true, mightn't it?</p> <p>22 A. No.</p> <p>23 Q. You don't think he said that?</p> <p>24 A. Well, he might have said it, but I don't think it was</p> <p>25 true that they were always without being onerous.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 62</p>	<p>1 was at this little dinner:</p> <p>2 "Well, he certainly says all the right things,"</p> <p>3 remarked Rupert after Blair had departed. 'But we're</p> <p>4 not letting our pants down just yet.'"</p> <p>5 Might you have said that?</p> <p>6 A. I might have. I've told you, I don't know the dinner</p> <p>7 took place, but yes.</p> <p>8 Q. It's really whether it's the sort of thing you might</p> <p>9 have said.</p> <p>10 A. Yes.</p> <p>11 Q. Because there are certain things which I'm sure you</p> <p>12 wouldn't say. If I put it to you you had said</p> <p>13 something, you'd know immediately, "Well I couldn't have</p> <p>14 said that because I would never say that sort of thing".</p> <p>15 A. A little colourful but it's quite possible I said that.</p> <p>16 Q. The Hayman Island trip, which I think was in July 1995</p> <p>17 when Mr Blair flew the best part of 25 hours, I think,</p> <p>18 to speak at your conference at Hayman Island at your</p> <p>19 invitation, do you remember that, Mr Murdoch?</p> <p>20 A. Oh, very vividly.</p> <p>21 Q. I think Mr Paul Keating, who was the Australian</p> <p>22 Prime Minister, was also there, wasn't he?</p> <p>23 A. Yes. And the Leader of the Opposition from Australia,</p> <p>24 Mr Howard.</p> <p>25 Q. Yes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 64</p>

16 (Pages 61 to 64)

<p>1 A. And I think some other interesting speakers, but yes.</p> <p>2 Q. According to Alastair Campbell's Diaries -- I don't</p> <p>3 think we need turn them up -- Mr Keating said this:</p> <p>4 "You can do deals with him without ever saying</p> <p>5 a deal is done."</p> <p>6 Do you think that's a fair observation?</p> <p>7 A. No.</p> <p>8 Q. Do you understand the point that Mr Keating is making</p> <p>9 there?</p> <p>10 A. I understand what you're saying, yes, but that's not</p> <p>11 true. Mr Keating is given to very extravagant language.</p> <p>12 I thought you were going to quote something much more</p> <p>13 extravagant.</p> <p>14 Q. Well, I was, but I wasn't going to --</p> <p>15 A. I'm sorry.</p> <p>16 Q. It's the -- well, it's not necessary to quote</p> <p>17 everything. As you say, extravagant language I will</p> <p>18 edit out on this occasion. But what about this:</p> <p>19 "But the only thing he cares about is his business</p> <p>20 and the only language he respects is strength."</p> <p>21 Is that a fair insight into you?</p> <p>22 A. Certainly not.</p> <p>23 Q. And then Mr Keating also said, according to Mr Campbell,</p> <p>24 that you "like to be associated with winners". This is</p> <p>25 Mr Keating speaking:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 65</p>	<p>1 it were, would wait as long as possible to endorse the</p> <p>2 Labour Party, because that was the best way of</p> <p>3 extracting commercial advantages from them?</p> <p>4 A. Certainly not.</p> <p>5 Q. Were you tracking Labour Party policy on media issues at</p> <p>6 this point?</p> <p>7 A. I don't think so. I wasn't even in the country, but no.</p> <p>8 Q. Weren't you asking your lieutenants who were in the</p> <p>9 country to do just that, because it would be a keen</p> <p>10 commercial interest to your companies to know what</p> <p>11 Labour Party's policy on media issues was likely to be,</p> <p>12 wouldn't it?</p> <p>13 A. What could they have done?</p> <p>14 Q. Pardon me, Mr Murdoch?</p> <p>15 A. I said what could they have done? I don't think so.</p> <p>16 Q. Well, they could, if they were minded or of like mind to</p> <p>17 Mr Kinnock's Labour Party, to have invited the</p> <p>18 Monopolies and Mergers Commission, or its successor, to</p> <p>19 undertake an investigation into the issue of cross media</p> <p>20 ownership and concentration of media ownership into your</p> <p>21 companies, couldn't they?</p> <p>22 A. They're welcome.</p> <p>23 Q. It's obvious that's something you wouldn't want, would</p> <p>24 you?</p> <p>25 A. Well, it would be a diversion, but that's fine.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 67</p>
<p>1 "If he thinks you're a winner, he'd prefer to be</p> <p>2 with you than against you."</p> <p>3 That's spot on, isn't it, Mr Murdoch?</p> <p>4 A. No. I mean, I think we all like to back a winning</p> <p>5 racehorse or whatever. Yes, you like to be on the</p> <p>6 winning side, but no, that was not a motivation.</p> <p>7 Q. You gave a little speech, apparently, after Mr Blair's</p> <p>8 speech, and his speech was a roaring success, according</p> <p>9 to everyone who was there, and we've heard some evidence</p> <p>10 about it.</p> <p>11 A. Yes, he had a standing ovation from everybody there.</p> <p>12 Q. Yes. You said this, apparently:</p> <p>13 "If our flirtation is ever consummated, Tony, then</p> <p>14 I suspect we will end up making love like porcupines,</p> <p>15 very, very carefully."</p> <p>16 Did you say that?</p> <p>17 A. I might have.</p> <p>18 Q. As you point out in your witness statement, the Sun in</p> <p>19 1995 remained non-committal, didn't it?</p> <p>20 A. 1995? Yes.</p> <p>21 Q. Yes. And the endorsement only came late in the day, in</p> <p>22 March 1997, didn't it?</p> <p>23 A. I forget the dates, but I'll take your word for it,</p> <p>24 Mr Jay.</p> <p>25 Q. Was it part of your strategy, Mr Murdoch, that you, as</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 66</p>	<p>1 Q. Weren't you reassured when the 1997 Labour Manifesto did</p> <p>2 not contain any legislative proposals on media</p> <p>3 ownership, by which I mean concentration of media</p> <p>4 ownership and cross media ownership?</p> <p>5 A. I don't even remember noticing it.</p> <p>6 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Is that right, Mr Murdoch? I mean,</p> <p>7 quite apart from whoever you supported, presumably as</p> <p>8 a businessman with very substantial interests in this</p> <p>9 country, you would be very interested in what every</p> <p>10 party was saying in their manifestos that might impact</p> <p>11 upon the way in which you did business, wouldn't you?</p> <p>12 A. Yes. Yes, sir. But I wanted to make it quite clear</p> <p>13 that my commercial interests, such as they are, or</p> <p>14 whatever you want to describe them, never came into any</p> <p>15 consideration on where we stood on issues or political</p> <p>16 parties.</p> <p>17 MR JAY: Can I refer you to an extract from the</p> <p>18 Alastair Campbell Diaries, volume 1, page 634, entry for</p> <p>19 3 February 1997. It's going to be tab 2.</p> <p>20 A. Yes.</p> <p>21 Q. Eight lines down --</p> <p>22 A. Saturday, February 1? Are we on the right page,</p> <p>23 page 633?</p> <p>24 Q. 634, please, Mr Murdoch, we're 3 February.</p> <p>25 A. Yes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 68</p>

