

<p>1 2 (2.15 pm) 3 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Yes, Mr Jay. 4 MR JAY: The next witnesses I'm calling jointly are Mr Bell 5 and Mr Johnson. 6 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Yes. 7 MR MATTHEW BELL and MR CHRISTOPHER JOHNSON (sworn) 8 Questions by MR JAY 9 MR JAY: May I invite you, please, to sit down and make 10 yourselves comfortable. If I could ask each of you to 11 provide us with your full names. 12 MR JOHNSON: I'm Chris Johnson and I'm treasurer of the 13 National Association of Press Agencies and editor of 14 Mercury Press agency in Liverpool. 15 Q. Thank you very much. 16 MR BELL: I'm Matthew Bell. I'm the chairman of National 17 Association of Press Agencies and I'm also the director 18 and co-owner of Ferrari Press Agency. 19 Q. Thank you. Now, you have -- 20 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Thank you both very much for 21 providing this material, which provides a different 22 perspective to the perspective I had previously been 23 considering. I'm grateful to you. 24 MR JAY: Just identify, please, the submissions and 25 statements that you've provided to the Inquiry. There's</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 1</p>	<p>1 mean 60 press agencies or companies; is that right? 2 MR JOHNSON: Correct. 3 Q. They cover, is this right, the whole of the United 4 Kingdom? 5 MR JOHNSON: Indeed, and some in Europe and the USA. 6 Q. May I ask you, please, about the code of conduct, which 7 you refer to, which is modelled on and embodies the PCC 8 code. Does it differ in any way from the PCC code? 9 MR JOHNSON: Essentially no, it merely elaborates some 10 elements of the code in respect to the way they apply to 11 agencies, which give some detail about the services that 12 we offer and the way that we can represent more than one 13 newspaper at a time. 14 Q. Thank you. In terms of the aims and objects of NAPA, 15 you tell us it's a self-help body, that it's 16 administered on a largely voluntary basis by its own 17 members, its objectives are to further the interests of 18 its members, to facilitate their operations and to 19 assist them in maintaining professional standards of 20 conduct. Can I ask you, please, about the next 21 sentence, that: 22 "Amongst other functions, NAPA acts as a gatekeeper 23 for the UK Press Cards Authority." 24 Would you like to elaborate on that a little bit for 25 us, please?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 3</p>
<p>1 a document first of all entitled "National Association 2 of Press Agencies' submission to the Leveson Inquiry", 3 which bears the number 52729. Is that a document which 4 each of you has had a hand in preparing? 5 MR JOHNSON: It is, yes. 6 Q. Although it's not signed and there's no statement of 7 truth at the end, is this your evidence to the enquiry 8 and do you stand by it? 9 MR JOHNSON: It is. 10 MR BELL: Yes. 11 Q. Each of you individually has also prepared a statement. 12 Mr Bell, first of all, document 33335. 13 MR BELL: Yes. 14 Q. Again you've signed it, but this is your formal 15 evidence, Mr Bell, is it? 16 MR BELL: It is. 17 Q. In relation to the Ferrari Press Agency the Limited. 18 Mr Johnson, does the same apply equally to the statement 19 you have provided us with in the last few days? 20 MR JOHNSON: Is does. 21 Q. May I deal first of all with the National Association of 22 Press Agencies before I deal with your statements 23 individually? You tell us that NAPA was founded in 24 1982. It's a professional body of freelance press 25 agencies. There are more than 60 members. By that, you</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 2</p>	<p>1 MR JOHNSON: Which page are we on here, sorry? 2 Q. First page, quarter of the way down. 3 MR JOHNSON: Oh, right, yes. We are a self-help 4 organisation in that all the officers of NAPA are agency 5 principals or directors of agencies. 6 Q. Yes. It's more the gatekeeper part. 7 MR JOHNSON: And on the gatekeeper of the press, we operate 8 along with any other media organisations. We act as 9 gatekeepers in that we vet and issue press cards which 10 are issued by the UK Press Cards Authority. 11 MR BELL: And they're press cards -- in our case, as 12 a gatekeeper on behalf of NAPA, if someone approaches 13 NAPA to say, "Can I apply for a press card?" they have 14 to be employed by a NAPA member agency. So they can't 15 just be anyone after a press card, and that applies -- 16 there are a number of different gatekeepers, not just 17 NAPA, and that's a way of trying to ensure that someone 18 bona fide is able to apply for a press card. 19 Q. Thank you. On the second page, you deal with the role 20 of freelance press agencies in the United Kingdom and 21 make the point that the focus or emphasis of news and 22 news values has shifted over the last two decades or so. 23 Could you, in your own words, deal with the change in 24 news values? 25 MR JOHNSON: Certainly speaking for my own agency and my</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 4</p>

<p>1 knowledge of others, back in the 70s and 80s, a lot of 2 our effort went into reporting what can be described as 3 provincial news, in our case from Merseyside, from 4 Liverpool. So industrial news, council coverage, court 5 coverage. You know, we did an awful lot of coverage in 6 the 1980s of the exploits of the Liverpool 7 Labour-controlled council and also the demise of a lot 8 of industry in Liverpool. At that time, we were 9 employing as many as -- I think the peak was 18 staff, 10 and we were supplying a constant stream of news and 11 pictures about events in Liverpool, provincial news, to 12 national newspapers of all kinds. We had national 13 newspaper staff men who rented desks in our office and 14 covering the life of our city was our main stock in 15 trade. We were covering court and sport, council, 16 industrial relations and general news.</p> <p>17 Nowadays, we do much less of that. We cover less 18 court and certainly very little council, unless there's 19 some item of special interest that may be regarded as 20 a little bit left of field.</p> <p>21 Q. And the focus now, as you tell us, is skewed towards 22 celebrity, showbusiness and royal content; that is your 23 experience, is it?</p> <p>24 MR JOHNSON: Certainly that's the demand from national 25 newspapers, is for celebrity stories, royal stories,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 5</p>	<p>1 provide the copy, they may decide whether they want it 2 or not, and there is a scale of fees depending on where 3 the story is ultimately published in the paper; is that 4 correct?</p> <p>5 MR BELL: Yes, yes, but it varies between papers as well. 6 So, for instance, a newspaper like the Daily Mail may 7 well pay more money for the same size story in the same 8 part of the paper than the Guardian newspaper, for 9 instance. So the base paid rates are not the same 10 across all newspapers. They vary.</p> <p>11 Q. You also tell us that sadly in real terms -- and this is 12 an economic reality -- the rates have not kept up with 13 inflation over the years?</p> <p>14 MR BELL: Correct.</p> <p>15 Q. So that has obvious knock-on effects. Perhaps you'd 16 spell them out for us, please?</p> <p>17 MR JOHNSON: I think one of the factors is that we -- 18 basically, less people do more work. That's generally 19 true of the press, of national newspapers, even of the 20 provincial press, radio and television, and for agencies 21 it means that we can -- the economics of the business 22 means that we can afford to spend less time pursuing 23 perhaps investigations that may come to nothing. We are 24 looking for, really, something that is not exactly 25 a guarantee to make the paper but we're setting the bar</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 7</p>
<p>1 showbusiness of all kinds. Yes, and we -- operating 2 within that market, we have to follow that market and so 3 we're looking for those type of stories.</p> <p>4 MR BELL: To be fair, to pick up on a point there just to 5 not create the wrong impression, that's across the 6 press. That's not just in the tabloid press; that's in 7 the heavy press as well. The papers -- the heavy press 8 are carrying a lot more celebrity-orientated stories 9 than they also would have done in the past, and so that 10 applies for agencies like ours across the board. We 11 find it just as difficult to get regional stories into 12 heavy newspapers as we do into tabloids, so that's 13 across the board. That's not just, you know, the 14 tabloid press.</p> <p>15 Q. There are two bases, on my understanding, on which you 16 work. You either work -- and this may be exceptional -- 17 on an ordered or commissioned basis by a particular 18 newspaper, but more usually, you provide material on 19 spec to newspapers?</p> <p>20 MR JOHNSON: That's right.</p> <p>21 Q. If they want it, they then pay for it on a self-billing 22 basis, as you describe it?</p> <p>23 MR BELL: Yeah.</p> <p>24 Q. Can I deal with the more usual basis first, the 25 self-billing basis. Does it work in this way: you</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 6</p>	<p>1 higher in terms of the likelihood of a return for 2 effort. So that happens.</p> <p>3 Also, the new technology -- I say "new technology". 4 Electronic communication means that this is all done at 5 a much faster pace than it was prior to the advent of 6 IT. I mean, 25 years ago, we were typing copy and 7 reading it eight times to different copy takers. So the 8 amount of time and effort that went into that was quite 9 enormous compared to pressing a button and it goes to 10 12, 20, 30 destinations.</p> <p>11 But the commercial pressures that are put on NAPA 12 agencies through rates being pinned down are really 13 manifold in that you are under pressure to keep, you 14 know, a staff paid, you know, to pay their salaries, to 15 pay the overheads and so forth, and so the commercialism 16 that comes into it -- the commercial element of the need 17 to get a return for effort is all the greater.</p> <p>18 Q. Yes. Then the more unusual arrangement -- but it exists 19 nonetheless -- is when you provide material to a single 20 client on an exclusive basis and as you say in your 21 statement, the fee in those circumstances is agreed in 22 advance, depending on the nature and subject matter of 23 the story; is that correct?</p> <p>24 MR BELL: That's correct, yeah.</p> <p>25 Q. Can I ask you, please, about news gathering,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 8</p>

<p>1 particularly in the context of celebrities? You say --</p> <p>2 it's on the fourth page of the NAPA statement, five or</p> <p>3 six lines down:</p> <p>4 "NAPA members report that they're only rarely given</p> <p>5 the name of a celebrity or celebrities and encouraged to</p> <p>6 carry out the search in order to unearth unpublished</p> <p>7 revisions about them."</p> <p>8 In general terms, what sort of research is carried</p> <p>9 out?</p> <p>10 MR BELL: For example, it might be that a new series of the</p> <p>11 X Factor has started and obviously there are new</p> <p>12 celebrities, as they were, and it may well be that</p> <p>13 a newspaper will say, "We would like you to go to</p> <p>14 such-and-such a village where such-and-such an X Factor</p> <p>15 star comes from, have a chat with their friends, people</p> <p>16 that know them in the village, and see if you can find</p> <p>17 out something interesting about them."</p> <p>18 But it doesn't have to be salacious. You may well</p> <p>19 find out something about them that's of a more positive</p> <p>20 nature, shall we say. So it's not always a search where</p> <p>21 you know you're going to be coming up with something</p> <p>22 salacious at the end of it.</p> <p>23 Q. Can I ask you about paparazzi pictures and photography</p> <p>24 in general? What is the experience of NAPA generally in</p> <p>25 relation to paparazzi?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 9</p>	<p>1 security guys, made a friendly arrangement that the</p> <p>2 photographers would not stand directly outside the</p> <p>3 church, would work from a point some distance away from</p> <p>4 the church where they would use long lenses so as not to</p> <p>5 directly interfere with the wedding. Other</p> <p>6 photographers arrived from other papers. This local</p> <p>7 agency photographer relayed to them what arrangement he</p> <p>8 had made. All of the photographers, come the Saturday,</p> <p>9 the day of the wedding, all adhered to that arrangement.</p> <p>10 No one broke the agreement. They all got good pictures.</p> <p>11 The wedding passed off without any harassment from the</p> <p>12 media.</p> <p>13 Now, that works fine. If you're talking about</p> <p>14 paparazzi, in my opinion, they're a different group of</p> <p>15 people and they're not the type of photographer you'll</p> <p>16 find within a -- working for a NAPA agency.</p> <p>17 MR JOHNSON: It's hard to say where the dividing line</p> <p>18 actually comes, except that to say that our staff do</p> <p>19 carry press cards which have been issued through NAPA.</p> <p>20 I think we would question whether a lot of the</p> <p>21 photographers, say, on the streets of the capital are</p> <p>22 either trained as journalists, understand the law, and</p> <p>23 whether they operate within the law and according to</p> <p>24 proper ethics and the code of practice.</p> <p>25 So one of the points that we really wanted to make</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 11</p>
<p>1 MR JOHNSON: Well, the reality is that that's what</p> <p>2 newspapers want. You know, they want celebrity</p> <p>3 pictures. Magazines -- the whole explosion in the</p> <p>4 celebrity and show business magazine market has created</p> <p>5 a demand for those celebrity paparazzi red carpet-type</p> <p>6 pictures. So again, a lot of NAPA agencies -- I say</p> <p>7 "a lot of NAPA agencies"; a number of NAPA agencies,</p> <p>8 certainly the ones in London and the bigger cities,</p> <p>9 engage in that kind of work in order to supply the</p> <p>10 demand that's there.</p> <p>11 MR BELL: But there is -- I'm just going to say there's an</p> <p>12 important distinction to make in that -- defining the</p> <p>13 term paparazzi. I think the image of the paparazzi</p> <p>14 photographer is someone who will chase a celebrity down</p> <p>15 the street. What you'll find with -- certainly in my --</p> <p>16 I don't employ photographers on my agency, but I've</p> <p>17 spoken before I've come here today to a few agencies</p> <p>18 within NAPA that do, and to give you an example, one guy</p> <p>19 was sent to cover the wedding of the sister of</p> <p>20 a celebrity who's been here and given evidence, arrived</p> <p>21 in the village a couple of days before the wedding,</p> <p>22 because he lived in Devon, to work out where the wedding</p> <p>23 was going to take place, met some security guys who were</p> <p>24 employed by the celebrity to make sure the wedding</p> <p>25 wasn't interfered with by the media, spoke to those</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 10</p>	<p>1 to the Inquiry was that the whole area of the issue of</p> <p>2 the press card probably needs greater scrutiny, and</p> <p>3 there is room -- we have, actually -- as NAPA, we have</p> <p>4 proposed to the UK Press Cards Authority that there</p> <p>5 should be some tightening up of the regulations so as to</p> <p>6 ensure that the identity of the holder of the press card</p> <p>7 is known and possibly -- and this is something that</p> <p>8 obviously is open to discussion -- possibly looking at</p> <p>9 carrying out a CRB check on people who apply for press</p> <p>10 cards or renew press cards.</p> <p>11 Q. The different type or breed of paparazzo that I think,</p> <p>12 Mr Bell, you were referring to --</p> <p>13 MR BELL: Yeah.</p> <p>14 Q. Are you able to offer us any insights into its</p> <p>15 constituents?</p> <p>16 MR BELL: In terms of those more likely to act in a way that</p> <p>17 people would associate with the paparazzi?</p> <p>18 Q. Yes.</p> <p>19 MR BELL: Yeah. I can't give you any specific examples, but</p> <p>20 when I've heard the evidence of certain celebrities here</p> <p>21 at this Inquiry and they've talked about conduct of</p> <p>22 photographers in a negative way, in my experience,</p> <p>23 I don't associate that with the conduct of NAPA agency</p> <p>24 photographers, or indeed photographers I've worked with</p> <p>25 who are employed by national newspapers. I think you're</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 12</p>

