Day 70 - PM  Leveson Inquiry  14 May 2012

Q. In effect, you were headhunted. There were discussions with Mr Blair in Provence in mid-August in 1994 which you doubtless remember. According to Mr Blair, he talked half the night alone with you and did the deal.

A. Yeah. He'd asked me to do the job. I said no a couple of times, and then he asked me again and I went on holiday and said I'd think about it, and he turned up on holiday. One of the concerns I had was actually that there would be two rival media operations going on and I wanted assurances that that wasn't going to happen.

Q. Mr Blair says:

A. No, when he talked about Peter, I meant that whether Peter Mandelson would, in a sense, de facto want to do the job that Tony Blair was asking me to do, and as it happens, although Peter and I had our ups and downs from time to time, by and large most of the time we worked well today.

In relation to Gordon's people, yeah, there was a sense that he had his own team, his own operation. I am very much a team player, and I wanted to be clear that I'd be able to -- on the communications side of things, to lead that team.

Q. Two rather nice pen portraits of you and Mr Mandelson:

A. Is this Tony's book?

Q. Yes. And you:

A. Yeah, well.

Q. "He had great clanking balls as well."

A. Right.

Q. That's not bad, is it?

A. Sweet.

Q. I'm not asking you to comment on, but the "hard nut" is obviously an attribute which would be desirable in that post, wouldn't it?

A. I think it's possible for somebody who's not necessarily a hard nut to do part of that job, but I certainly think that the way that the press and the media were developing, you had to be pretty robust, and not shy of engaging in difficult debate.

Q. In 1997, after 1 May, you were entering Downing Street. Do you have any recollection of Mr Blair coming up to you and saying:

A. I don't think I did. I signed -- I was covered obviously from 1997 by the Official Secrets Act. I can't remember if I signed a confidentiality agreement in opposition.

Q. In 1997, after 1 May, you were entering Downing Street.
Q. Anger over the 1992 election result, although, as you say, cause and effect could never be clearly established; is that right?
A. Yeah.
Q. And then the iconic status of the Sun. I mean, did you feel in 1994 to 1997 that the Sun did occupy such a status or not?
A. No, not really. I think that they'd very cleverly marketed themselves as having such a status, and I think that -- I say elsewhere in my statement about there was a kind of sense of hierarchy and which papers were more important than others, and I think the Sun -- I wouldn't call it iconic, but I think it was a significant player, and I think within the media marketplace, Rupert Murdoch then had probably, within the press, a greater share and greater power than perhaps he does now, because of all the changes that have happened with television, Internet, social media and so forth.
Q. Put another way, was it particularly important for you either to neutralise the Sun or at best to win it over, even if the word "iconic" may be putting it --
A. That was certainly one of the things that I -- one of the things we discussed in that night in France and it's one of the objectives that I set myself, yeah. The neutralisation strategy, in a sense, was you to counter...

sensitive policy areas that Tony Blair was going to be taking charge of. So, for example, we were very quickly President of the European Union. There were lots of NATO issues going on. So I think there was an assumption from the word go that I would be.
Q. I think all I was trying on ascertain -- but it may be very difficult to differentiate this -- was whether it was a reason of principle which caused you to be vetted or series of obvious circumstances which rendered it desirable. I'm not sure it's possible to say which.
A. I think it was the former. I think it was the former.
I think it was made clear to Jonathan Powell and me that we would have to go through that process.
Q. Okay. The next theme is the wooing of the Murdoch press. Paragraph 9 of your statement, Mr Campbell, our page 00795.
A. Yes.
Q. In essence, you explain that it was a neutralisation strategy but you ended up doing rather better than that.
That sums it up, doesn't it?
A. Yeah.
Q. And the reasons, from your perspective, are pretty obvious: evisceration by the Murdoch press during the Kinnock years; is that right?
A. Mm-hm.
Q. Did you regard having to deal with Mr Murdoch and his press as a necessary evil?
A. Well, I think it was part of the job. It was part of my job to help Tony Blair communicate to the public and part of that was through the media. Rupert Murdoch, there's no point denying, is the single most important media figure, and it would have been foolish on our part not to have sought to build some sort of relationship with him.
Q. Did you regard having to deal with him as a necessary evil?
A. Well, I don't like the word "evil" in relation to anyone, but I saw it as a part of my job and I saw it as a part of what we sought to do. I mean, I often -- as again is clear from my diaries, there was often when I didn't particularly like having to do it, and at times nor did Tony Blair. I think there are various points in my diary where I say that we -- including just before the election -- I've written about this at some length in my witness statement, where the Sun asked for a piece about Europe and we talked about whether to do it and we didn't in any way change policy but we knew what they wanted rhetoric-wise and I did feel a little bit uneasy at times, but there's no point pretending Rupert Murdoch's not an important player in the media landscape and we dealt with him, as has been well documented by all of us.