17 (Pages 65 to 68)

<p>1 Q. The sentence beginning about eight lines down "TB and 2 GB ..."; do you have that one?</p> <p>3 A. Yes.</p> <p>4 Q. "... went to see Murdoch, Les Hinton and Irwin Stelzer." 5 And Mr Campbell's footnote: "Rupert Murdoch's 6 economic guru". Was he that?</p> <p>7 A. No. He was a friend and someone I enjoyed talking to. 8 He's a fine economist.</p> <p>9 Q. Okay. 10 "TB said GB had been fine, sounded more sceptic than 11 usual on the single currency." 12 That's a reference to a speech Mr Brown had given?</p> <p>13 A. GB is Gordon Brown.</p> <p>14 Q. Of course. 15 "TB's sense was that Murdoch wanted to back us, but 16 the senior people at the Sun -- probably with Trevor 17 [Kavanagh] in the lead -- were telling him he must be 18 mad." 19 Is that correct?</p> <p>20 A. I don't remember, it's possible.</p> <p>21 Q. "TB said that he felt we got a fair crack on some 22 issues, but not on Europe. Murdoch said he hated the 23 idea of the single currency, full stop." 24 Might you have said that?</p> <p>25 A. Most certainly. I had arguments for ten years with Page 69</p>	<p>1 I think you should call him.</p> <p>2 Q. I don't think that was my question, Mr Murdoch. It was 3 a more subtle question, that --</p> <p>4 A. Indeed it was.</p> <p>5 Q. That the interchange between the sophisticated 6 politician and the sophisticated newspaper proprietor 7 would not be a hard-nosed commercial negotiation, how 8 much to pay for something. It would be at a far higher 9 and more subtle level. It would be each trying to work 10 out how much to give and how much to press for. Do you 11 follow me?</p> <p>12 A. I'm afraid I don't have much subtlety about me.</p> <p>13 Q. Don't you, Mr Murdoch?</p> <p>14 A. No.</p> <p>15 Q. Okay. But did you at least sense that this sort of 16 encounter with Mr Blair and Mr Brown, so they were the 17 two most powerful people in the then Labour Opposition 18 just before a General Election -- that they were very 19 anxious to sound you out and see what your thinking was? 20 Didn't you at least sense that?</p> <p>21 A. No, I think they probably wanted to convince me that 22 they were the right people to be leading Britain, and 23 I'm sure they were doing that to every other press 24 proprietor.</p> <p>25 Q. So you didn't feel that they were sizing you up, trying Page 71</p>
<p>1 Mr Blair about the subject.</p> <p>2 Q. "But by and large TB felt it went okay. They agreed to 3 differ on a few things, but his sense was Murdoch was 4 reassured on the economy, tax, et cetera, and had lost 5 any kind of respect for Major and the Tories." 6 That's certainly true, isn't it?</p> <p>7 A. Yes.</p> <p>8 Q. "TB didn't like having to deal with them. He knew they 9 were very right wing and only even thinking of backing 10 us because they wanted to back winners and be in 11 a better position to deal with us if we did win. But he 12 felt there was something unpleasant about newspaper 13 power and influence." 14 I'm not going to ask you to comment on Mr Blair's 15 state of mind, as it were, because that wouldn't be 16 fair, but didn't you sense in these discussions you were 17 having with senior politicians before a General Election 18 that a sort of form of pirouette or negotiation was 19 occurring and they wanted to know how far they had to 20 go --</p> <p>21 A. You're making sinister inferences.</p> <p>22 Q. It's not sinister.</p> <p>23 A. I want to say, Mr Jay, that I, in ten years of his 24 power, never asked Mr Blair for anything. Nor indeed 25 did I receive any favours. If you want to check that, Page 70</p>	<p>1 to work out what you were thinking, what was necessary, 2 from their perspective, they had to do to win your 3 support?</p> <p>4 A. No. I think you must ask them that.</p> <p>5 Q. Okay. Mr Campbell's diary entry for 10 March 1997, 6 page 664. This is a short one, so you probably don't 7 need to turn it up.</p> <p>8 A. Page 664?</p> <p>9 Q. 664.</p> <p>10 A. Oh.</p> <p>11 Q. Let me just read it to you. It's probably not necessary 12 to look at it, but you can, of course, if you wish to.</p> <p>13 A. I'm sorry. Yes.</p> <p>14 Q. "[TB] spoke to Irwin Stelzer later who said Murdoch was 15 moving towards supporting us again. For commercial 16 reasons, they would probably make clear who they were 17 backing at the start of the campaign." 18 Might you have had that discussion with Mr Stelzer?</p> <p>19 A. No. If he said that, he certainly had no right to.</p> <p>20 Q. Isn't that the sort of thing that you did discuss with 21 Mr Stelzer?</p> <p>22 A. No. I want to say -- I don't know how many times I have 23 to state to you, Mr Jay, that I never talk commercial 24 considerations.</p> <p>25 Q. So Mr Stelzer's got completely the wrong end of the Page 72</p>