<p>1 dealing with a breed of people that -- as Chris said,                  2 you could probably question their backgrounds in                  3 journalism, where they've started from, what kind of                  4 training they've had, indeed, what experience they've                  5 had and, you know, suddenly they're on the streets of                  6 London or another big city and they're behaving in a way                  7 that doesn't -- as I say, from what I've heard described                  8 here, doesn't mean anything to me. I've not personally                  9 experienced.                  10 MR JOHNSON: Anecdotally, there are a lot of stories that                  11 are told, and probably the main ones boil down to                  12 paparazzi who will act in teams so that -- you know,                  13 there are at least two in a team, maybe more, and one                  14 will provoke a celebrity into some angry reaction by                  15 going up close with a camera and getting in their face,                  16 and the other photographer will be standing off to                  17 record the reaction of the celebrity. That's certainly                  18 one known modus operandi.                  19 We've also heard about the chasing, which is, again,                  20 something which is, you know, not within our remit as                  21 NAPA agencies. We would never encourage our staff to                  22 chase after people, whether on foot or on car.                  23 Certainly never in a car, because of the obvious                  24 dangers. But in terms of the unfettered, unregulated                  25 paparazzi, it's hard for us to say because they are not</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 13</p>	<p>1 none, and they would come through my office, because we                  2 provide the secretariat to NAPA. In the last five                  3 years, less than you can count on the fingers of one                  4 hand. So I would say -- if there were two a year, that                  5 would be a lot.                  6 MR BELL: That's direct to NAPA. There may well be                  7 instances where an individual agency may well be the                  8 subject -- not themselves the subject of a complaint,                  9 but may well be -- may well have been involved in an                  10 assignment with a particular newspaper. There could                  11 well have been a complaint in that instance, and then                  12 that individual agency would have to deal -- you know,                  13 help to deal with that complaint as it arose.                  14 MR JOHNSON: Yes, I'm talking here about complaints routed                  15 through NAPA about the conduct of its members. A very                  16 small number. Probably in the last ten years, I think,                  17 there may have been eight or nine.                  18 Q. In your capacity as owners or directors of two agencies,                  19 is the picture broadly the same in terms of numbers of                  20 complaints? Could you help us with that?                  21 MR JOHNSON: Well, speaking for my own agency, we do get                  22 complaints from members of the public who -- about whom                  23 stories have been written or about -- or who objected to                  24 the way a story has been written or about the conduct of                  25 a member of our staff. When a complaint is made, we'll</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 15</p>
<p>1 our members.                  2 MR BELL: What I can say is that certainly in my agency                  3 situation, if one of our reporters has been working on                  4 an assignment with a photographer from a national                  5 newspaper, there may well be a discussion between                  6 myself, as the owner of my agency, and a senior                  7 executive on a picture desk about how a certain picture                  8 was taken, the circumstances surrounding it. So there                  9 is a process there whereby if the picture desk feels                  10 that they've received a picture that they're not                  11 entirely happy, satisfied with the way it may have come                  12 to be taken, then they will ask us, you know: "What                  13 happened on the ground? Can you give us some feedback?"                  14 And likewise, if someone made a complaint directly to                  15 a paper, there may be a similar discussion about that,                  16 so that, you know, the conduct in that situation, people                  17 know what has happened.                  18 Q. You deal with the issue of complaints about a third of                  19 the way down the fourth page:                  20 "If a celebrity or any member of the public makes                  21 a complaint about the conduct of a NAPA member, our                  22 executive investigates and seeks to find a remedy."                  23 How many complaints are there over the course of                  24 a year? Could you help us with just a feel of numbers?                  25 MR JOHNSON: I'm pleased to report that this year I know of</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 14</p>	<p>1 investigate it on its merits, and ultimately, if we                  2 can't satisfy them, then we will tell them that they                  3 have got recourse either to the National Association of                  4 Press Agencies or to the Press Complaints Commission.                  5 MR BELL: I can think of -- in the case of my agency, in the                  6 last six months -- one specific one where the complaint                  7 was made to either the Daily Mail or the Mail on Sunday                  8 but the complaint related to one of our reporters who                  9 was on an assignment on their behalf. So the person                  10 concerned complained to the Mail and the Mail's managing                  11 editor then came to us and said, "We have had                  12 a complaint about the conduct of your reporter. This is                  13 the nature of the complaint. Can you help us deal with                  14 this?" Which we did, and it basically amounted to                  15 someone walking up to a front door and knocking on the                  16 front door and asking a question of someone. It just so                  17 happened the person concerned didn't think that that was                  18 appropriate conduct. So that's the only instance I can                  19 think of.                  20 MR JOHNSON: Yes, complaints quite often will be routed                  21 through the newspaper that has published the story.                  22 They will receive a complaint and it will be referred to                  23 us as the authors of the story.                  24 Q. Can I deal with the question of libel, please? You                  25 check copy for legal issues, which would include libel,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 16</p>

<p>1 accuracy under clause 1 of the code -- it's the same --  2 and contempt of court; is that right?  3 MR JOHNSON: Yes.  4 Q. Once the copy is submitted to the newspaper, the  5 newspaper conducts its own check according to its own  6 practices and procedures; is that also right?  7 MR JOHNSON: That's correct.  8 Q. Can I just deal with the question of newspaper websites  9 and the need for instantaneous news and reporting. What  10 effect, if any, have newspaper websites had on the  11 second level of checks by newspapers?  12 MR BELL: I think there is a concern that the immediacy of  13 the very, very short period of time between us filing  14 a piece of copy and that copy being published on the  15 'Net, that perhaps the legal checking process at the  16 newspaper's end may not have been quite as thorough as  17 perhaps it would have been when there were just  18 newspapers. But having said that, I am aware that  19 newspapers within their own offices have a legal  20 department and I'm sure their legal department will  21 still want to make sure they don't libel someone or be  22 in contempt of court about a story that they published  23 on their website.  24 Perhaps where there's more of a danger is where what  25 is happening is that local newspapers are publishing</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 17</p>	<p>1 misspelled names that actually end up -- sorry,  2 misspelled titles or mistakes, basically, literals that  3 get transmitted to screen without being corrected. In  4 the days of hot lead, they would have been corrected by  5 the subeditors.  6 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Don't start me on the subject of  7 misrepresented titles or names. I suffer that to this  8 day, but there it is.  9 MR JAY: Weighing up of privacy issues against the public  10 interest. That's been devoted a lot in this Inquiry.  11 Is that a process with which you are familiar?  12 MR JOHNSON: Yes.  13 Q. Can you help us a little bit on those matters?  14 MR BELL: What may happen is a newspaper may come to you as  15 an agency and request you to carry out an assignment.  16 It may well be that during the course of that assignment  17 a privacy issue, a public interest issue may arise which  18 we would then discuss with the newspaper. Indeed, it  19 might even be discussed before the task even begins, and  20 it may well be that we, as an agency, might decide --  21 I can't think of any specific examples here and now of  22 where we've actually completely turned down an  23 assignment on the grounds of us deciding it was an  24 invasion of someone's privacy potentially, or indeed  25 there wasn't a public interest to the story, but</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 19</p>
<p>1 stories on websites which -- not people like us, but  2 other individual freelance journalists are  3 effectively -- I'll use the term "lifting", not doing  4 any of their own checking on it and in some cases  5 lifting reports of proceedings in court, filing them  6 directly to newspapers -- all newspapers, not just the  7 tabloid press -- and those newspapers, believing in good  8 faith that the report they've received is accurate and  9 has come from a bona fide source, where, unbeknown to  10 them, it may well have just been completely lifted off  11 a local newspaper website who may have got it wrong, and  12 that's, to me, one of the issues and one of the dangers  13 in the growth of Internet journalism.  14 MR JOHNSON: There are a number of issues that are raised by  15 the Internet and the rise of exchanges of information  16 and syndication. You know, evening newspapers, weekly  17 newspapers are syndicating out their stories themselves  18 to national newspapers, sometimes through a group agent,  19 sometimes directly, sometimes through a press agency --  20 through press agencies who are members of NAPA.  21 So there's a great deal of material being circulated  22 and the number of checks that it goes through before it  23 gets onto a -- you know, screens, I suspect -- well, in  24 fact I'm certain are less than they were when it was  25 going into print. We've got examples of, you know,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 18</p>	<p>1 certainly, I think, over the last year or two -- and  2 certainly since this Inquiry has begun -- discussions  3 between -- even within our own office, between us on  4 stories that we be working on ourselves that we haven't  5 even sent to newspapers, and indeed on assignments where  6 papers are asking us to carry out for them, there is  7 a lot more discussion about the way to tackle a story.  8 Are you potentially invading someone's privacy? Is  9 there a public interest in the assignment you might be  10 doing?  11 Q. I think you may be able to assist us on one issue,  12 namely intrusion of grief. Could you elaborate on that,  13 please? What are the issues that arise there?  14 MR BELL: It's fair to say that on a press agency -- I mean,  15 journalists working on national newspapers I'm sure will  16 say the same. There are occasions when you are asked to  17 go and knock on the door of someone, a family member of  18 someone who may have been involved in a tragedy. It may  19 be someone who's been killed in an accident on holiday,  20 abroad, and you may want to go and knock on the door of  21 a family member here, somewhere in England, to ask them  22 if they want to talk about what's happened, talk to you  23 about the person who's died, pay a tribute to them,  24 maybe even give you a picture of them. And the rule  25 really is, and as indeed is this the code of conduct,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 20</p>

<p>1 that you should only make that approach the once. If 2 the person makes it clear that they don't want to talk, 3 then that should be the end of the matter. 4 Where agencies can be a big help -- and I'm sure 5 papers would say this -- is that you may get a situation 6 where five different national newspapers from across the 7 range may all ask the one agency to do the same knock on 8 the door. Now, obviously you don't want to go and do it 9 five different times and say, "I'm here from five 10 different newspapers." So you can do the one knock on 11 the door. If the person wants to talk, then you can 12 interview them and you can send the interview to all of 13 the newspapers. Again, you would be right to make it 14 clear to the person that you are there on behalf of 15 whichever newspaper has asked you to go there. So it 16 can be a filter, I suppose, to stopping five different 17 people knocking on the same door five times. 18 Q. Can you assist in the range of reactions, if any, of 19 bereaved people? Are they uniquely hostile to 20 a journalist knocking on their door or are reactions 21 different? 22 MR BELL: They vary totally. It never ceases to amaze me 23 how they vary. You can knock on one door and someone 24 can be utterly hostile to the point of threatening 25 violence. You can end up knocking on a door where you Page 21</p>	<p>1 we take is obviously going to go completely out of the 2 window because of the sheer volume of people beating 3 a path to their door. I really don't now how you can 4 control a situation like that. 5 MR JOHNSON: 24-hour news is a real element of change that 6 has come to bear in the last -- really, in the last ten 7 years. Not only is it now television, it's also the 8 Internet, and you're talking about instant reporting in 9 all forms of the media. But when you have a story and 10 you have -- often the television now outnumber the 11 press. Very often the press pack on a job will be the 12 local agency and Press Association, accompanied by four 13 people from the BBC, one from independent television and 14 a number of radio stations. So in terms of sheer 15 numbers on a doorstep, I have to say it is often the BBC 16 who are the most numerous. 17 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Before you move off the privacy 18 question, do you think the increased sensitivity to 19 privacy issues which you have referred to as 20 a consequence of the Inquiry or the events that led up 21 to the Inquiry is a good thing or do you think it's 22 become inappropriate and too far? 23 MR BELL: I think it's a good thing. Has it gone too far? 24 Too early to say whether it's gone too far, really. 25 MR JOHNSON: Are you saying sensitivity on behalf of the Page 23</p>
<p>1 end up becoming friends with someone, you end up keeping 2 in touch with them. Chris, I'm sure, can speak of 3 Denise Fergus. 4 MR JOHNSON: Yes, I've been representing James Bulger's 5 mother, Denis Fergus, in press matters for the last 17 6 years, slightly longer, and she is a direct client and 7 friend of mine. But that's very different from the raw 8 emotions that you get immediately after an event. In 9 that case, I'm representing her in terms of her not 10 having to constantly field press enquiries. She needs 11 a press agent, which is the role I fulfil. 12 But when you're talking about raw emotions and 13 people obviously in the depth of grief, Matt's right, 14 the reactions can be very different. But we are there 15 not -- not through a sort of a prurient interest, but on 16 behalf of the public to report something that is of -- 17 in the public interest to explore what has happened in 18 any particular tragedy. 19 MR BELL: And certain types of tragedy are obviously -- in 20 terms of media response, are going to be unique, and 21 obviously Madeleine McCann's parents is a completely 22 different situation, because such was the level of 23 interest in that story from every form of media -- 24 radio, television, newspapers, tabloids, heavy 25 newspapers -- I don't think you're -- the approach that Page 22</p>	<p>1 journalists or the public? 2 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Yes, the journalists. 3 MR JOHNSON: I think there's been a hugely heightened 4 sensitivity on the part of journalists. 5 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Yes, that's what you said a momen 6 ago. 7 MR JOHNSON: Yes, definitely. 8 MR BELL: Yes, it's a good -- 9 MR JOHNSON: I think essentially -- well, the Inquiry's 10 heard a lot about the various excesses that have 11 happened in various quarters, and so it must be a good 12 thing that those activities are been reined back or 13 excluded. 14 What the impact is in the mind of the public is 15 probably something that rather exercises my mind 16 a little bit more, because as we made the point in our 17 submission, all journalists are getting tarred with the 18 same brush. You know, it's -- I mean, we last week had 19 a story in Liverpool about the artist Banksy doing 20 a statue which was representing a cardinal in the 21 Catholic church and an interesting statistic that was 22 produced was that only 0.4 per cent of Roman Catholic 23 clergy in this country have ever been accused of any 24 kind of offence in terms of paedophilia. I say "only". 25 That's the statistic. The statistic in terms of Page 24</p>

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<p>1 journalists who ever engaged in any kind of phone 2 hacking or illegal activities must be tiny, but we are 3 all being tarred with the same brush, and that really is 4 one of the reasons that compelled us to want to come 5 here to give evidence, was to speak up for the majority 6 of journalists and agency journalists who operate day 7 in, day out, year in, year out, in a thoroughly 8 professional and businesslike manner.</p> <p>9 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Well, I understand that, and that's 10 why I acknowledged with gratitude your doing so at the 11 very start of your evidence. But of course to some 12 extent the culture may move on. The problem then 13 becomes embedding it.</p> <p>14 MR BELL: I can give you an example of a privacy discussion. 15 I was chatting to a guy on the legal department of the 16 Mirror group and he said -- I'm sure I'm not going to 17 say anything out of turn, but if I am, you can stop me.</p> <p>18 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: It depends what you're going to say.</p> <p>19 MR BELL: The Sunday People on a Saturday had a photograph, 20 like every newspaper that day, come in of Gary Speed's 21 widow at a football match with their son. It was 22 a public event. They were there in memory of Gary 23 Speed. I think it was the Everton football match. The 24 Sunday People's lawyer said, "I don't think we should 25 run the picture showing the little boy unless we've got</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 25</p>	<p>1 affected the newspapers and how they refrained from 2 chasing or pursuing the two princes. But as time pass, 3 memories fade and because nothing was put in place, it 4 was all done on a voluntary basis, I think the 5 restraints tend to fade and dissipate.</p> <p>6 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: There are four or five points in your 7 last two answers which are all worthy of picking up, but 8 I'll let Mr Jay carry on and then we'll see whether we 9 need to come back to them.</p> <p>10 MR JAY: I'll come back to them, if I may, at the end.</p> <p>11 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Yes.</p> <p>12 MR JAY: I was going to ask some specific questions on your 13 individual statements, although they largely speak for 14 themselves. Mr Johnson, may we just be clear: when you 15 referred to Mercury Press supplying material for 16 websites, which websites are you referring to there?</p> <p>17 MR JOHNSON: Right. Well, we operate three websites of our 18 own, three news websites, the main one being 19 Click Liverpool, which is an online newspaper which we 20 ourselves produce, but we also supply copy for other -- 21 for newspaper websites, national newspaper websites, 22 regional newspapers and so forth. Broadcast -- radio 23 stations have websites. Our stories are often carried 24 on there as well.</p> <p>25 Q. Thank you. Then you deal with the commercial factors</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 27</p>
<p>1 the permission of that little boy's family." 2 So the people working that day in that office on the 3 Sunday People went to efforts to try and find out if it 4 was okay for them to run the picture of Gary Speed's 5 widow and his son. Now, they never got the permission 6 so they never ran the picture with the little boy in it. 7 They only ran the picture with the widow.</p> <p>8 However, the next day, the Independent on Sunday had 9 the picture of both in there, so the journalists within 10 the Sunday People were saying amongst themselves: "Why 11 is it that we went to great efforts that day to find out 12 if it was okay, yet it appears another newspaper who 13 perhaps hasn't been in the headlines so much doesn't 14 appear to have gone through the same process?"</p> <p>15 So there is a big discussion going on in tabloid 16 newsrooms -- I think Sunday People's a tabloid -- about 17 privacy.</p> <p>18 MR JOHNSON: I also think that what happens is that the 19 example that Matt's given is the tabloid journalists are 20 alert to the scrutiny that they are under, and possibly 21 the other end of the market are less so because they 22 don't feel that they're under the spotlight.</p> <p>23 For me, the question is what tends to happen with 24 these events -- I mean, we only need to cite Diana's 25 death -- Princess Diana's death to show how that</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 26</p>	<p>1 which are in play in which you've already addressed, 2 I think, in the broader context of NAPA generally. Then 3 you deal with future regulation, which I am going to 4 touch at the end, if I may.</p> <p>5 Mr Bell, if I could address some points on your 6 statement. So we get a flavour of the economics -- I'm 7 not going to ask you about your salary, but it is worthy 8 of note what full-time reporters get paid. £18,000 to 9 £20,000 per annum?</p> <p>10 MR BELL: Yes.</p> <p>11 Q. May we just get a feel for the level of experience of 12 individuals who are getting paid that sum?</p> <p>13 MR BELL: Yes, the type of person that we recruit tends to 14 be someone who will have had at least a couple of years' 15 experience working on either a local weekly or regional 16 daily newspaper. They will have had some training 17 either on a postgraduate journalism course or 18 a pre-entry course. There'll be someone who we're 19 satisfied, whilst working on the local paper, will have 20 had experience of covering court cases or inquests, 21 which is a lot of what we used to do, not so much any 22 more. So yeah, someone with a good couple of years' 23 experience. What they understand to happen then is that 24 the reporters that work for us will spend a couple of 25 years with us and then they tend to go on to national</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 28</p>