Q. The diary entry of yours for 29 January 1997:
A. Yeah. At times, yeah.
Q. And also the perception, rightly or wrongly, that the meeting did matter because it was part and parcel of winning over his support! That's also true, isn't it?
A. Yeah.

LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: It might be better, rather than to say a "necessary evil", to say a necessary obligation, rather than something you went about because you wanted to do it?
A. It wasn't an obligation. We didn't have to do it.
LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: All right.

A. We could have chosen -- the Labour Party for some years after the Wapping dispute had nothing to do with the Murdoch papers whatsoever. We made an active choice to change that approach, and again, in the diaries,
Neil Kinnock, not happy about that at times. So we made a choice, and the choice was that -- if you like, part of what New Labour was trying to do was to show that there was no part of public opinion that we were scared of, there was no part of public opinion that we didn't think we could take our message in, and in opposition, getting your message through to the public, it's hard if you don't have access to the press.

LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: But isn't that a little bit why it was actually, for you and the perception you had, an obligation?
A. Um ...
Q. Can I deal with it bluntly in this way: are you able to assist the Inquiry from your own knowledge with any information that you have which would assist the Inquiry?
A. Mm-hm.

Q. Can I deal with it bluntly in this way: are you able to assist the Inquiry from your own knowledge with any information that you have which would assist the Inquiry?
A. Mm-hm.

Q. Can I deal with it bluntly in this way: are you able to assist the Inquiry from your own knowledge with any information that you have which would assist the Inquiry?
A. Mm-hm.

Q. Can I deal with it bluntly in this way: are you able to assist the Inquiry from your own knowledge with any information that you have which would assist the Inquiry?
A. Mm-hm.
A. Mm-hm.

Q. Do you have any evidence of such a deal or not?

A. No, absolutely not.

Q. In terms of the possibility of implied trade-offs for unspoken reciprocations, paragraph 49, you refer there to -- I think we probably asked you to look at the "big, bad bastard" comment, which is Mr Paul Keating, who was then the Labour prime minister in Australia, wasn't he?

A. Yes.

Q. You cover this in your diaries, volume 1, pages 247 and following. You set out part of the citation. Page 247.

We're on 16 July 1995:

"On Murdoch, he told TB: 'He's a big, bad bastard and the only way you can deal with him is to make sure he thinks you can be a big, bad bastard too. You can do deals with him without ever saying a deal is done but the only thing he cares about is his business and the only language he respects is strength.'"

And then later on you say:

"If he thinks you're a winner, he would prefer to be with you than against you."

A. Yeah.

Q. Obviously, Mr Campbell, you weren't taking notes while this conversation was going on, but you -- did you record it that evening in your diary or how does it come?

A. I did actually quite often take notes in meetings, but I can remember that -- I can't remember his exact words in that conversation, but I can remember Paul Keating's advice very clearly, and it was good advice.

I think later he said -- this is Keating again:

"You have to remember with Rupert that it's all about Rupert. Rupert is number one, two, three and four as far as Rupert is concerned. Anna and the kids come next and everything else is a long, long way behind. They overestimate the importance of their support for you, but if you can get it, have it. If you're Labour, you need all the help you can get to win elections."

And this is Paul Keating, who's had some considerable experience of dealing with Rupert Murdoch.

Q. Yes. That's at page 249, the last paragraph of the entry for that day.

A. Yes.

Q. The reference to "they overestimate the importance of their support for you", the "they" is a reference to the Murdochs, is it?