18 (Pages 69 to 72)

<p>1 stick then, hasn't he?</p> <p>2 A. Yes. Well --</p> <p>3 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: No, he's not actually -- with</p> <p>4 respect, Mr Murdoch, if one reads it carefully, he's not</p> <p>5 suggesting quite that. What he's saying is that</p> <p>6 Mr Stelzer was, as it were, providing feedback, which</p> <p>7 sounds as though it's accurate, that you were moving</p> <p>8 towards supporting the Labour Party, and then he's</p> <p>9 making a slightly separate point, that actually they'd</p> <p>10 only make clear who they were backing at the start of</p> <p>11 the campaign. And that might be for commercial reasons</p> <p>12 connected with wanting to sell copies of your newspaper,</p> <p>13 neither more nor less.</p> <p>14 A. That's possible. I thought Mr Jay was putting more</p> <p>15 sinister motives on it.</p> <p>16 MR JAY: I'm not sure I was seeking to put a sinister</p> <p>17 motive. I think one possible interpretation might be</p> <p>18 the commercial reasons are to do with the long-term</p> <p>19 interests of your companies in the face of what</p> <p>20 government policy might be on media ownership. Do you</p> <p>21 see the point?</p> <p>22 A. Could you repeat that one?</p> <p>23 Q. The commercial reasons are a reference to what</p> <p>24 government, future government policy might be on topics</p> <p>25 such as media ownership, which would affect the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 73</p>	<p>1 "He [that's you] saw no reason to delay his</p> <p>2 endorsement for Labour any longer, especially since all</p> <p>3 the polls made Blair overwhelming favourite to be the</p> <p>4 next Prime Minister anyway."</p> <p>5 And then the following day we have the endorsement.</p> <p>6 That endorsement was your decision, wasn't it,</p> <p>7 Mr Murdoch?</p> <p>8 A. Well, it certainly would have been with my approval.</p> <p>9 Q. Some would say, looking at this, you had extracted</p> <p>10 really as much as you could from Mr Blair in terms of</p> <p>11 policy promises. He'd gone a considerable distance in</p> <p>12 your direction. You assessed he'd gone as far as he was</p> <p>13 ever going to go, so you endorsed him. That is right,</p> <p>14 isn't it?</p> <p>15 A. I think so. I don't think it all followed in this way</p> <p>16 so logically, but yes.</p> <p>17 Q. Mr Neil's assessment -- it's right that I put this to</p> <p>18 you because it confirms something you said. He adds an</p> <p>19 additional point, xxv, he says:</p> <p>20 "I do not believe that there was an explicit deal</p> <p>21 between Murdoch and Blair in which the Sun gave its</p> <p>22 support in return for promises that a Labour government</p> <p>23 would leave Rupert's British media empire alone."</p> <p>24 So you presumably would strongly agree with that,</p> <p>25 Mr Murdoch?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 75</p>
<p>1 commercial interests of News International, wouldn't it?</p> <p>2 A. Yes.</p> <p>3 Q. In the run-up to the endorsement, the endorsement of the</p> <p>4 Sun of Labour was on 18 March 1997. This is</p> <p>5 Mr Neil's --</p> <p>6 A. Oh, we're still on page 664?</p> <p>7 Q. No.</p> <p>8 A. Oh, a different book?</p> <p>9 Q. We're on Mr Neil's full disclosure, tab 10. It's the</p> <p>10 1997 edition preface, which is xxiv.</p> <p>11 A. Yes.</p> <p>12 Q. If you look five lines down from the top of xxiv, he</p> <p>13 says this, and this relates to what happened on 17 March</p> <p>14 1997 --</p> <p>15 A. This is Mr Neil?</p> <p>16 Q. Yes.</p> <p>17 "Blair went the final mile for Rupert in an article</p> <p>18 for the Sun right at the start of the election campaign.</p> <p>19 He flew the Union flag and wrote in highly Eurosceptical</p> <p>20 tones. Rupert was delighted."</p> <p>21 Were you delighted?</p> <p>22 A. I don't remember, but I would have been. "He flew the</p> <p>23 Union flag and wrote in highly Eurosceptical tones",</p> <p>24 yes.</p> <p>25 Q. And then:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 74</p>	<p>1 A. Absolutely.</p> <p>2 Q. But then he says:</p> <p>3 "But there was an implicit understanding, never</p> <p>4 openly talked about between the two men, but an</p> <p>5 understanding nevertheless."</p> <p>6 Do you have a comment on that?</p> <p>7 A. That's not true. I think that he -- if it was true, he</p> <p>8 certainly didn't keep to it, because he appointed Ofcom</p> <p>9 with wide powers to interfere with us in every way.</p> <p>10 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I think we'll have another five</p> <p>11 minutes.</p> <p>12 (12.16 pm)</p> <p>13 (A short break)</p> <p>14 (12.25 pm)</p> <p>15 MR JAY: Mr Murdoch, I've been asked by a core participant</p> <p>16 to put to you a short and straightforward point in</p> <p>17 relation to a piece Mr Blair wrote in the Times on</p> <p>18 31 March 1997, which was one month and one day before</p> <p>19 the election. Are you with me chronologically?</p> <p>20 A. Yes.</p> <p>21 Q. He said this, and indeed I remember it quite clearly:</p> <p>22 "Let me state the position clearly so that no one is</p> <p>23 in any doubt. The essential elements of the trade union</p> <p>24 legislation of the 1980s will remain."</p> <p>25 So he is saying that he's not going to dismantle the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 76</p>