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<p>1 newspapers.</p> <p>2 Q. The second page of your statement, our page 33336,</p> <p>3 towards the bottom, you explain that although you don't</p> <p>4 have any written policies in place, you make it clear to</p> <p>5 everyone how highly you regard the need for them to</p> <p>6 engage in legal and ethical practices. They understand</p> <p>7 that any misconduct could result in disciplinary action,</p> <p>8 including dismissal.</p> <p>9 MR BELL: Yeah.</p> <p>10 Q. Can I deal with the next two points? When you first</p> <p>11 employ a reporter or hire a freelancer for the first</p> <p>12 time, "we brief them on how we expect them to work, ie</p> <p>13 explaining to them what they can and cannot do while</p> <p>14 working for us". Could you develop that a little bit</p> <p>15 more for us, please?</p> <p>16 MR BELL: Yeah. We'll take them through the likely</p> <p>17 scenarios that they're going to be finding themselves</p> <p>18 working in. So for instance, with court reporting, we</p> <p>19 talk to them about the importance of making sure that</p> <p>20 when they're filing copy from a court case, they're</p> <p>21 sticking to the proceedings, they're not running the</p> <p>22 risk of embellishing it with material that's coming from</p> <p>23 outside of the court room. Obviously, we talk to them</p> <p>24 about the need that if you're going to write an article</p> <p>25 alleging something about someone that could be termed as</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 29</p>	<p>1 where someone has taken part in subterfuge for me to</p> <p>2 have the need to discipline them. Obviously, we would</p> <p>3 say -- one thing we do make clear is when they go out to</p> <p>4 meet people, we do have to make clear that we're either</p> <p>5 there as Ferrari Press Agency or, at the same time, that</p> <p>6 we're there as Ferrari Press Agency but we've been asked</p> <p>7 to approach them on behalf of a particular newspaper, be</p> <p>8 it the Daily Mail, the Telegraph, the Express. But I've</p> <p>9 never had the need to discipline anyone over that.</p> <p>10 MR JOHNSON: Just to back up Matt on what he's saying there,</p> <p>11 subterfuge, and indeed all those areas that are covered</p> <p>12 in the Press Complaints Commission code of conduct, we</p> <p>13 would only supply the test of: is this in the public</p> <p>14 interest? And that's the test for engaging in</p> <p>15 subterfuge. I can hold my hand up and say that we</p> <p>16 engaged in subterfuge a fortnight ago to do a survey for</p> <p>17 a Sunday newspaper on short measures in pubs, in that we</p> <p>18 went in, we didn't declare that we were news journalists</p> <p>19 but we did order a pint of beer. We then measured it</p> <p>20 out and found out whether it was a pint or not. I mean,</p> <p>21 it's been done many times before and it will be done</p> <p>22 again, but that provided part of a survey into short</p> <p>23 measures in pubs. So that's an element of subterfuge.</p> <p>24 MR BELL: Yeah, and you might be asked --</p> <p>25 MR JOHNSON: So in actual fact, these things, really, we</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 31</p>
<p>1 being defamatory, that they have to be confident that</p> <p>2 they can defend it by proving that it's true, and we'll</p> <p>3 talk -- we'll explain to them as well the scenarios I've</p> <p>4 explained earlier on, how they're likely to find</p> <p>5 themselves on the ground having to talk to people in</p> <p>6 very tragic situations and how they need to go about</p> <p>7 those and not run the risk of making someone feel</p> <p>8 harassed.</p> <p>9 Q. You also talk about acceptable and unacceptable methods</p> <p>10 in news gathering?</p> <p>11 MR BELL: Yes.</p> <p>12 Q. Again, could I ask you to amplify that for us, please?</p> <p>13 MR BELL: Acceptable is pretty much what I've outlined.</p> <p>14 Unacceptable would be really making mistakes in court</p> <p>15 reporting, giving us stories that they can't back up.</p> <p>16 If one of our reporters gives us a story that we think</p> <p>17 is potentially defamatory about someone, we would ask</p> <p>18 them: "How do you know this to be true? Who are your</p> <p>19 sources? Who have you spoken to? Can you show us any</p> <p>20 evidence?" So unacceptable really would be going</p> <p>21 against the grain of any of that.</p> <p>22 Q. What about subterfuge? It may not apply very much to</p> <p>23 what your people do.</p> <p>24 MR BELL: Yeah. Subterfuge -- again I'm trying to think if</p> <p>25 we -- I can't even think of a case within our agency</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 30</p>	<p>1 apply the Press Complaints Commission code of conduct</p> <p>2 and for my part, when we engage staff, we provide them</p> <p>3 with company rules and regulations which embodies the</p> <p>4 PCC code, so everybody gets a copy.</p> <p>5 Q. Thank you. Can I ask you about the nature of the steps</p> <p>6 you take once the copy has been provided to you to check</p> <p>7 out its accuracy?</p> <p>8 MR BELL: I'll try and give you a specific example. In the</p> <p>9 case Chris touched earlier on on syndication</p> <p>10 arrangements, which is -- basically, we, as an agency,</p> <p>11 syndicate material on behalf of the Kent Messenger</p> <p>12 newspaper group. So that will involve us being given</p> <p>13 stories that have been written by Kent Messenger</p> <p>14 reporters, not our own reporters, and we may receive</p> <p>15 a report that we think -- you know, can we be</p> <p>16 absolutely -- it depends on the nature of the story. It</p> <p>17 doesn't apply to every story, but can we be sure -- if</p> <p>18 it's one that's a bit contentious, we will get one of</p> <p>19 our own reporters to make calls on it.</p> <p>20 We had one recently -- I can't remember the exact</p> <p>21 case, but it was some court copy. There was something</p> <p>22 about it this didn't seem quite rite and we made a call</p> <p>23 to the Crown Prosecution Service press office in Kent,</p> <p>24 and thankfully we were able to clear up something that</p> <p>25 could potentially have been a mistake.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 32</p>



<p>1 So, you know, it varies in different circumstances,  2 but a lot of it is based upon us guys who run the  3 agencies knowing when something you can really tell  4 needs checking or you have an instinct that something's  5 not quite right.  6 MR JOHNSON: We're constantly striving to ensure that the  7 copy that we are filing -- well, on a commercial basis,  8 that it can be used easily by newspapers, that it's  9 self-contained and that it's full. So it's a fair,  10 balanced and accurate report of court procedures, for  11 example, or, if it's outside court, if it's a story  12 that -- most stories have two sides to them -- that we  13 have both sides of the story. Somebody might be making  14 some kind of claim or allegation. We then give a right  15 of reply to whoever the other side of the story might  16 be, thereby engaging in good journalistic practice.  17 Q. Mr Bell, as you made clear at the end of your  18 statement -- and I'm sure Mr Johnson will echo this --  19 each of you applies a completely hands-on approach in  20 a professional way to protect the integrity and  21 reputation of your respective businesses?  22 MR BELL: Yes.  23 Q. Before I ask you about the way forward for the future,  24 I have been asked to raise points with you, Mr Bell, in  25 relation to Mr Richard Peppiatt.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 33</p>	<p>1 us by a couple of people who'd come across him working  2 on casual shifts on national newspapers. And Richard --  3 we gave him some encouragement as to what we thought he  4 should do next and we mutually agreed to part company as  5 friends. So, yeah, that was the reason.  6 Q. In relation to the way forward, Mr Johnson, quite  7 shortly towards the very end of your statement you point  8 out that your agency, Mercury Press, and other members  9 of NAPA observed the NAPA code of conduct which embodies  10 the PCC code:  11 "Many of the paparazzi and celebrity reporters are  12 not trained. Some are evening and weekend warriors who  13 live or die on the level of impact of the material that  14 they gather. Like other NAPA members, we deprecate the  15 changes in communication and newspaper practices that  16 have led to significant deprofessionalisation of the  17 industry ..."  18 If that word exists, but we understand fully what  19 you mean.  20 In terms of recommendations for the future to assist  21 this Inquiry, do you have some leaving thoughts for us,  22 each of you?  23 MR JOHNSON: I think the -- one of the prime areas that we  24 see as a potential area for benefit, something that can  25 be positive to come out of the Inquiry, would be an</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 35</p>
<p>1 MR BELL: Yes.  2 Q. You can confirm, can you, that you employed him as  3 a news reporter in August 2008; is that right?  4 MR BELL: Yes, that's correct.  5 Q. Did you keep him on beyond his six-month probation  6 period?  7 MR BELL: No.  8 Q. About how many employees do you not keep on beyond their  9 probation period for performance-related reasons?  10 MR BELL: I think in the 12 years that I've owned/run the  11 agency, it's happened three times that I can think of.  12 Q. What were the reasons in Mr Peppiatt's case for your  13 agency not keeping him on beyond the probation period?  14 MR BELL: We sat down towards the end of his six-month  15 probation period with Richard -- this is we being Adam  16 Gillham who runs the agency with me. We had an amicable  17 discussion with Richard and said that we felt he didn't  18 quite have the background in journalism that we wrongly  19 thought he'd had. We felt he'd missed out on some  20 training. We felt we couldn't quite be confident enough  21 to send him along, for instance, to report on court  22 cases. We held up our hands to Richard and said that as  23 much as anything it was our fault, the circumstances in  24 which we recruited him. We should have checked more  25 thoroughly his CV/background. He'd been recommended to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 34</p>	<p>1 extension of the checks and balances that are used in  2 the issue of -- in the issuing of press cards. At the  3 moment, agency bosses or editors of newspapers are  4 simply required to verify that this -- that the person  5 concerned who is applying for the card is, to their  6 knowledge, who they say they are and that they are  7 employed by the agency or by the newspaper or whatever  8 body it is who is issuing the press card.  9 That probably is not -- well, it's clearly not very  10 thorough, because in effect we don't actually carry out  11 any investigation to find out if they are who they say  12 they are. We probably take them on face value, that  13 they have a National Insurance number and that we're  14 employing them under their identity. I did mention  15 earlier that it's been suggested that a CRB check would  16 be a good idea, and that is something that the National  17 Association of Press Agencies has suggested to the UK  18 Press Cards Authority.  19 So that's one thing, and that really is aimed  20 towards bringing to bear attempts to -- an attempt to  21 ensure that people who are carrying a press card are  22 bona fide journalists.  23 MR BELL: Yeah, I mean, I -- not so much a specific point.  24 I think I would add a general appeal that -- I heard  25 a lot of talk about tabloid journalism. I mean,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 36</p>

<p>1 I strongly feel that there are some very, very good 2 journalists who you would classify as being tabloid 3 journalists and I just hope that whatever measures are 4 decided don't drive away or drive underground or prevent 5 the type of investigative journalism of people like 6 Mazher Mahmood, for instance, out of the business, 7 because I think it would make the media a poorer place. 8 I don't see how this side of it could be controlled, 9 but going back to the issue of the Internet and the rise 10 in social media, so many more people now are getting 11 their news from the Internet and social media. 12 Obviously the classic case this year, the Ryan Giggs 13 case, showed that newspapers showed great restraint for 14 a long time. Newspapers were very aware of elements of 15 that story, and yet the Internet and the social media 16 were merrily running stories on it approximately every 17 30 seconds. 18 So I can't see how any of us here in this room at 19 the moment could seek to control the Internet and social 20 media, but certainly I would just make a general appeal 21 that thought is given to my opinion that there are some 22 real top quality journalists out there working -- very 23 committed, very hard, and not engaging in some of the 24 practices that this Inquiry has heard about. 25 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Mr Bell, I've said many times broadly</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 37</p>	<p>1 to stay in business, but at the moment they're involved 2 in a terrific fight, and I'm sure editors, reporters on 3 local newspapers would love to come before this Inquiry 4 and press home that point, that, yes, there obviously 5 needs to be an improvement in some of the ethics and 6 standards that we've heard but at the same time you've 7 touched on what, in my opinion, is the most critical 8 aspect of the media at the moment, and that's the local 9 media, because if -- as you say -- 10 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Thank you for agreeing that I've 11 asked the right question. What I want to know is what 12 the answer is. 13 MR BELL: I don't know. I don't know. 14 MR JOHNSON: I have some ideas or some pointers to where 15 I think the issues lie. In the end, it's really all 16 about money, because the reason there are fewer 17 reporters in coroner's courts or magistrate's courts or 18 covering health authority -- you go to a health 19 authority board and try and find a reporter there. 20 They're very few and far between. Clearly, the 21 practices of newspapers' reporting is changing because 22 of the nature of electronic communication, so the days 23 when, you know, reporters were sent along to scribble 24 through a council meeting for four or five hours or six 25 hours are, you know, that's -- there are other reasons</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 39</p>
<p>1 that. 2 MR BELL: Yeah. 3 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: So I'm very conscious of the point. 4 MR BELL: Yeah. 5 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: But I'd like to ask you about 6 a problem rather closer to home for you. 7 MR BELL: Yeah. 8 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: For our democracy, local news 9 reporting, be it courts, about which, for different 10 reasons, I have strong views, or local authorities or 11 hospitals or coroner's courts is critical. How can one 12 protect that in this 24/7 media age? 13 MR BELL: Well, you're absolutely right, because if you go 14 in any magistrate's court in any provincial town this 15 afternoon, you'd be very unlikely to find a journalist 16 sitting on the press bench. Likewise council meetings, 17 likewise inquests. Unfortunately, local newspapers 18 commercially are being driven to the ground. The type 19 of journalists that we recruit are becoming fewer 20 because the local newspapers are employing less and less 21 people. 22 How can you keep those people -- how can you keep 23 local reporting going? I don't know. Because you need 24 the commercial organisations to run the local 25 newspapers, to sell advertising and to sell newspapers</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 38</p>	<p>1 other than cuts in editorial budgets. 2 But generally, the malaise in the media is about 3 reducing advertising revenue, and I'm going to be rather 4 controversial and say that I think one of the problems 5 for the Internet media is that the amount that search 6 engines pay for rendering readers to stories is 7 infinitesimally small, compared to the effort that goes 8 into creating that content. So the value placed on 9 advertising on the Internet is distorting the value of 10 the material that is presented to the reader. 11 How to actually address that is very hard to know 12 because it's a global market. But for -- I'm not 13 pessimistic about it. I think that it will find its own 14 level, and that -- for example, I mean, you know, we've 15 got -- a national newspaper in the UK is now one of the 16 very biggest newspapers on the Internet in the world and 17 the second biggest in North America. The Daily Mail is 18 possibly now the biggest news source in North America. 19 It's certainly vying with the Washington Post. That's 20 happened in a space of three years, with 70 million 21 unique users a day for the Daily Mail, and yet they 22 pay -- the Daily Mail pays us £40 for a story. 23 Something very strange there. For a story that's being 24 published worldwide, a press agency gets £40. 25 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Yes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 40</p>