A. Yeah. I think that relates to the point I made earlier. I think newspapers do overstate their own importance and I think politicians overstate it as well in terms of endorsements at elections.

Q. Just Mr Keating's:

"You can do deals with him without ever saying a deal is done."

Was he suggesting there: well, it's done on a nod and a wink, or was he suggesting something else?

A. No, I think what he's saying there is actually explained what he goes on to say, in that he's -- he needs to know -- it's the "big, bad bastard" point. He needs to know that you can be as tough as you need to be. And I think that -- you see, again, I think in relation to this whole area of policy, for me, there's been all this focus on our media management techniques and so forth and endless books written about it and so forth.

I don't think it's that important. What would be wrong is if there ever were the kind of trade-off that you were talking about and I don't think there's any evidence of such a trade-off.

On the contrary, I think that if you were to talk to people who worked at Sky, they would -- I think they would argue that Rupert Murdoch's political profile and the sort of general media neuralgia surrounding him probably led to decisions being made with greater scrutiny upon Sky that might have been other companies.

I mean, if you just look at the big policy decisions we took, the biggest in the media sphere is probably the rise of the BBC licence fee. They weren't terribly happy about that. Ofcom, I think Mr Murdoch said in his evidence, not terribly happy about that. He tried to take over Manchester United and was blocked. The digital switch, there were differences. ITV, Channel 5 -- there were lots of areas where you'd be hard-pressed to say that the Murdochs and the Murdoch businesses were getting a good deal out of the Labour government.

Q. Just to what Mr Keating was saying, wasn't he simply saying this: that unless Mr Murdoch thinks that you too are a big, bad bastard, there's no point even thinking you can do a deal with him because he'll think that you are weak, but the way he operates is by implied deals, by nods and winks. Isn't it that the message Mr Keating was trying to get across to you?

A. I don't think so. I think he was saying what he says in that broader context that I have set out in the statement, but I certainly think that Rupert Murdoch would have been -- might have been thinking that historically he'd had, for obvious reasons, this very, very difficult relationship with the Labour Party, it looked like there was going to be a Labour government, historically, our policy positions would, in a sense, have gone after the Murdoch empire, whether it's...
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<td><strong>Q.</strong> So the attribution of cause and effect which Mr Price sees in the sequence of events, you don't believe is correct?</td>
<td><strong>A.</strong> I don't, no.</td>
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<td><strong>Q.</strong> Did you have any discussions with Mr Blair about the change in cross-media ownership policy?</td>
<td><strong>A.</strong> I must have done. I must have done.</td>
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<td><strong>Q.</strong> Did he mention in any way the impact the change might have or, more exactly, the existing policy would have had, on the Murdoch press?</td>
<td><strong>A.</strong> Not that I specifically recall, but it would certainly have been a factor. It would have been a factor.</td>
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<td><strong>Q.</strong> So the change in policy was beneficial to the Murdoch press and that was part of the thinking, was it?</td>
<td><strong>A.</strong> No, what I mean by -- part of his thinking would be -- I think Gus O'Donnell said to you today that in any policy-making process, part of your thinking would be about how this will be perceived, written up and so forth. But Tony Blair's view on cross-media ownership was that he was not in favour of changes in the position of cross-media ownership that would lead to the closure of titles. He was in favour of trying to broaden the market and open up the market to new media owners. So it was a principle policy position that just happened to differ to the one that we'd held when Neil Kinnock went to Australia in 1995?</td>
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<td><strong>Q.</strong> Okay. Can I deal with the Sun piece in 1997, which you refer to in paragraph 13.</td>
<td><strong>A.</strong> Yeah.</td>
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<td><strong>Q.</strong> I think we saw this with Mr Murdoch himself, the actual piece, which Mr Blair wrote shortly before the 1997 election. It was in March 1997. About &quot;our commitment to a referendum on the Euro,&quot; you say: &quot;It was made clear to me by the editor that if Mr Blair were to emphasise the point that there would be no entry into the euro without a specific referendum on the issue, that he understood people's fears about a so-called European superstate, it was likely to be the final piece of the jigsaw before Mr Murdoch agreed the paper would back Labour.&quot; You describe that as purely a question of rhetoric but wasn't that specifically a matter of policy, or at least something which Mr Blair did which he would not otherwise have perhaps wanted to do?</td>
<td><strong>A.</strong> No. In terms of -- the policy was already set. The policy was set and we did have a discussion -- I remember we did have a discussion about whether it was sensible to do this piece at that time, and as I say --</td>
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<td><strong>Q.</strong> Okay. May I come to the issue of any implied trade-offs? Paragraph 13 of your statement. You deal there with the Sun in 1997, but before I come to that, do you agree with Mr Price's view, Mr Lance Price, that plans to limit cross-media ownership in a way which would have restricted Murdoch's empire had been quietly dropped by the Labour Party within six months of Blair's visit to Australia in 1995?</td>
<td><strong>A.</strong> Yeah. I think I'm right in saying it was one of the five pledges.</td>
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I go on to say that it was fantastically irritating on one level that we had to go through these kind of routines, but with an election looming, we would be daft not to try it.