19 (Pages 73 to 76)

<p>1 Thatcher reforms, are you with me?</p> <p>2 A. Yes.</p> <p>3 Q. And he also said:</p> <p>4 "The changes that we do propose would leave British</p> <p>5 law the most restrictive on trade unions in the western</p> <p>6 world."</p> <p>7 So this must have been music to your ears, mustn't</p> <p>8 it?</p> <p>9 A. I don't think I read it, but yes.</p> <p>10 Q. According to what you've disclosed of your meetings with</p> <p>11 Leaders of the Opposition, there was dinner with</p> <p>12 Mr Blair that very evening, 31 March 1997. Do you think</p> <p>13 you discussed that article and congratulated him for it?</p> <p>14 A. I doubt it. But it's possible.</p> <p>15 Q. Labour Party win the election 1 May 1997. Can we move</p> <p>16 forward to March 1998 and a piece which appeared in</p> <p>17 La Stampa on 24 March. They claimed that the Italian</p> <p>18 Prime Minister, who was then Romano Prodi, had taken</p> <p>19 a call from Mr Blair in which they discussed your</p> <p>20 multimillion pound offer for Mediaset, which was one of</p> <p>21 Berlusconi's companies.</p> <p>22 A. Multi-billion.</p> <p>23 Q. Did I say million?</p> <p>24 A. Billion.</p> <p>25 Q. And Mr Prodi allegedly told Mr Blair that he preferred</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 77</p>	<p>1 Mr Campbell, said that he would think about it, but in</p> <p>2 the end the phone call came from Prodi to Mr Blair,</p> <p>3 rather than the other way round. That's page 331 of</p> <p>4 Mr Campbell's diaries.</p> <p>5 A. I wasn't privy to --</p> <p>6 Q. But you can't comment on that?</p> <p>7 A. -- any of that.</p> <p>8 Q. May I ask you, Mr Murdoch, to deal with another piece of</p> <p>9 evidence the Inquiry received from Lord Patten, which</p> <p>10 was along the lines that he, Lord Patten, was writing</p> <p>11 a book about Hong Kong, because, of course, he was the</p> <p>12 last governor of Hong Kong, and HarperCollins, one of</p> <p>13 your companies, is the publisher. Do you remember that?</p> <p>14 A. Yes, I do indeed.</p> <p>15 Q. According to Lord Patten, you learned that HarperCollins</p> <p>16 were going to publish the book. This coincided with his</p> <p>17 always doomed attempts to extend his empire into China</p> <p>18 and effectively you pulled the book. Is that right?</p> <p>19 A. Half right.</p> <p>20 Q. Which bit is right and which is wrong?</p> <p>21 A. I did not have any influence or interest in China, not</p> <p>22 for lack of wanting or trying, but I had always taken</p> <p>23 the view that Mr Patten was a bad governor of Hong Kong</p> <p>24 and had raised very false expectations and when I first</p> <p>25 heard of this book, I said, "I hope we don't do it", and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 79</p>
<p>1 an Italian bidder. Can we try and examine what truth,</p> <p>2 if any, there is behind that story? Did you speak to</p> <p>3 Mr Blair on 17 March 1998 and ask him to speak to</p> <p>4 Mr Prodi to say that he shouldn't interfere?</p> <p>5 A. No. I may have spoken to him. I had my own access to</p> <p>6 Mr Prodi. I had been with him already and talked about</p> <p>7 it, but Mr Berlusconi had not only offered -- come to me</p> <p>8 with his company, he wanted to get rid of it, and we'd</p> <p>9 had negotiations, and I asked him what was his view, and</p> <p>10 he said, "Well, I wish there was an Italian bidder,</p> <p>11 I would have preferred that", but it was a friendly</p> <p>12 conversation. I don't say he agreed to anything. But</p> <p>13 I knew him slightly and I had my own access. I didn't</p> <p>14 need Mr Blair to be calling him. I may well have spoken</p> <p>15 to Mr Blair separately and said, "How do you think</p> <p>16 a British industry is going to get on in a country like</p> <p>17 Italy?"</p> <p>18 Q. But it stopped there? You didn't ask Mr Blair to phone</p> <p>19 Mr Prodi up?</p> <p>20 A. No.</p> <p>21 Q. You couldn't have said anything which gave Mr Blair that</p> <p>22 impression, that you wanted him to intervene on your</p> <p>23 behalf?</p> <p>24 A. No, I never asked Mr Blair for any favours.</p> <p>25 Q. To be fair, what happened is that Mr Blair, according to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 78</p>	<p>1 when I heard that it was about to hit the streets, or</p> <p>2 very close, I did step in and say, "Don't do it", which</p> <p>3 I wish to say now was one more mistake of mine. It was</p> <p>4 clearly wrong.</p> <p>5 Q. Weren't you hoping to acquire commercial interest in</p> <p>6 China at that point?</p> <p>7 A. No. Well, it's a huge market, we're always looking for</p> <p>8 opportunities there, but it's just too difficult.</p> <p>9 Q. But in December 2001, you were given permission by the</p> <p>10 Chinese authorities to launch a Cable TV channel in</p> <p>11 China, weren't you?</p> <p>12 A. There were endless negotiations and we finally got</p> <p>13 permission to do this, which turned out to be a Mandarin</p> <p>14 channel in a small Cantonese-speaking section of China.</p> <p>15 Not so small, but it was Cantonese.</p> <p>16 Q. From that foothold, you've done quite well in China,</p> <p>17 haven't you now? From that small foothold, you've</p> <p>18 advanced your commercial interests in China --</p> <p>19 A. No.</p> <p>20 Q. Okay.</p> <p>21 A. We have thrown whatever we had there, which was losing</p> <p>22 money, I mean a million or two, into a joint venture,</p> <p>23 which we're in the minority with Shanghai Media. That's</p> <p>24 about a year or two old.</p> <p>25 Q. I move forward to the 2001 election here. According to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 80</p>