<p>1 MR JOHNSON: So the market is really, really bizarre, and we 2 can only hope that it's going to -- that will resolve 3 itself as it matures. 4 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Okay, thank you. 5 MR JAY: Gentlemen, thank you very much indeed. 6 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Thank you both very much. We'll rise 7 for a few minutes. 8 (3.32 pm) 9 (A short break) 10 (3.33 pm) 11 MR JAY: Mr Morgan, can you hear me here in court 73 in 12 London? 13 A. I can, loud and clear. 14 Q. Thank you very much. We're going to invite you first of 15 all to take the oath. 16 MR PIERS STEFAN PUGHE-MORGAN (sworn) 17 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Can you see us? 18 A. I can see Mr Jay, but not you, Lord Leveson. 19 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: That's all right. Fine. If you need 20 to, you will. 21 A. I have no doubt. 22 Questions by MR JAY 23 MR JAY: Your full name, please, Mr Morgan. 24 A. Piers Stefan Pughe-Morgan. 25 Q. Thank you very much. You provided us with two witness Page 41</p>	<p>1 de facto editor of the Sun's showbiz column, which is 2 I think still called Bizarre, under Kelvin MacKenzie. 3 We've noted it's not uncommon for editors of leading 4 tabloids to have come through the showbiz columns of 5 tabloid newspapers. Why do you think that is so? 6 A. I think because you're basically constructing a mini 7 newspaper every day, so the discipline and the skill 8 base you need to produce a column like that is not 9 completely different to what you would use for 10 a newspaper, in the sense that you're looking for a lead 11 story, a second lead story, smaller stories, a picture. 12 So the framework of a column like Bizarre became a sort 13 of working template, if you like, for potential future 14 editors and I'm sure that's why so many became editors. 15 Q. Is it not an index, though, of current preoccupation in 16 celebrity and that the news values have very much 17 focused on that sort of matter? 18 A. Well, no, I think it's very patronising when people 19 saying that because I think in the end you have to be 20 a good journalist to do a column like that and you have 21 to be a good journalist to do news and showbiz 22 stuff, and the art of being a good tabloid journalist is 23 your ability to do both. 24 I've always felt that if you look at some of the 25 people who came through Bizarre, people like Martin Page 43</p>
<p>1 statements. The first is dated 1 November of this year. 2 It runs to 15 pages, is signed and has a statement of 3 truth. Is that your first witness statement, Mr Morgan? 4 A. Yes. 5 Q. The second one is nine pages, dated 21 November, again 6 with a statement of truth. Do you stand by that 7 statement, Mr Morgan? 8 A. Yes. 9 Q. If I can cover your professional background. You were 10 editor of the News of the World between January 1994 11 and August 1995; is that correct? 12 A. Yes. 13 Q. I think you were the youngest ever editor at the age of 14 28; is that correct? 15 A. I believe so, yes. 16 Q. I think that youth has not since been surpassed. You 17 then moved to the Daily Mirror between September 1995 18 and 14 May 2004; is that correct? 19 A. Yes. 20 Q. You are now, I think, an employee of CNN and you do -- 21 is it a daily show, Piers Morgan Tonight, which is very 22 big in the US, I understand? 23 A. It's clearly passed you by, Mr Jay, but yes, it is. 24 Q. May I ask you two general questions? We know from your 25 first statement that you were, as you describe it, Page 42</p>	<p>1 Dunn, who went on to edit the New York Daily News, these 2 are proper serious news journalists, and I'm now doing 3 a show at CNN. I don't think it can necessarily follow 4 that because you do a column in your early years which 5 is, in the main, about celebrity, this means you are 6 unfit to cover news. I think that's rather pompous. 7 Q. Okay. Can I ask you the second general question, the 8 turnover of journalists between the tabloids. I'm going 9 to ask you about your experience, which I know ended 10 in May 2004. Was there a rapid turnover between tabloid 11 newspapers or not? 12 A. Yeah, and also between tabloids and broadsheets. 13 I mean, they won't want to admit this, but quite a few 14 people who've gone through the ranks of the broadsheet 15 newspaper game have originated from the tabloids and 16 vice versa. 17 Q. Thank you. I'm going to ask you now another general 18 question about the first two volumes of your diaries. 19 Of course, the first volume is called The Insider, the 20 second volume Don't You Know Who I Am? How accurate and 21 reliable are these as historical documents? 22 A. Well, that's a moot point. I mean, they are my record 23 of ten years of editing newspapers which were compiled 24 not as a contemporaneous diary, as I say in the 25 introduction, but from a collection of notes, memos, Page 44</p>

<p>1 emails, stuff like that, and stuff I just kept on a sort 2 of weekly basis, and I constructed the book in diary 3 form as best my memory served it, but is it a record of 4 100 per cent historical import? I would say no. 5 Q. But is it your best recollection at all material times? 6 A. Yes. 7 Q. In your first statement, please, Mr Morgan, if I could 8 take you to paragraph 15, our page 24194. In answer to 9 a general question, you say: 10 "Ethical determinations are central to the role of 11 an editor of a major national newspaper and to the 12 profession of journalism generally. During my time as 13 editor of the News of the World and the Daily Mirror, 14 ethical considerations were interwoven into my work and 15 were an omnipresent aspect of daily professional life." 16 So that is and was your credo, as it were. Have 17 I got that right? 18 A. Yes. 19 Q. Then paragraph 17, the code of practice, you say: 20 "It was displayed prominently in the newsroom of the 21 Daily Mirror throughout [your] tenure as editor and 22 informed every editorial decision I made during my 23 tenure as editor of the News of the World and the 24 Daily Mirror." 25 Then I paraphrase: particularly in the context of Page 45</p>	<p>1 considerations informed your decision-making, the first 2 in paragraph 29. You were provided with a leaked copy 3 of the budget in 1996 and the upshot was, if I can 4 paraphrase the matter, you didn't think it right to 5 publish it so instead you handed it back? Have I fairly 6 summarised -- 7 A. Yes. 8 Q. -- what happened? 9 A. Yes. 10 Q. Taking the view that it might cause economic harm if the 11 budget were, as it were, trailed in a newspaper before 12 it was publicly announced? Was that your thinking? 13 A. We had a meeting with senior management, which was very 14 unusual, but because of potential implications of 15 leaking the budget, we felt this was the correct thing 16 to do. 17 There were a number of considerations, one of which 18 was we were not able, because of the ticking clock 19 element of this story, to completely verify its 20 veracity, so we weren't entirely sure we were dealing 21 with 100 per cent accurate documents. Secondly, we felt 22 that the material contained in here could potentially 23 cause market chaos and was that a responsible for 24 a newspaper to be doing? Did we need to do that? Was 25 it not a big enough story to actually just have the Page 47</p>
<p>1 balancing privacy of individuals against the public 2 interest. Again, is that right? 3 A. Yes. 4 Q. Paragraph 18, your recollection is: 5 "Compliance with the code of practice was 6 a requirement of contracts of employment of journalists 7 working with Daily Mirror from at least around 2000." 8 You don't think -- and again, I paraphrase -- it was 9 an express requirement of your contract of employment as 10 editor, but then you make it clear in your second 11 statement it really was so obvious that it went without 12 saying that you comply with the code of practice; is 13 that correct? 14 A. Yes. 15 Q. Paragraph 25 of this statement, you deal with libel. 16 You make it clear in your view that the libel laws in 17 the United Kingdom impose enormously onerous 18 requirements. Is that so? 19 A. Yeah, that was my belief when I was editing newspapers. 20 I mean, obviously I've written this nearly eight years 21 after I left editing newspapers, so it relates, really, 22 to my time as an editor. It may well have changed since 23 then. I haven't really followed it. 24 Q. Okay. In paragraphs 28 and following of your first 25 statement, you give us some examples of how ethical Page 46</p>	<p>1 budget and create the excitement that went with that? 2 Looking back on it, there were a number of things we 3 could have done with that story. I'm satisfied that we 4 took a responsible course of action, although I would 5 note that within the space of 24 hours I was castigated 6 by the Guardian. On the night, they praised me for what 7 I'd done, and then by the next day they had come around 8 to thinking this was a terrible arrogation of my 9 journalistic duties, so clearly there were different 10 views about what I'd done. 11 Q. In paragraph 31 -- this is covered in more detail in 12 your first diary -- you deal with a story which broke 13 in December 1997 involving the 17-year-old son of the 14 then Home Secretary being involved in selling cannabis. 15 You explain how that story was confirmed with the then 16 Home Secretary, but you decided, in the circumstances 17 which arose, to publish the story but without 18 identifying the boy concerned; is that correct? 19 A. Yes. 20 Q. Thank you. In paragraph 33, the Naomi Campbell story. 21 That, of course, is the story which ended up in the 22 House of Lords a couple of years later, I think; is that 23 right? 24 A. Yes. 25 Q. Where their Lordships were divided, as we all know, Page 48</p>

<p>1 three, two.</p> <p>2 A. Yes.</p> <p>3 Q. Can I deal with paragraph 34 of your statement, dealing</p> <p>4 with Earl Spencer's complaint in relation to his wife</p> <p>5 receiving certain treatment? His complaint was upheld</p> <p>6 by the PCC and then Mr Rupert Murdoch gave a public</p> <p>7 statement, which you set out in paragraph 34, where he</p> <p>8 said:</p> <p>9 "It is clear in this case that the young man</p> <p>10 [I think that's you] went over the top. I have no</p> <p>11 hesitation in making public this remonstrance and</p> <p>12 I have reminded Mr Morgan forcefully of his</p> <p>13 responsibility to the code to which he, as an editor,</p> <p>14 subscribes in his contract of employment. The company</p> <p>15 will not tolerate its papers bringing into disrepute the</p> <p>16 best practices of popular journalism."</p> <p>17 I'm going to return to that in a moment. May I ask</p> <p>18 you, though, a little bit further on in this first</p> <p>19 witness statement, to deal with the issue of private</p> <p>20 investigators? We're now at paragraph 50 on our</p> <p>21 page 24202. You have no recollection of any personal</p> <p>22 involvement in the use of private investigators during</p> <p>23 your time at the News of the World. Well, we're looking</p> <p>24 there at a period which I think was less than two years,</p> <p>25 but at paragraph 51:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 49</p>	<p>1 advantage of the services of Benjy the binman?</p> <p>2 A. I was trying to remember. I know that I detail at least</p> <p>3 one in my book in relation to a story about Elton John.</p> <p>4 I can't honestly say how many times, but certainly we</p> <p>5 deployed him or his services several times.</p> <p>6 Q. In your first book, 1998, 13 January, the entry says --</p> <p>7 I don't know whether you have the same paperback</p> <p>8 edition?</p> <p>9 A. Yes.</p> <p>10 Q. I have the hardback.</p> <p>11 A. I think it's the same pagination, actually.</p> <p>12 Q. It's page 185. You tell us this:</p> <p>13 "Benjamin Pell, a very strange guy who has peddled</p> <p>14 me a few stories in the past, rang me this morning with</p> <p>15 an extraordinary offer.</p> <p>16 "I have all Elton John's bank statements,' he</p> <p>17 squealed in a high-pitched voice.</p> <p>18 "I knew immediately where we would have got them.</p> <p>19 His nickname in Fleet Street is Benjy the binman. He</p> <p>20 goes around nicking rubbish from outside celebrity's</p> <p>21 houses or the offices of their lawyers and accountants.</p> <p>22 Loads of papers buy his stuff, despite the seriously</p> <p>23 unethical way he acquires it."</p> <p>24 Then I paraphrase: he turned up with sackfuls of</p> <p>25 Elton's documents, including the bank statements. Did</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 51</p>
<p>1 "The Daily Mirror would, from time to time, engage</p> <p>2 private investigators during my time as editor. Such</p> <p>3 professionals were useful tools for journalists in</p> <p>4 securing corroborating evidence for or fact-checking</p> <p>5 articles and stories that journalists had uncovered, or</p> <p>6 about which they had received a tip."</p> <p>7 Do you know what sort of evidence private</p> <p>8 investigators would seek out for your newspaper,</p> <p>9 Mr Morgan?</p> <p>10 A. I don't, because I was never directly involved. This</p> <p>11 was dealt with through the news desk or the features</p> <p>12 desk. So an editor in that position, I think probably</p> <p>13 like most editors, you wouldn't get directly involved.</p> <p>14 But certainly the journalists all knew they had to</p> <p>15 operate within the law. That was enshrined within their</p> <p>16 contracts of employment. So I never had any concerns</p> <p>17 that they were breaking the law with regard to using</p> <p>18 private investigators.</p> <p>19 Q. Okay, I'll come back to that issue, if I may.</p> <p>20 The question, please, of unethical news gathering.</p> <p>21 Presumably you've heard of the term "binnology"; is that</p> <p>22 correct?</p> <p>23 A. I've actually become acquainted with it through the</p> <p>24 process of this Inquiry.</p> <p>25 Q. Okay. On how many occasions did you deploy or take</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 50</p>	<p>1 you have any qualms about that, Mr Morgan?</p> <p>2 A. Yes, slightly. I mean, it clearly is, you know,</p> <p>3 a strange thing to be doing. Benjy the binman used to</p> <p>4 live in a house that had hundreds, if not thousands, of</p> <p>5 rubbish bins. He lived in a sea of rubbish bins. It's</p> <p>6 a very unusual way to lead your life.</p> <p>7 Did I think he was doing anything illegal? No. Did</p> <p>8 I think it was on the cusp of unethical? Yes. But it</p> <p>9 was interesting to me to see the testimony of</p> <p>10 David Leigh, the chief investigations editor of the</p> <p>11 Guardian, who decided to make somebody else pay for this</p> <p>12 information whilst hoovering up all the details himself,</p> <p>13 which is something the Guardian's very good at, and</p> <p>14 since they've appointed themselves as the bishops And</p> <p>15 Fleet Street, I would quite like to examine that</p> <p>16 practice, because in a way, it's not massively</p> <p>17 dissimilar. They take the discarded remains from the</p> <p>18 tabloids, fill their papers with them but never have to</p> <p>19 pay anything. I mean, if I'd thought of what</p> <p>20 David Leigh did, then the Daily Mirror would have been</p> <p>21 a lot more profitable.</p> <p>22 Q. Mr Morgan, we're not the asking questions of Mr Leigh at</p> <p>23 the moment. We're asking questions of you.</p> <p>24 A. Yes.</p> <p>25 Q. Your book makes it clear that -- you use this exact</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 52</p>

<p>1 language -- "despite the seriously unethical way he 2 acquires it". That's not just on the cusp of unethical 3 behaviour; it's well on the wrong side of the line. 4 Would you agree? 5 A. I don't know, actually, because if you throw something 6 away, you're discarding it and so you clearly have no 7 more use for it, and it's going to go off to a rubbish 8 tip where everyone knows people can walk down to rubbish 9 tips and help themselves. 10 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I'm not sure they can, actually, 11 Mr Morgan. I'm not sure they can. But you could get 12 some legal advice about that. 13 A. You can't go to rubbish tips? 14 MR JAY: No, I don't think you can, Mr Morgan. I think the 15 property in the discarded rubbish probably belongs to 16 the local authority once it's on their tip. But are you 17 seriously suggesting that the person who's thrown away 18 rubbish, in this case Mr Elton John, has any expectation 19 that it might end up in the hands of a journalist? 20 A. It wasn't him, actually. It was his manager, John Reid. 21 Q. Yes, his manager. But the same principle applies, 22 doesn't it? 23 A. Sort of -- you know, I take issue -- if you throw 24 rubbish into the street, then I just throw it out there 25 that I wonder how unethical it is if that appears in</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 53</p>	<p>1 he may have a view about the nature of those 2 investigations, and the paper may well have had a very 3 different view. 4 Q. But what view did you have of what the journalists were 5 doing at the time, regardless of the view the 6 Information Commissioner might have had? 7 A. Well, the journalists were obliged under their contracts 8 of employment to work within the law and the only 9 possible exception to that was if you were deploying 10 a public interest defence. It's the only possible 11 excuse you could have for going against the law. 12 Q. But were you aware in general terms of the sort of 13 information that the journalists were seeking from 14 Mr Whittamore? 15 A. No. 16 Q. Namely ex-directory numbers, vehicle registration marks, 17 that sort of thing? Were you aware of that? 18 A. No. (Overspeaking) 19 Q. Wasn't it your responsibility as editor to be aware of 20 what your journalists were doing, at least in general 21 terms? 22 A. I would say the average editor is probably aware of 23 about 5 per cent of what his journalists are up to at 24 any given time on every newspaper. 25 Q. Were you aware of the sort of money that was being spent</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 55</p>
<p>1 a newspaper. I mean, it's rubbish, isn't it? 2 Q. Okay. Private investigators. Have you heard of someone 3 called Steve Whittamore? 4 A. I have since this all blew up, yeah. I wasn't aware of 5 him before. 6 Q. When were you first aware that 45 of the Daily Mirror's 7 journalists were identified by the 8 Information Commissioner positively to have been 9 involved in the commissioning, in his view, of unlawful 10 transactions by Mr Steve Whittamore? 11 A. Was this published in 2006? 12 Q. It was, yes. Were you aware of it before then? 13 A. I was actually working mainly in America. I'd left 14 newspapers two years before, so that was when -- I mean, 15 I vaguely remember noting it when it was published in 16 the papers at the time. 17 Q. The Information Commissioner identified 681 18 transactions, is the term he used, which he considered 19 amounted to breaches of data protection law, and 45 20 named journalists at the Daily Mirror. Are you saying 21 that you weren't aware of any of that happening at the 22 time whilst you were editor? 23 A. I'm not aware of any of the specifics, but I'm also not 24 aware that any of those journalists were ever arrested 25 or charged or prosecuted or convicted of anything. So</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 54</p>	<p>1 on Mr Whittamore? Even if one confined it to the 681 2 positively identified transactions, according to the 3 Information Commissioner's evidence, the figure would be 4 anything between £52,000 and £80,000. Were you aware of 5 that at the time? 6 A. No. 7 Q. Who would be responsible for authorising that level of 8 expenditure? Would it be the managing editor? 9 A. I think -- I think so, yeah. I think at the Mirror it 10 was all pretty tightly run through the managing editor's 11 office and from the desk editors, themselves, the news 12 editor, features editor. It would all be done at that 13 level. It didn't come across my desk as far as I have 14 any recollection of, so that's why I don't have any 15 memory of any of the specifics on this. 16 But I do want to reiterate here: none of this has 17 ever been proven. I mean, these are just things where 18 people said, "Well, we believe this." 19 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Mr Morgan, I'd be very grateful if 20 you would answer Mr Jay's questions rather than enter 21 into a debate with him. I'm sure we'll get on much more 22 quickly. 23 A. Okay, no problem. 24 MR JAY: I may come back to that issue but the issue of 25 phone hacking, which I am obliged to ask you about --</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 56</p>