So I don't think we did change policy. I will admit to being a little bit queasy about the -- I think the headline was "Why I love the pound!", and it was -- so I was a little bit queasy about that. I will be honest about that. But I don't think on policy anything was ever traded with Rupert Murdoch or indeed with any other media owner.

So there's an example of where the Sun, mass-selling newspaper, coming up to an election campaign, is giving us half a page to set out our stall on an issue which is important -- probably more important to the paper than it is to their readers, to be absolutely frank -- and we took that opportunity. As I say, we would have been crazy not to.

**Q.** You'll have to remind me: was it part of the Labour Party manifesto in 1997 that there would be a referendum before the United Kingdom entered the euro? | **A.** Yeah. I think I'm right in saying it was one of the five pledges. |

Q. I'm not saying this is ancient history because it isn't, it is 15 years ago and we're trying to remember. The
Q. Why didn't he fancy such a sustained set of questions?
A. Because the -- I think I've quoted in my statement the -- what I said at the briefing, that the --
I said in a Number 10 briefing:

"The conversation with Prodi had covered a range of issues. It had been agreed that neither side would
brief on it. This had been honoured. The FT should not
use an anonymous Italian official to stand up a story
that was wrong. Of course, if asked, we would always
say that the PM spoke up for British firms. It would be
a bit odd if, as the PM of Great Britain, he did not.
This did not, however, stand up the story and talk of
intervention presented in this way was simply wrong."

Now, it did lead to a considerable frenzy, this one,
and we possibly could have handled it differently. The
call from Prodi was not about this. It was about
something completely different, and Prodi had asked for
us not to brief on it.

The FT then run this story and I refused to accept
that this was intervention as they were presenting it.
I think what Tony Blair is saying is that he was worried
actually that that was -- standing up in the House of
Commons to a sustained set of questions about why is
this not an intervention, I think he found that
difficult.

I've said in my statement:

"I was less concerned because I felt my statement
that it would be odd if the British Prime Minister did
not stand up for British companies reflected that
likelihood. Indeed, in the briefing of March 24 1998,
journalists pointed out that my statement did not amount
to a full denial, to which I responded I was not adding
to the statement."

And it's true. It was not a full denial.

Q. Maybe Mr Blair's concern was based on how all this
appeared?
A. By then it was a full-blown 24 caret frenzy. It's one
of those that's tricky. Rupert Murdoch had mentioned
this company to the Prime Minister and the
Prime Minister, as I recall -- we did have a discussion
about whether there was anything wrong in him raising
it. In the end, he didn't raise it until this phone
call came along on something else and he mentioned it
and Prodi said words to the effect that Murdoch's
wasting his time and I don't think it went any further.

Q. The origin of all of this kerfuffle was an express
request by Mr Murdoch, presumably made by phone to the
Prime Minister, to intervene in a certain way?
A. No, I don't think -- I think he was trying to establish
whether, words to the effect, he was wasting his time

| Page 29 | I think as time wore on, I think a view developed generally in government, certainly with the Prime Minister and other senior mayors, that there was a real problem and I think that if -- I certainly, as I say in my statement, was advancing the case: if you think there's a real problem, then we should do something about it, and part of the thinking as to why not to do something about it -- I think there were two main reasons. One was the one that the Prime Minister has talked about this before, that actually the public just wouldn't understand, because one of the lines being run at us by the press was that we had them all in our pocket. Not true, but that's one of the kind of lines that was run against us. The public are going to be confused as to why we're suddenly saying this is a problem.