20 (Pages 77 to 80)

<p>1 Mr Campbell's diaries, volume 3, page 439 --</p> <p>2 A. I'm sorry, what year?</p> <p>3 Q. This is a conversation or rather a diary entry for</p> <p>4 30 October 2000, volume 3, page 439.</p> <p>5 A. Yes.</p> <p>6 Q. The entry reads, at the bottom of the page, very bottom</p> <p>7 of the page:</p> <p>8 "TB saw Murdoch and Irwin Stelzer [Mr Campbell is</p> <p>9 glossing that] [Murdoch adviser]. He had asked them</p> <p>10 outright whether they were going to back us. Murdoch</p> <p>11 said the Tories were unelectable and that was that."</p> <p>12 Is this a faithful account of what happened,</p> <p>13 Mr Murdoch?</p> <p>14 A. I have no memory of it at all. I'm sorry, I can't help</p> <p>15 you.</p> <p>16 Q. Might you have said that the Tories were unelectable?</p> <p>17 A. No, I don't think so. I don't think they were.</p> <p>18 Q. By saying "unelectable", you meant they were bound to</p> <p>19 lose, I think, which is --</p> <p>20 A. If I said that -- you keep putting words into my mouth,</p> <p>21 Mr Jay.</p> <p>22 Q. I hope I don't and it's only what Mr Campbell here is</p> <p>23 reporting you.</p> <p>24 A. Yes but you're putting other words and I've told you</p> <p>25 I have no memory of any such conversation. I'm not</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 81</p>	<p>1 A. Yes, it was a purely intellectual point of view.</p> <p>2 Q. The March 2003 Gulf War, all 175 papers around the world</p> <p>3 which you owned backed the war, didn't they?</p> <p>4 A. I don't own 475 --</p> <p>5 Q. 175.</p> <p>6 A. Well, it would include a lot of little suburban papers,</p> <p>7 free sheets and things, which wouldn't have had a view,</p> <p>8 but yes, we did support the war, as did most papers,</p> <p>9 including even the New York Times.</p> <p>10 Q. Some years after the event, it was discovered that there</p> <p>11 were three telephone calls between you and Mr Blair in</p> <p>12 March 2003 where the issue of the Gulf War must have</p> <p>13 been discussed. Do you follow me, Mr Murdoch?</p> <p>14 A. Well, it must have been on his mind at that time, it was</p> <p>15 such a big issue. I don't remember the calls. The 11th</p> <p>16 might even have been calling me for my birthday, but no,</p> <p>17 our position on the war had been declared very strongly</p> <p>18 in all our newspapers and the Sun well before that date.</p> <p>19 Q. To be clear, Mr Murdoch, the discussion --</p> <p>20 A. So he wouldn't have been calling me for support.</p> <p>21 Q. The discussion could not have been about whether you</p> <p>22 were going to support him, because, as you rightly say,</p> <p>23 that support had already been given, so the discussion</p> <p>24 must have been about something else.</p> <p>25 A. Well, I don't think we can just personalise it to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 83</p>
<p>1 saying it's wrong, it just might be a wrong</p> <p>2 interpretation of what was said.</p> <p>3 Q. Okay. It may be that Mr Blair had got to know you quite</p> <p>4 well by now and did feel able to ask you outright</p> <p>5 whether you were going to back him. Do you see that?</p> <p>6 A. I can't believe he was so direct as that. I met</p> <p>7 Mr Blair, if you look at the record, an average of two,</p> <p>8 maybe three times sometimes in a whole year. It's not</p> <p>9 as though, you know, there was a constant approach or</p> <p>10 daily text messages, as happened with some newspapers.</p> <p>11 We had no such relationship. They were usually taken up</p> <p>12 by -- I remember an afternoon at Chequers where we spent</p> <p>13 the whole afternoon debating the euro. I remember what</p> <p>14 was said. And he didn't agree with me. I'm glad to see</p> <p>15 that I've turned out right, but that's another matter.</p> <p>16 Q. To be fair to you, Mr Murdoch, your great concern was</p> <p>17 that the United Kingdom might enter the euro. That is</p> <p>18 right, isn't it?</p> <p>19 A. My feeling about it, if you want to debate the euro, was</p> <p>20 that it was a great abdication of power over our own</p> <p>21 affairs.</p> <p>22 Q. I'm not sure I do want to debate the euro, but what I do</p> <p>23 want just to establish, out of fairness to you, is that</p> <p>24 that was your concern, wasn't it: the United Kingdom</p> <p>25 might enter the euro?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 82</p>	<p>1 Mr Blair, but to the war.</p> <p>2 Q. Mr Rawnsley's version, in a book called "The End of the</p> <p>3 Party", page 160, was that you --</p> <p>4 A. Who is he?</p> <p>5 Q. He's a political commentator. In a sense, it doesn't</p> <p>6 matter really what he says, it's really whether you</p> <p>7 agree with this point, that you and Mr Blair were</p> <p>8 devising the best strategy for attacking</p> <p>9 President Chirac. Do you think that's what was</p> <p>10 discussed during these calls?</p> <p>11 A. I doubt it very much.</p> <p>12 Q. Why, Mr Murdoch?</p> <p>13 A. Hm?</p> <p>14 Q. Why?</p> <p>15 A. I don't think Mr Blair would come to me for advice on</p> <p>16 a matter like that.</p> <p>17 Q. But why not? Because you had the Sun --</p> <p>18 A. Well, why would he? I mean he's surely above talking to</p> <p>19 a press proprietor about his foreign relations with</p> <p>20 France. It was well-known that the Sun was pretty rude</p> <p>21 about the French from time to time.</p> <p>22 Q. Mm. Well, the articles in the Sun about this time</p> <p>23 describe President Chirac as "Le French worm and a cheap</p> <p>24 tart who puts price before principle". Did that have</p> <p>25 anything to do with you?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 84</p>