<p>1 page 279 of the first volume of your diaries, which is 2 an entry for 26 January 2001.</p> <p>3 A. Yes.</p> <p>4 Q. Bear with me one minute while I find it. Four lines 5 into the entry for 26 January:</p> <p>6 "But someone suggested today that people might be 7 listening to my mobile phone messages. Apparently, if 8 you don't change the standard security code that every 9 phone comes with, then anyone can call your number, and 10 if you don't answer, tap in the standard four digit code 11 to hear all your messages. I'll change mine just in 12 case, but it makes me wonder how much public figures and 13 celebrities are aware of this little trick."</p> <p>14 When were you first made aware of this little trick?</p> <p>15 A. Well, according to this, Friday 26 January 2001.</p> <p>16 Q. Were you aware of it before?</p> <p>17 A. Not as far as I'm aware, no.</p> <p>18 Q. Who made you aware of this little trick?</p> <p>19 A. I have no idea, I'm sorry. It was ten years ago and 20 I can't remember.</p> <p>21 Q. Can you assist at all with the context? If you look at 22 the start of the entry, which deals with something else 23 altogether. Just refresh your memory.</p> <p>24 A. Mm-hm.</p> <p>25 Q. I'll ask you to think hard. You don't necessarily have</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 57</p>	<p>1 this Inquiry, I don't think.</p> <p>2 Q. But were you rumour-mongering when you had the interview 3 with the Press Gazette in 2007 or were you speaking from 4 your own experience?</p> <p>5 A. No, I was just passing on rumours that I'd heard.</p> <p>6 Q. Was this a practice which, if we may add a third 7 newspaper to the mix, was taking place within the 8 Daily Mirror before 2004?</p> <p>9 A. I do not believe so, no.</p> <p>10 Q. You don't believe so, or you're sure?</p> <p>11 A. I don't believe so. To the best of my recollection, I 12 do not believe so.</p> <p>13 Q. Then there was Desert Island Discs, June 2009, in which 14 Kirsty Young said:</p> <p>15 "And what about this nice middle class boy who would 16 have to be dealing with -- I mean, essentially people 17 who rake through people's bin for a living?"</p> <p>18 And then you say:</p> <p>19 "Well, I -- "</p> <p>20 And then you're cut off by Kirsty Young and she 21 continues:</p> <p>22 "People who tap people's phones, people who take 23 secret photographs."</p> <p>24 Then you say:</p> <p>25 "I know but --"</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 59</p>
<p>1 to identify the someone who suggested it to you, but 2 whether it was another journalist, whether it was 3 a friend, can you help us at all?</p> <p>4 A. If I can't remember who it is, then obviously I can't 5 narrow it down to a genre. I can't remember.</p> <p>6 Q. Do you remember an interview in which you said: 7 "As for Clive Goodman, I feel a lot of sympathy for 8 a man who has been the convenient fall guy for an 9 investigative practice that everyone knows was going on 10 at almost every paper in Fleet Street for years."</p> <p>11 A. Yes.</p> <p>12 Q. Why did you say that?</p> <p>13 A. Well, that was the rumour mill at the time. I mean, it 14 was exploding around Fleet Street. I wasn't there, 15 I hadn't been there for three years, but everyone you 16 talked to said that he was being made a scapegoat, that 17 this was a widely prevalent thing. I wasn't aware that 18 it was widely prevalent in any specific form. I was 19 hearing these rumours like everybody else. The reality 20 is that it certainly seems to have been much more 21 widespread at one newspaper, and we now know that the 22 Guardian also phone-hacked, so you had two newspapers. 23 So it's certainly wider apparently than just 24 Clive Goodman, but I'm not going to get into 25 rumour-mongering because that's not really the point of</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 58</p>	<p>1 And then you're interrupted again by Kirsty Young:</p> <p>2 "Who do all that very nasty down-in-the-gutter 3 stuff. How do you feel about that?"</p> <p>4 And then you say this:</p> <p>5 "Well, to be honest, let's put that into perspective 6 as well. Not a lot of that went on. A lot of it was 7 done --"</p> <p>8 And then she says:</p> <p>9 "Really?"</p> <p>10 Then you say:</p> <p>11 "A lot of it was done by third parties rather than 12 by the staff themselves. That's not to defend it, 13 because obviously you were running the results of their 14 work. I'm quite happy to be parked in the corner of 15 tabloid beast and to have to sit here and defend all the 16 things I used to get up to and make no pretence about 17 the stuff we used to do. I simply say the net of people 18 doing it for certain was very wide and certainly 19 encompassed the high and the low end of the supposed 20 newspaper market."</p> <p>21 So you were saying there, weren't you, that your 22 newspaper was doing it?</p> <p>23 A. Doing what?</p> <p>24 Q. Phone hacking, amongst other things.</p> <p>25 A. No. If you listen to the tape -- it's quite interesting</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 60</p>

15 (Pages 57 to 60)

<p>1 because I played it back the other day to remind myself.  2 You can see that I go to answer her question immediately  3 and she cuts me off, because I know exactly where she's  4 going and she's talking about the kind of -- what  5 I guess would be described as the dark arts of newspaper  6 investigations, whether that's Benjy the binman, whether  7 it's paparazzi photography, and I was responding in  8 general terms. I think if you hear the tape back in  9 real time, you can see that. I didn't hear her say  10 "phone tapping" and I certainly wasn't alluding to phone  11 tapping. I was talking in a general way about the  12 practices of undercover investigations, the nature of  13 which, by definition, can often sound quite unedifying.  14 Q. The third parties who you were referring to, rather than  15 the staff themselves, who were those third parties in  16 general terms?  17 A. People like Benjy the binman, private investigators.  18 Anybody that -- you know, paparazzi photographers.  19 Q. What were the private investigators doing which fell  20 within the dark arts?  21 A. I don't know specifics. I'm talking about the  22 generalisation of this kind of investigative work.  23 So -- you know, people don't understand how stories get  24 into newspapers or how indeed television news reports  25 get on television. The way that stories are gathered,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 61</p>	<p>1 "phone tapping". She rattles off a list of stuff, and  2 if you listen to it in real time, I think you would see  3 that.  4 Q. Okay, and then there's another interview which is in GQ  5 magazine, which should be under your tab 17, I hope,  6 Mr Morgan. "When Piers met Naomi".  7 A. Yes.  8 Q. I think this is quite recent, 4 February 2011.  9 A. No, no, it's not.  10 Q. It's a reprint of an article which was published  11 in April 2007. That's right. The version we're looking  12 at was later. It's the same sort of phenomenon as we  13 saw with Steve Coogan, that --  14 A. Yes.  15 Q. -- it was reprinted. Unfortunately, the way this was  16 printed off, because it's quite difficult to get these  17 things off the Internet, it's about 13 pages in.  18 A. I've got the page, actually.  19 Q. When Naomi pulls out a large notepad --  20 A. Yeah.  21 Q. -- and she starts interviewing you. The question she  22 puts to you at the bottom of the page:  23 "What do you think of the News of the World  24 reporter who was recently found guilty of tapping the  25 royals' phones? Did you ever allow that when you were</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 63</p>
<p>1 the way that they are processed, can often sound  2 unedifying. It doesn't make it illegal.  3 Q. I just wonder what you were intending to encompass by  4 the third parties and private investigators, Mr Morgan.  5 What activities were they up to on your behalf?  6 A. I don't know specifics, as I've said to you. But  7 I think I've given a range of things from, you know, the  8 rubbish bin saga we've talked about, the paparazzi  9 photography, to staking people out at their homes. It's  10 not the kind of work that sounds that edifying, but  11 every news organisation will do it in the process of  12 gathering news. It doesn't matter if you're  13 a broadsheet, a television company or a tabloid.  14 Q. Are you saying you didn't hear Kirsty Young mention  15 people who tap people's phones?  16 A. No. I think if you listen to the tape back, you can see  17 that I probably didn't hear it.  18 Q. Because the transcript says -- admittedly it's:  19 "People who tap people's phones, people who take  20 secret photographs."  21 And then you say:  22 "I know but -- "  23 And then, to be fair, she interrupts you again.  24 A. I've already tried to answer on her first point before  25 she mentions phone tapping. I didn't hear her say</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 62</p>	<p>1 there?"  2 "Well, I was there in 1994, 1995, before mobiles  3 were used very much, and that particular trick wasn't  4 known about. I can't get too excited about it, I must  5 say. It's pretty well known that if you didn't change  6 your PIN code when you were a celebrity who bought a new  7 phone, then reporters could ring your mobile, tap in  8 a standard factory setting number and hear your  9 messages. That's not, to me, as serious as planting  10 a bug in someone's house, which is what some people  11 seemed to think was going on."  12 When you say there "it was pretty well known", what  13 period of time would you say it was pretty well known,  14 if I can ask the question in that way?  15 A. Well, I know from my own book that I became aware of it  16 in early 2001 and I have vague memories after that of  17 this gathering awareness. I think members of the public  18 knew. From what I hear, this wasn't a great trade  19 secret, but my memory is not grey about this. It was  20 a long time ago.  21 Q. Okay. After you've expressed a view about its  22 seriousness -- I mean, does that indicate to us that you  23 didn't think it was particularly serious?  24 A. No, I think there had been a misconception that built up  25 that this involved journalists breaking into people's</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 64</p>

16 (Pages 61 to 64)



<p>1 houses and planting bugs in their phones, and I was 2 really talking about the difference, in my view, in 3 seriousness between that and what is actually a very 4 simple thing to do on a mobile phone, and something that 5 I'm told, although I have no evidence myself, was widely 6 known to the public, and in fact they used to do it to 7 each other as a bit of a lark. But that's only what 8 I've read.</p> <p>9 Q. Ms Campbell asked you: 10 "It is an invasion of privacy though." 11 And you say: 12 "It is, yes, but loads of newspaper journalists were 13 doing it. Clive Goodman, the News of the World 14 reporter, has been made the scapegoat for a very 15 widespread practice." 16 So you're making it clear there what your belief was 17 in April 2007; is that correct? 18 A. Yeah, and it seems to have been borne out by events. 19 Q. But you were sticking your neck out quite far, weren't 20 you, Mr Morgan? 21 "... a very widespread practice ... loads of 22 newspaper journalists were doing it." 23 You were making statements there which would 24 suggest, at least, that you were basing yourself on 25 personal knowledge, even if what other people might have</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 65</p>	<p>1 A. Again, that was the rumour mill and that was my concern. 2 When the person who I can't remember said to me: "Look, 3 they may be hacking your phones", and I was like: "What 4 is that?" and they told me -- you know, I'd been told 5 people were doing it to me through my DTI investigation, 6 which I know you may want to refer to later, but I have 7 no specifics and I have no proof or evidence of that. 8 Q. But then you say: 9 "... and no, I didn't like it." 10 Which suggests to the objective reader that you knew 11 far more about who was doing it to you than you are 12 telling us now, Mr Morgan. Could you assist us, please? 13 A. I didn't like the thought of it if it was true. I have 14 actually no hard evidence that it was true, but I didn't 15 like the idea of it, and it certainly made sense to me 16 because so much stuff was leaking at the time. 17 Q. Did the rumour mill you're referring to embrace your 18 newspaper as being amongst the perpetrators? 19 A. Not that I remember, no. 20 Q. Come on, Mr Morgan. Your newspaper was near the top of 21 the list, wasn't it? 22 A. Top of the list of what? 23 Q. Of the perpetrators, those who were carrying out this 24 sort of practice. And you well know that. 25 A. Well, you also well know that not a single person has</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 67</p>
<p>1 told you. Wouldn't you agree? 2 A. No, I wouldn't agree. 3 Q. But why did you say he was made the scapegoat for a very 4 widespread practice? 5 A. Well, I would have thought that subsequent events have 6 shown that he was made the scapegoat. It's a fact. 7 Q. But in April 2007, we were looking at one individual, 8 Mr Goodman, and one private investigator, Mr Mulcaire. 9 Not many people were saying that it was a very 10 widespread practice unless individuals happened to know 11 it was a very widespread practice. Do you see the 12 point? 13 A. I see your point, but no, the point I'm making is that 14 the Fleet Street rumour mill, which is always extremely 15 noisy and often not entirely accurate, was buzzing ever 16 since this all blew up with just endless rumours that it 17 spread a lot further than Clive Goodman, and subsequent 18 events have shown that to be the case. So I do think he 19 was made a scapegoat and having known him when I was at 20 the News of the World, I felt sorry for him. 21 Q. A couple of questions further on: 22 "Would you like it if someone listened to your 23 messages?" 24 "Oh, they used to do it to me." 25 Who was the "they"?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 66</p>	<p>1 made any formal or legal complaint against the Daily 2 Mirror for phone hacking. Not one. So why would you 3 say that? 4 Q. I'll continue with what you told Ms Campbell, just to 5 complete this line of questioning: 6 "But with new technology comes new temptation and 7 new issues, and this has brought the practice out into 8 the open and it won't happen any more -- celebrities get 9 a lot more privacy now than they used to." 10 So you believed, is this right, that this practice 11 was coming to an end, is that so, in April 2007? 12 A. I certainly felt that with the jailing of Clive Goodman 13 that the practice would be dead in the water, yeah. 14 Q. Have you listened to recordings of what you knew to be 15 illegally obtained voicemail messages? 16 A. I do not believe so, no. 17 Q. Well, you either did or you didn't. I don't think it's 18 a question of belief. 19 A. No, I did not -- 20 Q. Have you listened to recordings of what you knew to be 21 illegally obtained voicemail messages? 22 A. I do not believe so. 23 Q. Well, you know about the Mail Online piece, which 24 I think is your tab 22, 19 October 2006. Could I invite 25 you to look at that, please. It's under our tab 1 in</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 68</p>