The second thing is that the public had elected us to do all sorts of things. Press regulation was not one of them.

So that was, as it were, the points of principle.

I think there was a political point of pragmatism, that Tony Blair would have taken the view that it was not politically sensible, and, you know, it's no secret that this was one of the few things that we argued about. We argued about it over several years. |

| Page 30 | trying to get into the Italian marketplace.

Q. Even if it wasn't to intervene in a way which would necessarily produce direct results, at least to ascertain how the Italian marketplace looked, should he put his toe in the water; that's what it amounted to, wasn't it?

A. Well, I wasn't privy to the call that he had and nor, until this story blew up, was I privy to the call with Mr Prodi, but I stood on that line for over several pretty lengthy briefings that I refuse to accept that was an intervention in the way that it was being presented by the Financial Times. That's where the difficulty came in because the press said it was an intervention and I can see why, but you know, sometimes in these situations, you hold a line and that's what we did. And in the end, nothing came of it.

Q. It would have been an intervention if Mr Murdoch was seeking an express regulatory favour, which clearly he wasn't, but he was seeking information from the Italians, wasn't he?

A. I think -- I mean, I know you're going to be seeing Mr Blair and you'll be able to ask him, because he had the conversation. My sense of it would be that he's simply saying, "I'm interested in this Italian company. Do you think I'm wasting my time?" And I don't think |

| Page 31 | there was anything more than that.

Q. Okay. Of course, the reference to helping a British company was not quite accurate, since we're talking about one of Mr Murdoch's -- well, he'd either set up his own Italian company for the intervention, or we're looking back at News Corp, which is incorporated in the United States.

A. I accept that but I think more accurate -- this is not a transcript; it's an account of the briefing and we're talking about companies with British interests.

Q. The other area we need to look at -- and you cover it at paragraph 15 of your statement -- is media policy generally. You do say in the third sentence of paragraph 15:

"Ironically, the only area where I believe we may have fallen foul of this relates to the area of the press itself."

And then you refer to the current government. Are you suggesting that through fear of a hostile reaction, possibly even ad hominem attacks, the Labour government between 1997 and 2010 was shy of taking on the press and bringing in necessary press reform in terms of regulation? Is that the thesis which you say might have some validity?

A. Well, I wouldn't date it as far back as 1997, but |

| Page 32 | Q. Can we quite see, Mr Campbell, if we go back to 1997, which of course was before the death of Princess Diana, that to have included anything in the Labour Party manifesto which would have committed that government to press regulatory reform might have about been a bit ambitious. Others may comment on that. But by the time we get to 2001, and in particular 2005, there was a possibility, wasn't there, to include it within the government's legislative programme; is that correct?

A. Well, there was always the possibility. As to whether there was any likelihood, I suspect there wasn't. But some of us were arguing that there should have been.

Q. When you refer to concerns about what the media culture was -- that's the second sentence of paragraph 16 -- |

| Page 33 | Q. -- can we be clear what the analysis is, because it may be said to fall in two parts. There's one, the political analysis, which is the culture of negativity, the fusion of news and comment, the press driving the news agenda, all the matters which I know are of deep interest and concern to you, but can we put them sort of on one side. Then there are the wider concerns about the culture, practice and ethics of the press: harassment, intrusion, breach of privacy. I know the two concerns overlap to some extent, but they're more |