21 (Pages 81 to 84)

<p>1 A. No.</p> <p>2 Q. The 2005 election, Mr Murdoch. This is the last of</p> <p>3 Blair's victories.</p> <p>4 Did you make it a condition of support for the</p> <p>5 Labour Party that the government hold a referendum on</p> <p>6 the new EU Constitution?</p> <p>7 A. No, we didn't make any conditions, but we certainly</p> <p>8 expressed the opinion strongly that the EU Constitution</p> <p>9 should be put to the people. And I don't think we were</p> <p>10 alone in that. As it happened, didn't have to be,</p> <p>11 because it depended on unanimity between all the</p> <p>12 countries and other countries, at least one, had voted</p> <p>13 against it, so it was pointless to have a referendum.</p> <p>14 Q. Yes. In the end, as you rightly say, there wasn't</p> <p>15 a referendum for the reasons you've given, but what's</p> <p>16 said in another book by a Mr Richards this time is that</p> <p>17 Mr Blair held regular talks with Irwin Stelzer,</p> <p>18 including talks on that issue, and Mr Stelzer would have</p> <p>19 been communicating your views. Is that right or not?</p> <p>20 A. No. Mr Stelzer is a distinguished economist. He had</p> <p>21 his own views.</p> <p>22 Q. But in no sense was he communicating your views then to</p> <p>23 the Prime Minister, is that --</p> <p>24 A. No.</p> <p>25 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Well, you don't know whether he was</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 85</p>	<p>1 Q. According to Mr Blair's biography, "A Journey",</p> <p>2 page 655, it's just a couple of sentences, I do not</p> <p>3 think it's necessary to turn it up, Mr Blair's view is:</p> <p>4 "There was no contest for the leadership. John Reid</p> <p>5 could have stood, but the Murdoch papers, I fear at</p> <p>6 Rupert's instigation, just wrote him off."</p> <p>7 Do you remember doing that?</p> <p>8 A. No, that's quite untrue. I had met Mr Reid a couple of</p> <p>9 times and I liked him and admired him.</p> <p>10 Q. But you didn't write him off?</p> <p>11 A. I didn't know that he was a contender for the job. Or</p> <p>12 possible contender.</p> <p>13 Q. Okay. Your relations with Mr Brown until 30 September</p> <p>14 2009, which was when the Sun, as it were, dropped him</p> <p>15 and supported the Conservatives, were quite warm,</p> <p>16 weren't they?</p> <p>17 A. My personal relationship with Mr Brown --</p> <p>18 Q. Yes.</p> <p>19 A. -- was always warm, both before he became Prime Minister</p> <p>20 and after, and I regret that, after the Sun came out on</p> <p>21 him, that's not so true, although I only hope that that</p> <p>22 can be repaired.</p> <p>23 Q. There may have been a number of reasons why your</p> <p>24 personal relations were good, but one obvious one,</p> <p>25 perhaps, was your common Presbyterian upbringing; is</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 87</p>
<p>1 or he wasn't.</p> <p>2 A. He may have been. I don't know.</p> <p>3 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: That's the point.</p> <p>4 A. It would have been a coincidence.</p> <p>5 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: But it would be something that you</p> <p>6 would talk to him about?</p> <p>7 A. If I was seeing a lot of him.</p> <p>8 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: That's the point. You've already</p> <p>9 spoken very, very highly of him, and therefore it's the</p> <p>10 sort of thing you might very well discuss with him?</p> <p>11 A. Yes. Yes, sir.</p> <p>12 MR JAY: Thank you.</p> <p>13 A. My only point in answering Mr Jay was that he was not</p> <p>14 there to carry a message from me.</p> <p>15 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: (Nods head). I understand.</p> <p>16 MR JAY: I'm sure Dr Irwin Stelzer with all his intellectual</p> <p>17 abilities would have his own ideas on this and every</p> <p>18 other topic, but in one sense he would know your</p> <p>19 thinking and he would be able to discuss that with</p> <p>20 Mr Blair, wouldn't he?</p> <p>21 A. Probably, yes. He was actually closer to Mr Andrew Neil</p> <p>22 than he was to me.</p> <p>23 Q. Okay. Mr Blair leaves in 2007. Did you have a view as</p> <p>24 to who should succeed him?</p> <p>25 A. I thought the matter was settled.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 86</p>	<p>1 that right?</p> <p>2 A. Yes.</p> <p>3 Q. Can we see if we can possibly explode one of the myths</p> <p>4 you've mentioned? We know that you stayed at Chequers</p> <p>5 the weekend of 6 and 7 October 2007, or were at least</p> <p>6 there on one of those days. Do you remember that?</p> <p>7 A. Was that the pyjama party weekend?</p> <p>8 Q. No. We're coming to that. That's 14 June 2008,</p> <p>9 Mr Murdoch. No, this is --</p> <p>10 A. I do remember being once, at least, but I think only</p> <p>11 once, at Chequers as the guest of Mr and Mrs Brown, and</p> <p>12 there were certainly other people there, because</p> <p>13 I remember -- the outstanding thing in my memory was it</p> <p>14 was the first time I met JK Rowling, who was a close</p> <p>15 friend of -- at least of Mrs Brown.</p> <p>16 Q. Did you have any discussions with Mr Brown about whether</p> <p>17 there should be a snap election?</p> <p>18 A. No.</p> <p>19 Q. Were you aware of the --</p> <p>20 A. Let me say I don't remember any and I'm sure he didn't</p> <p>21 ask me. No.</p> <p>22 Q. There is evidence somewhere, I think in Mr Rawnsley's --</p> <p>23 A. No, if any politician wanted my opinions on major</p> <p>24 matters, they only had to read the editorials in the</p> <p>25 Sun.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 88</p>