<p>1 the second volume.                  2 A. Yes.                  3 Q. We're working from slightly different volumes. It's                  4 about ten pages into tab 1.                  5 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Thank you.                  6 MR JAY: It's dated 19 October 2006. It's quite a frank                  7 headline, but that doesn't matter:                  8 "I'm sorry, Macca, for introducing you to this                  9 monster."                  10 So we've got our bearings there, and what you say at                  11 the start of this piece is that it was you who                  12 introduced Sir Paul McCartney to Heather Mills. That's                  13 what you say, isn't it?                  14 A. Yes.                  15 Q. I am going to miss out some irrelevant parts, if you                  16 don't mind, unless you want me to read them out, but you                  17 explain that you introduced Heather Mills to Paul after                  18 the show and then we know what happened next, as it                  19 were. I'm going to cut straight to the quick. Right in                  20 the middle of this page:                  21 "Stories soon emerged that the marriage was in                  22 trouble."                  23 Do you have that sentence?                  24 A. I do, yeah.                  25 Q. "At one stage, I was played a tape of a message Paul had</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 69</p>	<p>1 that was unethical?                  2 A. Not unethical, no.                  3 Q. Why not?                  4 A. It doesn't necessarily follow that listening to somebody                  5 speaking to somebody else is unethical.                  6 Q. But on a tape of a voicemail message, you didn't think                  7 that was unethical?                  8 A. It depends on the circumstances in which you're                  9 listening to it.                  10 Q. Can you tell us something about the circumstances which                  11 might lead us to think that it was not unethical?                  12 A. I'm afraid I can't, no, because I'm not going to do                  13 anything that may identify the source.                  14 Q. But the source would only be someone who was                  15 participating in the same unethical activity as you                  16 were; isn't that true?                  17 A. Well, you're presuming it's unethical.                  18 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Let's think about it this way,                  19 Mr Morgan. Without identifying your source, the only                  20 person who would lawfully be able to listen to the                  21 message is the lady in question or somebody authorised                  22 on her behalf to listen to it. Isn't that right?                  23 A. Possibly.                  24 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Well?                  25 A. Sorry, what do you expect me to say?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 71</p>
<p>1 left for Heather on her mobile phone."                  2 Can you remember the circumstances, Mr Morgan?                  3 A. I can't discuss where I was played that tape or who                  4 played it, because to do so would be to compromise                  5 a source, and I can't do that.                  6 Q. I am not sure about that, Mr Morgan. You can discuss in                  7 general terms where it was, can't you?                  8 A. Actually, no, I can't.                  9 Q. It was a tape of a voicemail message, wasn't it?                  10 A. I'm not going to discuss where I heard it or who played                  11 it to me for the reasons I've discussed. I don't think                  12 it's right, and in fact the Inquiry has already stated                  13 to me you don't expect me to identify sources.                  14 Q. No, but I think we do expect you to identify what is                  15 obvious to anyone reading this, that you listened to                  16 a tape of a voicemail message; is that correct?                  17 A. I listened to a tape of a message, yes.                  18 Q. But it was a voicemail message, wasn't it?                  19 A. I believed it was, yes.                  20 Q. Then you deal in more detail here with what you heard:                  21 "It was heartbreaking. The couple had clearly had                  22 a tiff, Heather had fled to India and Paul was pleading                  23 for her to come back."                  24 And he even sang something into the answerphone, as                  25 you say. You listened to all that. Did you know that</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 70</p>	<p>1 MR JAY: Put forward another possibility if there is one,                  2 I think.                  3 A. Well, I mean I can't go into the details of it without                  4 compromising a source, and I'm not going to do that.                  5 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I am perfectly happy to call Lady                  6 McCartney to give evidence as to whether she authorised                  7 you to listen to her voicemails. If she didn't --                  8 A. We know from --                  9 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: She may say she did, in which case                  10 you're not compromising anybody. But if she didn't,                  11 then we can proceed on the premise that it's somebody                  12 else, can't we?                  13 A. What we know for a fact about Lady Heather Mills                  14 McCartney is that in their divorce case Paul McCartney                  15 stated as a fact that she had recorded their                  16 conversations and given them to the media.                  17 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Maybe I'll do that then.                  18 MR JAY: Can you help us, please, as to approximately when                  19 the events described here took place, namely you                  20 listening to the message?                  21 A. I believe the early part of 2000, 2001, but I can't                  22 remember exactly when.                  23 Q. So we're clearly in the era when you were the editor of                  24 the Daily Mirror, aren't we?                  25 A. I believe so, yes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 72</p>

<p>1 Q. Was your source an employee of the Daily Mirror?  2 A. I'm not going to go into any details about the source.  3 Q. I don't think you'd be identifying the source if you  4 were to tell us whether or not the individual was an  5 employee of the Daily Mirror. Can you not do that?  6 A. I'm not going to start any trail that leads to  7 identification of the source.  8 Q. Did you listen to Ulrika Johnson's voicemail messages in  9 relation to Sven Goran Eriksson?  10 A. No, I did not.  11 Q. Do you recall a lunch at the Daily Mirror hosted by  12 Victor Blank on 20 September 2002 when you advised  13 Ulrika Johnson to change her PIN number and you started  14 mimicking her Swedish accent? Do you remember that  15 occasion?  16 A. No, I don't remember the specifics. I think I remember  17 her coming to a lunch.  18 Q. Breaking it down into its two parts, might you have  19 advised her to change her PIN number?  20 A. I don't recall anything like that.  21 Q. Was a Mr Ben Verwaayen, if I pronounce his name  22 correctly, also at the lunch, indeed sitting next to or  23 close to you?  24 A. He did come to one of the lunches. Do you mean the  25 British Telecoms guy?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 73</p>	<p>1 back and confirmed it.  2 Q. It's page 330 of The Insider, I think, the entry for  3 18 April 2002, where you say:  4 "I think you may have to sit down for this one."  5 Are you with me?  6 A. Yes.  7 Q. "This is Richard Wallace, my new supremo, who had flown  8 into my office looking even more pleased with himself  9 than usual, and I could tell from the wicked grin on his  10 face that this was a big one."  11 I can miss out some of the next bit, but you never  12 set out there what his source or who his source was, do  13 you?  14 A. Not here, no.  15 Q. Maybe the reason for your diffidence, Mr Morgan, is that  16 you didn't want to set out precisely who or what the  17 source was, because you knew that that would be a bit  18 tricky, to put it mildly. Would you agree with that?  19 A. I wouldn't agree with that, no.  20 Q. Then it's right, you did phone Ulrika's agent and then  21 there were various exchanges, but can I ask you to deal  22 with the entry for 21 April, the last line:  23 "I attribute this all to 'close friends of Ulrika'.  24 What was that a reference to?  25 A. Well, I'd had a conversation with Melanie Cantor and she</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 75</p>
<p>1 Q. Yes.  2 A. He came to one of the lunches, but I don't know which  3 one.  4 Q. Did you tell him he should tell his customers to be more  5 careful about changing their PIN numbers?  6 A. I don't recall that.  7 Q. Might you have told him that?  8 A. Well, since I'd been warned, it's possible, yeah.  9 Q. Can I put to you, as generally as I can, the  10 circumstances in which I suggest that you did listen to  11 Ulrika Johnson's voicemail? A competitor of yours had  12 hacked into her voicemail. Obviously I'm not going to  13 go into the details of that. There was then boasting  14 about it in a pub and then someone told someone close to  15 you, who let it be known to you that this is what  16 happened, and then you decided that you -- in other  17 words, the Mirror -- had better hack into Ulrika  18 Johnson's voicemail as well, and that is precisely what  19 happened?  20 A. Absolute nonsense as far as I'm concerned.  21 Q. None of that is true; is that right?  22 A. No. In fact, I detail in my book how I was simply told:  23 "We've had a tip that Ulrika Johnson's having an affair  24 with Sven Goran Eriksson", and I rang Ulrika's agent,  25 who I knew very well, she spoke to Ulrika and she came</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 74</p>	<p>1 doesn't want to be named on the record, but she would be  2 happy for me to say "close friend of Ulrika", which she  3 was.  4 Q. But isn't that a reference to whoever was the source in  5 the first place, rather than Ulrika's agent, who you  6 spoke to to confirm whether or not the story was  7 correct?  8 A. No. I think it's self-evident. If you read from:  9 "Melanie Cantor rang me in the afternoon to say  10 Ulrika's furious with Sven because he won't take her  11 calls. It looks like he's freezing her out.  12 "She says he's a spineless little toad and a liar."  13 "I attribute this all to 'close friends of Ulrika'.  14 I would have thought it's fairly obvious, isn't it?  15 Q. Okay. You've seen, I think, the statement of  16 Mr Hipwell, which is in our bundle at tab 9.  17 A. Yes.  18 Q. If you look at the bottom right-hand side, page 24227 --  19 A. It's actually not numbered this, I don't think.  20 Q. Is it not numbered at all? If you look at the bottom  21 right-hand side of each page, do you see MOD and then  22 a long number?  23 A. I don't, actually, no. I'm looking at his witness  24 statement; is that --  25 Q. It's going to be the third page.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 76</p>

<p>1 A. Okay.</p> <p>2 Q. The paragraph beginning in the middle of the page:</p> <p>3 "Another example of the lack of corporate governance</p> <p>4 of the Mirror was the unfettered activities of its</p> <p>5 showbusiness team."</p> <p>6 Are you with me?</p> <p>7 A. Yes.</p> <p>8 Q. "I sat next to the Mirror's showbiz journalists on the</p> <p>9 22nd floor of Canary Wharf Tower ..."</p> <p>10 Pausing there, is that where the showbiz journalists</p> <p>11 were based?</p> <p>12 A. Yes, I think so, yeah.</p> <p>13 Q. "... and so was able to see at close hand how they</p> <p>14 operated. I witnessed journalists carrying out repeated</p> <p>15 privacy infringements, using what has now become</p> <p>16 a well-known technique to hack into the voicemail</p> <p>17 systems of celebrities, their friends, publicists and</p> <p>18 public relations executives. The openness and frequency</p> <p>19 of their hacking activities gave me the impression that</p> <p>20 hacking was considered a bog-standard journalistic tool</p> <p>21 for gathering information. For example, I would, on</p> <p>22 occasion, hear two or more members of the showbusiness</p> <p>23 team discussing what they had heard on voicemails openly</p> <p>24 across their desks. One of the reporters showed me the</p> <p>25 technique, giving me a demonstration of how to hack into</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 77</p>	<p>1 Q. So I think it follows that your evidence must be that it</p> <p>2 wasn't going on, or maybe your evidence is that it was</p> <p>3 going on? Could you assist us, please?</p> <p>4 A. My evidence is that I have no reason or knowledge to</p> <p>5 believe it was going on.</p> <p>6 Q. But what did you yourself know from your own perception</p> <p>7 of what was going on? Did you see this sort of thing</p> <p>8 going on, Mr Morgan?</p> <p>9 A. No.</p> <p>10 Q. You sure about that?</p> <p>11 A. 100 per cent. I'd also point out that James Hipwell is</p> <p>12 a convicted criminal.</p> <p>13 Q. We know that and you've told us that several times in</p> <p>14 your second witness statement.</p> <p>15 A. Yes.</p> <p>16 Q. But again you come close to arguing a position rather</p> <p>17 than giving us evidence.</p> <p>18 Can I just ask you a number of other points on what</p> <p>19 Mr Hipwell says? He says as well, page 24228, the</p> <p>20 fourth page, five lines from the bottom:</p> <p>21 "Occasionally when big stories emerged, he [that's</p> <p>22 you] would ask us, myself and Mr Bhoynul, about the</p> <p>23 source of our information -- the prime concern being the</p> <p>24 credibility of the source and whether or not the paper</p> <p>25 would face a libel action on publication if the story</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 79</p>
<p>1 voicemails. The practice seemed to be common on other</p> <p>2 newspapers as well -- journalists at the Mirror appeared</p> <p>3 to know that their counterparts from the Sun were also</p> <p>4 listening to voicemail messages because on occasion</p> <p>5 I heard members of the Mirror team joking about having</p> <p>6 deleted a message from a celebrity's voicemail in order</p> <p>7 to ensure that no journalist from the Sun would get the</p> <p>8 same scoop by hacking in and hearing it themselves."</p> <p>9 Is that something you knew about, Mr Morgan?</p> <p>10 A. No.</p> <p>11 Q. But you were quite hands-on, weren't you? You had come</p> <p>12 up through showbusiness journalism. You were close to</p> <p>13 the showbusiness journalists on the 22nd floor, weren't</p> <p>14 you?</p> <p>15 A. They worked for me, and I liked them and they were very</p> <p>16 good at their jobs.</p> <p>17 Q. But didn't you take a keen interest in what they were</p> <p>18 doing?</p> <p>19 A. I took a keen interest in everything the paper was</p> <p>20 doing.</p> <p>21 Q. So if this sort of thing was going on "as a bog standard</p> <p>22 journalistic tool", it's something you would be likely</p> <p>23 to know about if indeed it was going on. Wouldn't you</p> <p>24 agree?</p> <p>25 A. Probably, yeah.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 78</p>	<p>1 turned out to be wrong."</p> <p>2 Is that correct?</p> <p>3 A. Sorry, can you repeat that?</p> <p>4 Q. It's five lines from the bottom, you asking him about</p> <p>5 the source of their information occasionally, he says.</p> <p>6 Is that correct?</p> <p>7 A. I had very little to deal with Mr Hipwell at all.</p> <p>8 I dealt with Anil Bhoynul in the main, so I have no</p> <p>9 recollection of any conversation with him ever about the</p> <p>10 source of any story.</p> <p>11 Q. But as a generality, talking about your practice rather</p> <p>12 than a specific case, would you ask your journalists</p> <p>13 about the source of their information?</p> <p>14 A. Not usually, no.</p> <p>15 Q. On occasion, would you?</p> <p>16 A. Very occasionally.</p> <p>17 Q. At the top of the next page, where Mr Hipwell says:</p> <p>18 "From my experience of working in newspapers, news</p> <p>19 editors and editors ask reporters for the source of</p> <p>20 their stories as a matter of course -- the fear of libel</p> <p>21 action, or having to print a grovelling apology their</p> <p>22 number one concern."</p> <p>23 Is that right or not?</p> <p>24 A. No.</p> <p>25 Q. Are you seeking to distance yourself from these sources,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 80</p>

<p>1 because the sources we are talking about are the fruits 2 of phone hacking? 3 A. No. 4 Q. Two pages further on, our page 24231, four lines from 5 the top of the page, Mr Hipwell says: 6 "There is, however, an undeniable pressure to 7 deliver scoops." 8 Is that right or not? 9 A. If you edit a tabloid newspaper or you work for one, 10 there's a convention that you would try and come up with 11 some stories, yes. 12 Q. Then he continues: 13 "Exclusives sell newspapers, especially Sunday 14 newspapers, and every journalist is under pressure to 15 bring them in." 16 Would you agree with that statement or not? 17 A. Journalists were under pressure to bring in stories, 18 yes, definitely. That is their job description. 19 Q. He continues: 20 "For example, Mr Morgan would regularly send out 21 all-staff emails berating his journalists for not 22 bringing in enough exclusives, and these emails would 23 often be quite menacing in tone." 24 Is that correct or not? 25 A. I would quibble with "menacing in tone", but I would</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 81</p>	<p>1 Is that correct or not? 2 A. No, I believe there was. I mean, in relation to the 3 Press Complaints Commission code of conduct, which was 4 on display in the newsroom. There wasn't an individual 5 one for the Daily Mirror, but journalists were expected 6 to adhere to the code. 7 Q. Okay. 8 "There was no guidance from your superiors or from 9 the in-house lawyers ..." 10 Would you agree with that? 11 A. I wouldn't, no. There was regular guidance from the 12 lawyers, in particular. 13 Q. Then he continues: 14 "... and there was evidence of a culture of advance 15 information about tips and share-dealing within 16 the office." 17 Would you agree with that? 18 A. I would dispute that. 19 Q. You don't think there was any culture of that sort 20 abroad in the Daily Mirror at the time or at all; is 21 that right? 22 A. No, I don't. I mean, certain journalists did buy shares 23 but I don't think there was a culture of this at all. 24 Q. I think you were one of them, weren't you? You bought 25 £67,000 worth of shares in a company called Viglen the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 83</p>
<p>1 certainly occasionally put a rocket up their collective 2 backsides if I felt they weren't performing well enough. 3 Q. Have you seen the sentencing remarks of 4 Mr Justice Beatson in connection with the criminal 5 proceedings against Mr Hipwell and Mr Bhoynul? 6 A. Is that in a tab here? 7 Q. Yes, it is. I'm going to find it for you. Bear with me 8 one moment. 9 Bear with me because I know your bundle has been 10 tabbed in a slightly different way. I'm not sure you 11 have this, Mr Morgan. 12 A. I might have it. I think I have got it. It's number 2, 13 3 and 4 here in my -- 14 Q. Someone is whispering to me helpfully that it's behind 15 your witness statement. Sorry, it's behind Mr Hipwell's 16 witness statement in your bundle. 17 A. Yes, I think I have it, yeah. 18 Q. There's just one part of this I want to ask you about 19 for comment. I'm not going to ask you about the 20 particular circumstances of their case. 21 Mr Justice Beatson says on page 5, about ten lines from 22 the bottom of page 5 of the sentencing remarks: 23 "I also take into account the fact that at that time 24 there was no formal code of conduct for journalists at 25 the Daily Mirror."</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 82</p>	<p>1 day before it was tipped by the Daily Mirror, I think on 2 18 January 2000; is that right? 3 A. Yes. 4 Q. It culminated in the PCC upholding a complaint, 5 a technical breach of the code but no more than that, 6 and the DTI, after a four-year investigation, not taking 7 the matter any further; is that right? 8 A. Yes. 9 Q. Although originally, I think your position, Mr Morgan, 10 was that you'd only purchased £20,000 worth of shares; 11 is that right? 12 A. No, that wasn't my position. I told my company 13 immediately how much shares I'd bought. 14 Q. But the PCC's adjudication, the first one, referred only 15 to £20,000 worth of shares, didn't it? 16 A. I believe so, yes. 17 Q. Wasn't that based on the information that you provided 18 the PCC? 19 A. Not that I provided, no. The company did. 20 Q. Which company? 21 A. I think it was Trinity Mirror then, wasn't it? 22 Q. But it must have been information which you provided 23 Trinity Mirror for them to provide to the PCC. Can we 24 not agree about that? Trinity Mirror would not know 25 unless you told them.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 84</p>