22 (Pages 85 to 88)

1 Q. Mr Rawnsley, page 507, says that the decision to call
 2 off the snap election was taken before 6 October. If
 3 he's right, you couldn't have discussed it with
 4 Mr Brown, but maybe we can't really --
 5 **A. So who says I did?**
 6 Q. Others have suggested it, but we've heard your evidence
 7 on the topic, Mr Murdoch. I'm not going to press that
 8 any further, if you forgive me.
 9 Can I move forward with Mr Brown. June 2008, if we
 10 can take just one month, the documents demonstrate that
 11 you had dinner with Mr Brown on 6 June and your
 12 respective wives were present. Would you accept that?
 13 **A. Yes.**
 14 Q. 14 June was the famous slumber party, where I don't
 15 believe you were present.
 16 **A. I think they were just a bunch of women complaining**
 17 **about their husbands, probably.**
 18 Q. 15 June, you were Mr Brown's guest at a Downing Street
 19 dinner for President Bush, do you remember that?
 20 **A. Yes. That was a large party. I mean, there was --**
 21 Q. Yes, There'd be about 30 or 40 people there, wouldn't
 22 there?
 23 **A. Yes, I'm sure there were other people there from the**
 24 **press.**
 25 Q. And then on 16 June, Mr Brown attends your annual summer
 Page 89

1 party?
 2 **A. Yes. I think so. Most people did.**
 3 Q. Were you involved in any way in the timing of the
 4 decision to support the Conservative party on
 5 30 September 1989 [sic]?
 6 **A. No, I was not consulted as the exact timing. We**
 7 **certainly had had talks over a period -- my son James**
 8 **and Mrs Brooks and no doubt others -- that we felt this**
 9 **government was making a lot of mistakes and that we'd**
 10 **had a long period of Labour rule and it was time for**
 11 **a change.**
 12 Q. And you, along with many others, were working out that
 13 Mr Brown was likely to lose the next election?
 14 **A. No. I didn't know.**
 15 Q. Mr Murdoch, one can't know, because unless one can read
 16 the future, there are uncertainties --
 17 **A. I thought you were asking me to --**
 18 Q. But your best guess, Mr Murdoch, along with many others,
 19 best-informed guess, was that Mr Brown was going to
 20 lose, wasn't he?
 21 **A. The election was a long way away. I had no idea. You**
 22 **know, as many people have said, a week is a long time in**
 23 **politics.**
 24 Q. That was Mr Howard Wilson, I think, who originally said
 25 that. May I just deal with one piece of evidence the
 Page 90