<p>1 A. Trinity Mirror were well aware within, I think, ten 2 hours of the story first emerging exactly how many 3 shares I'd bought.</p> <p>4 Q. Based on information you provided; is that correct, 5 Mr Morgan?</p> <p>6 A. Yes.</p> <p>7 Q. So one way or another they were under the impression -- 8 incorrect, it seems -- that it was £20,000 worth of 9 shares and not £67,000. Is that right?</p> <p>10 A. Who was under that impression?</p> <p>11 Q. Trinity Mirror and thereafter the PCC. Are we agreed 12 about that?</p> <p>13 A. No. No, they're not. As I keep saying -- sorry, just 14 to clarify, I told Trinity Mirror exactly how many 15 shares I had bought.</p> <p>16 Q. So do you know how it is that the wrong information then 17 was provided to the PCC?</p> <p>18 A. I believe that the company took a view that there were 19 certain pieces of information which had not already been 20 made public which had led to other people involved in 21 the scandal constructing a story based around a sequence 22 of events which they were reading about and total sums 23 of money that they were reading about and time of 24 purchase of shares they were reading about, and the 25 company felt, for better or for worse, that if this was</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 85</p>	<p>1 asked, 'If you don't win the case, will you kill Piers 2 Morgan?' Hewitt replies, 'Maybe. I don't know, I don't 3 know.'</p> <p>4 "In another call, he expands on his thoughts, saying 5 he knows a Nicaraguan hitman who could take me out for 6 £20,000. God Almighty. I hurriedly leaked all this to 7 the Telegraph diary, so at least everyone will know who 8 did it if some bloke from South America guns me down in 9 Soho."</p> <p>10 Why did you say "dodgy transcript"?</p> <p>11 A. Well, I would have thought somebody planning to have me 12 assassinated by a Nicaraguan hit man is fairly dodgy.</p> <p>13 Q. It might be said that the dodginess relates to the 14 circumstances in which the transcript was obtained. Is 15 that not a possibility here?</p> <p>16 A. No, because I believe that the dodgy aspect I was 17 referring to actually pertained to the fact that I was 18 hoping that this was not an accurate record of the 19 conversation that had taken place.</p> <p>20 Q. Okay. Can I ask you, please, about paying police 21 officers. Is that something which happened at the 22 Daily Mirror whilst you were editor?</p> <p>23 A. I have no reason to believe so, no.</p> <p>24 Q. Are you saying by that that it was not brought to your 25 attention?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 87</p>
<p>1 information they didn't put in the public domain, it 2 would expose other people involved for telling a false 3 story, which is pretty much what happened.</p> <p>4 Q. But the difference between the £20,000 and the £67,000 5 worth of shares was based on the fact that some of the 6 shares were put into a personal equity plan of yours, 7 I think, and the balance of the shares were purchased in 8 your wife's name. Do I have that right?</p> <p>9 A. I think so, yes.</p> <p>10 Q. I can't see at the moment why that wasn't information 11 which shouldn't have been provided in the first instance 12 to the PCC. Can you help us?</p> <p>13 A. I mean, you'd have to ask Trinity Mirror. They were the 14 ones who did that. I've read the adjudication here to 15 remind myself and I've read why Trinity Mirror did that. 16 I've tried to outline their reasoning but I think for 17 further details on this, you'd have to ask them.</p> <p>18 Q. Okay. May I ask you about one other entry in your 19 diary, the dodgy transcript entry in The Insider, 20 page 269, 28 July 2000.</p> <p>21 A. Yes.</p> <p>22 Q. Where you say: 23 "We were offered a dodgy transcript of a phone 24 conversation between James Hewitt and Anna Ferretti 25 today. My attention was drawn for a moment when she</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 86</p>	<p>1 A. I've never been made aware of any evidence for that at 2 all.</p> <p>3 Q. Can I ask you to clarify one entry in the diary, I'm not 4 sure actually that we pre-notified you of this, but 5 forgive me if we didn't. It relates to evidence which 6 was given to the Culture and Media Select Committee in 7 2003. Do you recall that?</p> <p>8 A. I recall appearing, yeah.</p> <p>9 Q. And your position on that occasion, do I have this 10 right, is that standards in the tabloid press had 11 improved in the previous few years? Is that correct?</p> <p>12 A. Yes. Yes.</p> <p>13 Q. There's a further paragraph which I'll miss out and then 14 you say: 15 "Later, Rebekah excelled herself by virtually 16 admitting she's been illegally paying policemen for 17 information. I called her to thank her for dropping the 18 tabloid baton at the last minute. She apologised. 19 "That's why I should never be seen or heard in public." 20 I'm not going to ask you about that particular 21 sentence, but what I do want to ask you is whether your 22 reference to "dropping the tabloid baton at the last 23 minute" was a general acceptance that illegally paying 24 policemen was a practice which went on in the tabloid 25 press generically? Would you agree with that?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 88</p>

<p>1 A. No.</p> <p>2 Q. Why did you call to thank her for dropping the tabloid</p> <p>3 baton at the last minute?</p> <p>4 A. Because it was getting huge attention from the press and</p> <p>5 was clearly a clanger on her part, a mistake.</p> <p>6 Q. In what sense a mistake, at least from your perspective?</p> <p>7 A. I think she accepted it was a mistake. I can't remember</p> <p>8 exactly what will she said at the time, but I think it</p> <p>9 was something she didn't mean to say.</p> <p>10 Q. Okay. But from your standpoint, was it a mistake</p> <p>11 because she shouldn't have said it, or was it a mistake</p> <p>12 because it was untrue? Do you see the distinction?</p> <p>13 A. I have no idea if it was true or not.</p> <p>14 Q. Okay. There's another incident which caught my</p> <p>15 attention in The Insider. This is when a journalist was</p> <p>16 put under cover at Buckingham palace for a number of</p> <p>17 weeks as a footman. Do you recall that? I think we</p> <p>18 might be hearing from him at that stage. The journalist</p> <p>19 was a Mr Ryan Parry.</p> <p>20 A. Yes.</p> <p>21 Q. Was that something you organised?</p> <p>22 A. Yes, it was.</p> <p>23 Q. Why?</p> <p>24 A. Because on the face of it, it appeared to be a massive</p> <p>25 security breach involving the Royal Family, which is</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 89</p>	<p>1 further investigation, you didn't publish; that is</p> <p>2 correct?</p> <p>3 A. That's right, yeah.</p> <p>4 Q. You explain why, but there was evidence that the female</p> <p>5 switchboard operator was psychiatrically disturbed or</p> <p>6 ill. Then you say:</p> <p>7 "Lots of people break down when we confront them and</p> <p>8 lots threaten to kill themselves."</p> <p>9 Was that an accurate statement in your diary?</p> <p>10 A. Yeah. I don't know what I mean by "lots". I think it</p> <p>11 was more of a general sense that when is people get</p> <p>12 confronted -- you know, paedophiles and people like</p> <p>13 that -- they did tend to play that card.</p> <p>14 Q. Then you say:</p> <p>15 "But there's a difference between paedophiles and</p> <p>16 lonely disturbed women like this. I could not have</p> <p>17 lived with myself if we'd exposed her on page 17 and</p> <p>18 then she had killed herself."</p> <p>19 What is the difference?</p> <p>20 A. Between a paedophile and somebody who runs</p> <p>21 a switchboard?</p> <p>22 Q. Yes.</p> <p>23 A. I would have thought it's fairly self-evident.</p> <p>24 Q. Yes, but explain it to us, please, in this context.</p> <p>25 A. Well, one is, you know, potentially abusing and raping</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 91</p>
<p>1 exactly what it turned out to be.</p> <p>2 Q. Although it's one you instigated, of course, wasn't it?</p> <p>3 A. Well, rather us than a terrorist.</p> <p>4 Q. Okay. Did you publish any stories as a result of this?</p> <p>5 Presumably you did.</p> <p>6 A. We did, yeah. It led the news for about a week.</p> <p>7 Q. Did you feel that was in the public interest?</p> <p>8 A. Absolutely.</p> <p>9 Q. Okay. Why, Mr Morgan?</p> <p>10 A. Well, because we exposed a huge series of loopholes in</p> <p>11 the security systems surrounding the senior members of</p> <p>12 the Royal Family, which was so easy to expose that we</p> <p>13 could easily have been a terrorist and if we had been</p> <p>14 terrorists and not journalists, then the Royal Family</p> <p>15 senior members might not be here today. It's hard to</p> <p>16 imagine anything more in the public interest than that.</p> <p>17 Q. Okay. I'm sorry to go back in time, and I know we're</p> <p>18 now going on considerable way back in time, to 7 July</p> <p>19 1994 and page 40 of The Insider. This is the entry for</p> <p>20 7 July 1994.</p> <p>21 A. Yes.</p> <p>22 Q. This is what you describe as an intriguing tale about</p> <p>23 a female switchboard operator who chatted up a caller</p> <p>24 and became obsessed him, tracking down his address and</p> <p>25 pestering him big time. This is a story which, on</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 90</p>	<p>1 young children, and the other one is manning</p> <p>2 a switchboard.</p> <p>3 Q. But the paedophiles at the relevant time are presumably</p> <p>4 not doing those things, but you're still exposing them,</p> <p>5 aren't you, just because they are or have been</p> <p>6 paedophiles in the past? Is that the position?</p> <p>7 A. I certainly think it's overtly in the public interest to</p> <p>8 expose paedophiles, yes.</p> <p>9 Q. Then you say:</p> <p>10 "I'll developing a curious moral code as I go.</p> <p>11 Sometimes the job does feel a bit like playing God with</p> <p>12 people's lives. I get ultimately to decide every week</p> <p>13 who lives and dies by the News of the World's sword."</p> <p>14 Is that an accurate descriptions, in slightly florid</p> <p>15 language, of what a job of an editor of a tabloid</p> <p>16 newspaper entails?</p> <p>17 A. Metaphorically speaking, yes, I think so it is.</p> <p>18 Q. "That sword can be a ruthless, highly destructive</p> <p>19 implement."</p> <p>20 Is that true as well?</p> <p>21 A. Yes.</p> <p>22 Q. "I've not had any sleepless nights yet but I can feel</p> <p>23 them coming."</p> <p>24 Of course it wasn't that much longer. You were only</p> <p>25 on the News of the World for another 13 months or so</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 92</p>

<p>1 before you moved on. But you, of course, had immense 2 power, didn't you, in this position as editor of the 3 News of the World and then the Daily Mirror? Presumably 4 you would agree with that? 5 A. Yes, I think the holder of the office of editor has 6 immense power, yes. It wasn't me personally. It's 7 whoever's the editor. 8 Q. Did you feel that you had sufficient judgment, at the 9 age of 28, to weigh up the difficult issues of the 10 private interests of individuals against the public 11 interest, Mr Morgan? 12 A. I did my best. 13 Q. Well, no doubt you did, but did you have the necessary 14 judgment to carry out that exercise, looking back on it? 15 A. I would say that I was unusually young for a job like 16 that, and I came to rely on much older, more experienced 17 people on the staff who were invaluable. But certainly 18 when I first went in, I think it's fair to say that 19 I was -- you know, I was pretty young. I was 28. 20 Q. When you were editor of the News of the World, I think 21 you paid £250 a week to have a mole put into the 22 Sunday Mirror. Is that correct? 23 A. The paper did, yes, I believe. 24 Q. Is that something you knew about? 25 A. I was made aware of it, yes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 93</p>	<p>1 Then the answer: 2 "Yes, papers pay snitches, but they're disgusting 3 little vermin.' 4 "Who help you sell papers?' 5 "Yes, so there's rank hypocrisy there again, 6 I agree, but just because papers buy the stories, it 7 doesn't mean the editors don't think the people selling 8 them aren't horrible.' 9 "Now you're a celebrity, has your view of the prize 10 laws changed?' 11 "No, because celebrities are the very last people 12 who should be protected by privacy law. They're the 13 ones who use the media the most and who sell their 14 privacy for money." 15 Were you referring to all celebrities there? 16 A. In what context? 17 Q. Well, the answer to this question, which was put to you. 18 A. Yeah, I've actually struggled to find this here because 19 these are not in order, so I was listening to you rather 20 than reading it. Can I just identify exactly the 21 paragraph you're talking about? 22 Q. Yes, it's four pages from the end of this clip or sheaf 23 of pages. At the top right-hand side, you will see 24 page 2 of 6. It might say 2 of 7 apparently on yours. 25 It says 2 of 6 on mine.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 95</p>
<p>1 Q. I think you said: 2 "It's a disgrace, of course, and totally unethical." 3 Would you agree with that? 4 A. Probably, yes. 5 Q. There's one example, I think, which you accept occurred, 6 of altering or doctored photographs. This was the 7 daily Princess Diana photograph which made them look as 8 if they were kissing; is that right? 8 August 1997. 9 A. Yeah, it was a stupid thing to do. We didn't actually 10 con the public, because the picture was exactly the same 11 as the one that was going to be appearing the next day 12 in a rival paper in our own building, but it was a very 13 silly thing to have done and it came as a result of the 14 introduction of digital photography, and a few papers 15 came a cropper in that period by misusing original 16 images like that, and I think we all woke up and 17 thought: "This is not a good idea." 18 Q. Can I deal as well what your attitude is -- or was and 19 still is -- to privacy? Go back to the "When Piers met 20 Naomi" piece, which is tab 17. Four pages from the end 21 of this interview, top right-hand corner. It says 22 page 2 of 6. The question from Ms Campbell is right in 23 the middle of the page: 24 "How do you feel about snitches who tell private 25 information to the papers? Do you pay them?"</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 94</p>	<p>1 A. Yes. 2 Q. It depends how it's printed off because it's quite 3 a difficult website to print stuff off, I know from my 4 own experience. 5 A. I'm reading the two paragraphs, yes. My view of 6 celebrities and privacy, if that's what you're asking, 7 is that it really depends, I think -- and I'm sure this 8 will come as a central point to the Inquiry, which is: 9 how much privacy are you entitled to if you're a famous 10 person or public figure if you yourself use your privacy 11 for commercial gain? You know, I have very little 12 sympathy with celebrities who sell their weddings for 13 a million pounds, one of the most private days of their 14 lives, and then expect to have privacy if they get 15 caught having affairs, for example. It seems to me 16 a nonsensical position to adopt. I have a lot more 17 sympathy with celebrities who just don't do that kind of 18 thing. 19 Q. I think you're going a little bit further here, but it 20 may be that you were being wound up by your interlocutor 21 by suggesting that all celebrities are not deserving of 22 any sympathy at all because they sell their privacy for 23 money. Do you see that? 24 A. I think I've said they're the very last people who 25 should be protected by privacy law. So probably on the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 96</p>

24 (Pages 93 to 96)



<p>1 list of people most deserving of a privacy law, I would 2 put the genre of celebrity last. The reason is that 3 actually -- and I've had the benefit of experiencing 4 both sides of this coin, the media and the celebrity 5 side, and the reality is there are lots of benefits that 6 come with being a celebrity, many benefits that are not 7 available to ordinary members of the public, and 8 I consider myself extremely fortunate on a daily basis. 9 Other celebrities do not consider themselves to be 10 fortunate, and there's a kind of war of attrition that 11 they wage with the media, in the sense that they wish to 12 use the media to promote themselves and their brands and 13 their television shows or their movies but they don't 14 like the tap continuing to run if it's ever remotely 15 negative, and I just don't think you can have it both 16 ways.</p> <p>17 Q. Okay. May I deal with your attitude to the PCC. The 18 party line which the Inquiry has received from many is 19 that an adjudication by the PCC is regarded very 20 seriously and really a matter of shame. Was that an 21 attitude which you had at all material times, Mr Morgan?</p> <p>22 A. Yes. I think that is an accurate version, yes.</p> <p>23 Q. We've touched on paragraph 34 of your first witness 24 statement and the Earl Spencer complaint, but page 82 of 25 The Insider, please. Maybe we should take it up at the Page 97</p>	<p>1 A. It was my memory. I mean, you know, the fact that he 2 couldn't remember in that moment the exact wording of 3 the Press Complaints Commission, I wouldn't read too 4 much into it.</p> <p>5 Q. Right. Your state of mind, though -- and this must have 6 continued with you -- was one of astonishment, wasn't 7 it?</p> <p>8 A. Well, I mean obviously, given the background to this, 9 which was that the front page which I had created which 10 got me into trouble and for which I take full 11 responsibility had only really come about because the 12 page I wanted to do Mr Murdoch had effectively suggested 13 wouldn't be a good idea.</p> <p>14 Q. Hmm. Although you might not remember precise words 15 used, one's own experience is that one does remember 16 one's feeling or emotion when something is said, and 17 you've said here "astonishment", so that must have been 18 your state of mind when he uttered whatever he did 19 utter. Would you agree with that?</p> <p>20 A. Yeah, I think that he was slightly taken aback by the 21 sheer scale of the coverage after he issued the 22 statement against me. It was the first time he'd ever 23 made a statement against any of his editors of that 24 nature, and I was getting kicked all over the place and 25 he knew I was very young. He knew that I was probably Page 99</p>
<p>1 bottom of page 81, four lines from the bottom. This is 2 a conversation you're having with Mr Rupert Murdoch: 3 "Hi Piers, how are you?' he said cheerily. 4 "Oh, fine, thanks, boss. Really enjoyed you 5 humiliating me over Earl Spencer. Thanks a bunch, pal,' 6 was what I wanted to say, but instead I said I was in 7 great shape, the paper was in great shape and, well, 8 everything's in great shape -- the usual very bullish 9 address to the chief bull. One thing I've learnt is 10 that he really doesn't want to hear you whingeing so 11 there's no point in going down that road. He just wants 12 to hear precisely how you intend to smash the opposition 13 into oblivion."</p> <p>14 Is that more or less correct, at least as regards 15 your state of mind, Mr Morgan?</p> <p>16 A. From a business point of view, yes.</p> <p>17 Q. Then what you attribute to him is this: 18 "I'm sorry about all that press complaining 19 thingamajig,' he said to my astonishment." 20 Is that what Mr Murdoch said?</p> <p>21 A. That was my memory of it years later, yeah. I wouldn't 22 say it's word for word because I don't have a recording 23 of it.</p> <p>24 Q. But the thingamajig part, does that chime with what you 25 recall him having said? Page 98</p>	<p>1 slightly impetuous, that I'd made a dumb decision that 2 night, which I had, changing the front page at the last 3 moment, and I think that he wanted to express a sense of 4 understanding that.</p> <p>5 Q. Okay.</p> <p>6 A. And he did.</p> <p>7 Q. Then your diary continues: 8 "He definitely used the word 'sorry'." 9 That's right, isn't it?</p> <p>10 A. I believe so, yes.</p> <p>11 Q. Well, you used "definitely" in the diary. You're quite 12 categorical about it, aren't you?</p> <p>13 A. Yes, but as I say, I mean, this is 1995, so I would have 14 written this in 2005, ten years later. So it's as best 15 as my memory serves it.</p> <p>16 Q. Okay, and then it continues: 17 "... and it was clear by his failure to even 18 remember the name of the Press Complaints Commission 19 that he doesn't really give a toss about it." 20 So that was the message he left you with, wasn't it?</p> <p>21 A. Well, it was my assumption of the message. I mean, that 22 may not be his recollection of events.</p> <p>23 Q. I'm not asking you for his recollection. I can ask him 24 for his recollection when we get there. I'm asking you 25 for yours. That was the impression he left you with, Page 100</p>

25 (Pages 97 to 100)

<p>1 wasn't it?</p> <p>2 A. Yes. That was how I saw it.</p> <p>3 Q. That was also, really, the culture in the</p> <p>4 News of the World, I would suggest, and the Mirror as</p> <p>5 well, that people really didn't give a toss about the</p> <p>6 PCC, did they?</p> <p>7 A. No, absolutely they did.</p> <p>8 Q. They did? Okay.</p> <p>9 May I cover some matters which are outside module</p> <p>10 one, but to avoid bringing you back for module three,</p> <p>11 I just want to get you to confirm, Mr Morgan -- we</p> <p>12 haven't warned you of this, if there's a difficulty</p> <p>13 you'll let me know, but the questions, I promise you,</p> <p>14 are innocuous. At least, they don't require you to do</p> <p>15 more than agree or disagree with what I'm going to put</p> <p>16 to you.</p> <p>17 How many face-to-face meetings did you have with</p> <p>18 Tony Blair? Desert Island Discs in 2009, the number you</p> <p>19 gave was 56. Is that correct?</p> <p>20 A. That was one-on-ones, just he and I, yeah.</p> <p>21 Q. Just you and him?</p> <p>22 A. Yes.</p> <p>23 Q. You deal in The Insider at page 93 with the --</p> <p>24 A. Sorry, sorry, just to clarify that. Occasionally</p> <p>25 Alastair Campbell may have been there, too, in some of</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 101</p>	<p>1 Q. "It was a pulsating speech delivered with great energy</p> <p>2 and dynamism and excluding confidence."</p> <p>3 I'm sure all that was correct.</p> <p>4 "And we walked out afterwards, Sam Chisholm grabbed</p> <p>5 me by the shoulders and virtually shrieked, "That was an</p> <p>6 amazing speech, he's the new bloody JFK."</p> <p>7 Again, I'm sure that's what was said, wasn't it?</p> <p>8 A. I think so, yes.</p> <p>9 Q. "Murdoch tried to make light of the mutual love-in that</p> <p>10 was going on by saying in his speech, 'If our flirtation</p> <p>11 is ever consummated, Tony, then I suspect we will end up</p> <p>12 making love like two porcupines: very, very carefully.'"</p> <p>13 Was that said?</p> <p>14 A. Yeah, I thought it was a rather good line.</p> <p>15 Q. Yes:</p> <p>16 "But there didn't seem to be anything prickly</p> <p>17 between them from where I was sitting. Blair himself</p> <p>18 seemed elated when I had a quick word with him outside:</p> <p>19 'You know, Piers, it's very important for me to come</p> <p>20 here and get the message over that New Labour is not</p> <p>21 going to strangle businesses like News Corporation. We</p> <p>22 believe in a vibrant, free press and in commercial</p> <p>23 enterprise.'"</p> <p>24 I'm sure words to that effect were probably said as</p> <p>25 well, weren't they?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 103</p>
<p>1 those meetings.</p> <p>2 Q. Yes. And your conversations, presumably, ranged far and</p> <p>3 wide, but covered matters such as the position your</p> <p>4 newspaper was taking in relation to the Labour Party,</p> <p>5 either in opposition or in government, at the material</p> <p>6 time; is that right?</p> <p>7 A. Yes.</p> <p>8 Q. The Hayman Island conference, page 93, please, of The</p> <p>9 Insider for 1995.</p> <p>10 A. Yes.</p> <p>11 Q. Is my recollection correct -- I think it is -- that you</p> <p>12 were in Hayman Island, Australia, with Mr Blair on this</p> <p>13 occasion?</p> <p>14 A. Yes.</p> <p>15 Q. I just want you to confirm that what is in the diary is</p> <p>16 correct, or to the extent that it isn't, you will</p> <p>17 indicate. But at page 93, about six lines from the</p> <p>18 bottom, the entry for 18 July:</p> <p>19 "Tony Blair made the keynote speech to the</p> <p>20 conference delegates here today and went down an</p> <p>21 absolute storm. He spoke passionately of his new moral</p> <p>22 purpose [et cetera], all just what Murdoch wanted to</p> <p>23 hear."</p> <p>24 So far so good?</p> <p>25 A. Yes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 102</p>	<p>1 A. Yes.</p> <p>2 Q. "Murdoch was understandably impressed. 'He's a very</p> <p>3 bright young man and he made a great speech, didn't he?'</p> <p>4 he raved 'We're going to back him then?' I asked. 'Too</p> <p>5 early to say that, but I could see people voting for</p> <p>6 him. He's a breath of fresh air.'"</p> <p>7 Is that what Mr Murdoch said or words to that</p> <p>8 effect?</p> <p>9 A. That is my recollection, yes.</p> <p>10 Q. And we know that Mr Murdoch did back Mr Blair before</p> <p>11 1997, didn't he?</p> <p>12 A. Yes, he did.</p> <p>13 MR JAY: Okay, thank you very much, Mr Morgan. There may be</p> <p>14 some further questions, but those are all the questions</p> <p>15 I have to ask of you. Thank you for your patience.</p> <p>16 A. Okay, thank you.</p> <p>17 MR SHERBORNE: Sir, yes, I'd like to ask Mr Morgan</p> <p>18 a question about the evidence of Steven Nott. I don't</p> <p>19 know whether you recall that.</p> <p>20 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Yes, I do. Yes.</p> <p>21 Questions by MR SHERBORNE</p> <p>22 MR SHERBORNE: Mr Morgan, you said in your book, and you</p> <p>23 confirmed in your evidence to the Inquiry earlier, that</p> <p>24 the first you ever heard of the practice of phone</p> <p>25 hacking was on 26 January 2001. Is that correct?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 104</p>

26 (Pages 101 to 104)

<p>1 A. Yes, that appears to be the case, judging by the entry 2 in the book, yeah. 3 Q. And you still maintain that, do you? 4 A. Yes. 5 Q. You were the editor of the Daily Mirror in August 1998, 6 weren't you? 7 A. Yes. 8 Q. And you remember, no doubt, Oonagh Blackman, who was one 9 of your editors; is that correct? 10 A. Yes. She was a reporter, actually. 11 Q. She was actually special projects editor in 1998, wasn't 12 she? 13 A. I don't know. She may have been. 14 Q. Were you aware, Mr Morgan, that she was contacted by 15 someone in August 1998 with a major new story about how 16 mobile telephones could be hacked? 17 A. No. 18 Q. The story came, we've heard, from someone called Steven 19 Nott, a Welsh lorry driver. That's a fairly memorable 20 story, isn't it? 21 A. I don't remember it. 22 Q. Mr Nott gave evidence here, evidence which wasn't 23 challenge by Trinity Mirror, that Ms Blackman, when he 24 telephoned her, was very excited about this story and 25 told him it would be one of the biggest headlines that</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 105</p>	<p>1 A. That's true. 2 Q. So he wasn't really barking, was he? 3 A. Well, I watched his testimony. I'd say fairly barking, 4 yeah. 5 Q. And when Mr Nott complained that the Mirror had spent 12 6 days checking out his story and then decided that, 7 despite the fact that this practice worked, they weren't 8 actually going to publish anything, he was very 9 concerned, wasn't he, that you were going to use it at 10 the Mirror for the purposes of obtaining stories about 11 well-known people? Do you remember he gave that 12 evidence? 13 A. Yeah, I saw bits of it, I didn't see the whole thing. 14 I just think, honestly, this is a complete nonevent. 15 I knew nothing about this. It was never going to be 16 a huge story in the Mirror. It never got suppressed for 17 the reasons he's trying to insinuate. I think it's 18 nonsense, the whole thing. 19 Q. If it's such a nonsense, why he was he sent a check for 20 £100 out of the blue in September of that year? 21 A. Well, loads of people would be paid for offering stories 22 that then don't get used. It happens all the time. 23 Nothing unusual about it whatsoever. 24 Q. And have you seen the description of the article for 25 which he was paid, Mr Morgan?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 107</p>
<p>1 decade. Do you not recall that? 2 A. Well, given that decade included events like the death 3 of the Princess of Wales and other major events, I find 4 that incredibly hard to believe. I have to say, 5 I watched his evidence. I've studied this man's website 6 since then, and he seems to me one sandwich short of 7 a picnic. 8 Q. So you're well aware of his evidence then, Mr Morgan? 9 A. I watched a bit of it live, actually, yeah. 10 Q. A story such as this, you would have expected Oonagh 11 Blackman to bring to you, wouldn't you? 12 A. Well, I just think the idea this is the biggest news 13 story of the decade that he said is complete nonsense. 14 Q. And you then, having heard his evidence, will know that 15 he said that after chasing Ms Blackman for days and 16 days, finally 12 days later she came back and said that 17 the newspaper wasn't interested in the story at all. 18 A. That happens every hour of every day on a daily 19 newspaper. We are offered thousands of stories like 20 this, a lot of them from people like Mr Nott, who are 21 slightly barking. And we clearly rejected it, I would 22 imagine, on that basis. I had nothing to do with him. 23 Q. Barking, you say, Mr Morgan? But he was right, wasn't 24 he, because mobile telephones could be hacked in 25 precisely the way that he said they could?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 106</p>	<p>1 A. No. I've never seen a cheque. I don't know for a fact 2 he was paid. I don't dispute it. £100 for the biggest 3 story of the decade sounds pretty cheap to me. 4 Q. The story was entitled, "Mobile phone scandal". 5 A. Right. Where did it appear? 6 Q. The story never appeared. 7 A. Right. 8 Q. But yet you paid him £100 without him even asking for it 9 several weeks later. 10 A. And your point? 11 Q. I ask the questions, Mr Morgan. Were you aware of the 12 payment at the time? 13 A. No. 14 Q. Were you aware of the story at the time? 15 A. No. 16 Q. Even though it was brought to one of your editors? 17 A. As I've said, thousands of stories are brought to the 18 attention of my journalists at the time on a weekly 19 basis. I think we worked it out once: we get offered 20 2,000 stories a day and we publish 100 to 120, so ... 21 Q. Stories about a mobile phone scandal that we know has 22 now caused such an outrage that it has led to the start 23 of this Inquiry? 24 A. I think you are massively self-inflating the importance 25 of this particular character and his almost</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 108</p>

27 (Pages 105 to 108)

<p>1 psychotically obsessive campaign to make people think  2 this was the catalyst for all this. It had nothing --  3 from my view, from what I've seen of him and his website  4 and his testimony, absolutely nothing to do with him.  5 I believe his story then got published in a local  6 newspaper at a later date, I don't know that for a fact,  7 but that's what seems to have happened. It's probably  8 where it belonged at the time.  9 Q. But the point is, Mr Morgan, that no one, none of the  10 tabloids, wanted to publish this story because they  11 didn't want to reveal this practice which they were  12 using for the purposes of obtaining stories about  13 precisely the celebrities and well-known people that  14 they wanted to fill their newspapers with; that's  15 correct, isn't it?  16 A. No, it's your supposition and I think it's total  17 nonsense.  18 Q. Last question, Mr Morgan: when you say that you found  19 out on 26 January 2001 about this practice of phone  20 hacking, it was Mr Nott's story that gave rise to that  21 knowledge, wasn't it? That's how you knew about phone  22 hacking?  23 A. Absolute nonsense.  24 MR SHERBORNE: No further questions.  25 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Thank you.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 109</p>	<p>1 and the newspaper industry does is splendid and utterly  2 to be applauded, but I've also emphasised the need for  3 that balance. I hope you've seen that --  4 A. Yes.  5 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: -- part of the Inquiry as well. I'm  6 very conscious --  7 A. I have seen that.  8 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: -- as I have said many times, of the  9 enormously important work that all newspapers do, which  10 is why I have always made it very clear that the  11 critical importance of freedom of expression and freedom  12 of the press is to be preserved.  13 A. Yes. I have noted you saying that and I appreciate  14 that. I think the industry does, too.  15 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Thank you. Thank you very much, and  16 I say thank you to all those in America who have made  17 this possible. Thank you very much.  18 A. Thank you very much. Thank you.  19 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Right. It was obviously sensible  20 that we sit to conclude that evidence. Tomorrow  21 morning, 10 o'clock. Thank you.  22 (5.12 pm)  23 (The hearing adjourned until 10 o'clock the following day)  24  25</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 111</p>
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<p>1 Thank you very much, Mr Morgan. Would you please --  2 A. Thank you.  3 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: -- thank those who facilitated the  4 possibility of your giving evidence on a video-link and  5 all the people who have done the work at your end.  6 Thank you.  7 A. Am I allowed to say one final thing?  8 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: It depends about what you want to  9 speak.  10 A. Well, only that it's just -- this has gone how I thought  11 it would, which it becomes almost like a rock star  12 having an album brought out from his back catalogue of  13 all his worst-ever hits, and I do feel still very proud  14 of a lot of the very good stuff that both the Mirror and  15 the News of the World did in my tenure as editor. And  16 it does slightly concern me, because I've been watching  17 a lot of the Inquiry and I think a lot of it is very,  18 very useful, but I do think there has to be a better  19 balance here because a lot of the very good things that  20 the newspapers were doing in those periods and continue  21 to do are not being highlighted at all and there's a  22 very, very slanted --  23 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: If you'd followed the Inquiry  24 carefully, Mr Morgan, you will find that I have said  25 several times not merely that much of what the tabloids</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 110</p>	<p>1  2 I N D E X  3  4 MR JULIAN PIKE (recalled) .....1  5 Questions by MR JAY .....1  6 Questions by MR SHERBORNE .....6  7 MR STEPHEN GORDON TURNER (sworn) .....7  8 Questions by MS PATRY HOSKINS .....7  9 MS SHARON JEAN MARSHALL (sworn) .....40  10 Questions by MR BARR .....40  11 MR MATTHEW BELL and MR CHRISTOPHER .....130  12 JOHNSON (sworn)  13 Questions by MR JAY .....130  14 MR PIERS STEFAN PUGHE-MORGAN (sworn) .....171  15 Questions by MR JAY .....171  16 Questions by MR SHERBORNE .....234  17  18  19  20  21  22  23  24  25</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 112</p>
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