1 Inquiry received from Mr MacKenzie. Mr MacKenzie told
 2 us that Mr Brown spoke to you on the phone, this was on
 3 or shortly after 30 September 2009 and he, Mr Brown, is
 4 said to have roared at you for 20 minutes. Is that true
 5 or not?
 6 **A. I am afraid that -- I'm very happy to tell you about the**
 7 **conversation, but Mr MacKenzie, who I might have talked**
 8 **to about it over dinner, I occasionally see him -- that**
 9 **was a very colourful exaggeration. Mr Brown did call me**
 10 **and said, "Rupert, do you know what's going on here?"**
 11 **And I said, "What do you mean?" He said, "Well ..." the**
 12 **Sun and what it's doing and how it came out, and I said,**
 13 **"I'm not aware of the -- I was not warned of the exact**
 14 **timing, I'm not aware of what they're saying, I'm**
 15 **a long, long way away, but I'm sorry to tell you,**
 16 **Gordon, we have come to the conclusion that we will**
 17 **support a change of government when and if there's an**
 18 **election." Not "if", but "when there's an election".**
 19 **And he said -- and I must stress no voices were raised,**
 20 **we were talking more quietly than you and I are now --**
 21 **he said, "Well, your company has declared war on my**
 22 **government and we have no alternative but to make war on**
 23 **your company." And I said, "I'm sorry about that,**
 24 **Gordon, thank you for calling", end of subject.**
 25 Q. How could Mr Brown have declared war on your company?
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1 **A. I don't know. I don't think he was in a very balanced**
 2 **state of mind. He, frankly -- he could have -- I don't**
 3 **know -- set up more commissions. God knows there's**
 4 **plenty of quangos and commissions around us now. So**
 5 **that was it.**
 6 He later, when the hacker scandal broke, made
 7 a totally outrageous statement, which he had to know was
 8 wrong, when he called us a "criminal organisation", and
 9 because he said that we had hacked into his personal
 10 medical records when he knew very well how the Sun had
 11 found out about his son, the condition of his son, which
 12 was very sad. A father from the hospital in a similar
 13 position had called us, told us and said, "Shouldn't we
 14 get some charity or research on this?", and so on, and
 15 Mrs Brooks immediately snatched it from the news list
 16 and said, "Let me handle this", and she called Mrs Brown
 17 and said, "Look, this is going to be out, we should be
 18 careful, how would you like it handled?" And I don't
 19 know if it was one or several days later, we published
 20 the story, and four or five days later, Mr Brown wrote
 21 a personal letter to Mrs Brooks thanking her for her
 22 sensitivity and the way she handled the story.
 23 **I believe that letter is in the hands of the police.**
 24 Q. So, Mr Murdoch, you had no knowledge of and involvement
 25 in the events you've just described. You, presumably,
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1 are communicating to us what Mrs Brooks has told you; is
 2 that correct?
 3 **A. On her handling of the story, and indeed I've since**
 4 **had -- some time ago -- personal contact with Mrs Brown,**
 5 **which was very friendly, and, yes, that part of the**
 6 **story -- and I'm sure there's plenty of evidence that**
 7 **she took it out of the news list and said, "Let me**
 8 **handle that", other people would have been present, and**
 9 **there would be people in the newsroom that would have**
 10 **known, that would have received the call from the**
 11 **hospital. I haven't seen the letter.**
 12 Q. Okay.
 13 **A. But I have no doubt you'll have a chance to do that.**
 14 Q. May I go back --
 15 **A. Well, we're jumping several years.**
 16 Q. It's fine, Mr Murdoch, but can I just go back to this
 17 declaration of war? Could it be said that the way
 18 Mr Brown might have carried out his threat -- perhaps
 19 the way you interpreted it -- was that as and when you
 20 would bid for the remaining publicly owned shares in
 21 BSKyB, Mr Brown might place obstacles in your way?
 22 **A. No, we never thought about it. We had taken advice on**
 23 **that. It's something that goes on, I guess, every day,**
 24 **if not every week. Somewhere in the markets of the**
 25 **world, controlling shareholders buy in the outside**

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1 **shareholders. It's not a matter for regulation in most**
 2 **countries or any country that I'm aware of. It was**
 3 **turned into a political issue in this country by our**
 4 **newspaper enemies -- or I shouldn't say "enemies".**
 5 **Competitors. But it is possible, of course, for the**
 6 **Minister for Culture to step in, I presume, and refer**
 7 **any market move to Ofcom or the Competition Commission**
 8 **or whatever. But we'd never thought of that.**
 9 Q. Mm.
 10 **A. I mean, we thought -- to be quite honest with you --**
 11 **that we'd be held up for a couple of months in Europe**
 12 **and there was just nothing here; and, in fact, we were**
 13 **waved through in Europe in two weeks.**
 14 Q. Can I just understand the chronology, Mr Murdoch, that
 15 by 30 September 2009, had there been keen internal
 16 consideration within News Corp regarding the acquisition
 17 of the remaining shares in BSKyB?
 18 **A. Oh, well, there had certainly been a desire there for**
 19 **a long time. I remember when Mr Carey returned to the**
 20 **company after many years away, the first thing he said**
 21 **to me was, "We should clean up this situation at Sky" --**
 22 **or BSKyB. It was a -- you know, we started this company**
 23 **and it was a longstanding ambition. With hindsight,**
 24 **I regret that I ever agreed to an IPO, although I admit**
 25 **that they were different times and there were probably**

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1 **monetary pressures which encouraged it.**
 2 Q. I just wonder though, Mr Murdoch, whether it entered
 3 into your thinking that Mr Brown had said, "We're going
 4 to declare war on your company", that you interpreted
 5 that as being, at the very least, the possibility of
 6 obstacles being placed in the way of your bid for the
 7 remaining shares in BSKyB?
 8 **A. No, that never occurred to me.**
 9 Q. Didn't it?
 10 **A. No.**
 11 MR JAY: Sir, would that be --
 12 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Yes, certainly.
 13 MR JAY: May I say --
 14 **A. Certainly not.**
 15 MR JAY: I'll say what I had in mind for the rest of --
 16 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Yes.
 17 No, I think Mr Jay was just suggesting we should
 18 break. Nothing more.
 19 **A. Well, I hope we can get through today.**
 20 MR JAY: Mr Murdoch, I'm concerned about the length of --
 21 **A. It's up to you.**
 22 MR JAY: I'm concerned overall about the length of this
 23 evidence and, if we plough through the afternoon, how
 24 cogent my questions will be and your answers might be.
 25 I know how much I have left. My preference would be to

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1 go just for about 45 minutes in the afternoon and then
 2 complete in about two or three hours in the morning.
 3 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Can I suggest that during the course
 4 of the next hour you have a word with those who are
 5 advising Mr Murdoch and he can have a word with them as
 6 well. I'm conscious that I do not want to put excessive
 7 pressure on you and I don't want to put excessive
 8 pressure on Mr Murdoch either.
 9 **A. Thank you, sir.**
 10 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: All right. You can return to that at
 11 2 o'clock. Thank you very much.
 12 (12.59 pm)
 13 (The luncheon adjournment)
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