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<td>thinking of the Prime Minister and some of his colleagues was that to take on the whole of the press at the time when most of the public thought we got a pretty good deal was politically not very sensible.</td>
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<td>Q. It might have been difficult to have approached this on a cross-party basis at any time between 1997 and certainly 2010, unless you were to identify a short window of opportunity which opened after the tragic death of Princess Diana; is that right?</td>
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<td>A. I think it would have been impossible to get a cross-party agreement on something like this.</td>
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<td>Q. What about that short window of opportunity?</td>
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<td>A. I'm not sure there really was one. I think that the -- interestingly -- I saw you had Chris Mullin's diaries as well. He was of the view that the short window of opportunity was the same day we did Bank of England independence, ie. straight after the election, but I think that would have been very, very difficult for obvious reasons.</td>
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<td>I don't think there was -- even with all the focus was upon the conduct of the media post Diana's death, I don't think there was that kind of political or public appetite. This debate is only happening because of this Inquiry and this Inquiry's only happening because of the specific set of issues that led to it,</td>
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<td>but these cultural issues have been underlying it for some time. As I said in my first statement, both the media and politics have not really faced up to that.</td>
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<td>LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Do you detect an appetite now to do that?</td>
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<td>A. No, if I'm being frank. I thought that Michael Gove's speech to the parliamentary press gallery was part of the political strategy. I don't think that David Cameron particularly wants to have to deal with this. I don't think he wanted to set up the Inquiry. He had to do it in the end. I think it would be very difficult for him not to go along with whatever recommendations or at least a very large part of the recommendations the Inquiry produces, but I don't think there is much of an appetite. I hope there is some appetite for the sort of cross-party approach you were talking about with Gus O'Donnell earlier, but I wouldn't rule out the possibility of the politicians looking to see how this might affect their positioning vis a vis the next election.</td>
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<td>So I think there is some appetite for change, but I wouldn't overstate it. I think there's quite a big appetite for the people who are no longer there.</td>
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<td>Q. The general topic of reform of the press, in particular regulation, Mr Powell again, page 206. See whether this</td>
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<td>Q.</td>
<td>In 2006, he [Mr Blair now] told me that he would consider putting surprise legislation in the Queen's speech on the subject, but he didn't.</td>
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<td>A.</td>
<td>Mm-hm.</td>
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<td>Q.</td>
<td>When he finally did make a speech on the media in 2007 – that's the famous &quot;feral beast&quot; speech of June 2007, which perhaps didn't receive the attention it deserved -- Mr Powell says it was too late. Is that fair a sort of conspectus of what was happening?</td>
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<td>A.</td>
<td>Yeah. I think also, as I said in my witness statement, political leaders, even when they're the Prime Minister and even when they're in a very powerful position, as Tony Blair was for most parts of his Premiership, you do have to take accounts of the views of your senior colleagues and there was no real appetite within the government, I think with the possible exception -- I mean, I was arguing on this track for some time. John Prescott to some extent was, but it wasn't an issue on which the Prime Minister was feeling huge pressure, and as I said in the statement, there a large number of issues on which he was feeling huge pressure. I think the other thing to bear in mind is that it's not unreasonable for politicians to take account of political factors, like the fact that if he had gone down this road, the Conservative opposition would have been perfectly entitled then to use that to get much better sense of support from the press and there was also the whole issue of the -- as many of those books have gone into, the sometimes troubled relationship with Gordon Brown. That would have been a factor too.</td>
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| Q. | I wonder if you can throw light, Mr Campbell, on the passage through Parliament of what became the Communications Act of 2003. That's obviously an extremely complicated piece of legislation, but it passed through Parliament at a time when you were still in post, as it were, before your retirement in -- |
| A. | Yeah. I don't recall being involved to a huge extent in the detail of policy discussion. And I do remember Tessa Jowell, who I think was the Secretary of State at the time, when she took the job, wanting it to be very, very clear that she was going to be in charge of that process and I do also remember her wanting to be absolutely clear that she wasn't, as it were, inheriting any kind of implied or unimplied deals with anybody in the media empires. So -- and I'm sure Tess will be able to speak for herself, but I do remember that. |

| Q. | To be clear about that, she was concerned that as part of the inheritance there might have been some sort of deal, as you say, express or implied. She wanted to be sure that there wasn't such a deal. Did she have conversations with you about it or conversations which were in your hearing? |
| A. | I think she had conversations both with -- most importantly with Tony Blair, but also I talked to Tessa as well at that time. |

| Q. | To be blunt about it, was she concerned to find out whether it deal had been done with Mr Murdoch? |
| A. | Yeah, she just wanted to be absolutely sure that she was not, as it were, going into a policy area where a conclusion had already been reached based upon whatever. So -- and Tony Blair was able to give her that assurance. |

| Q. | In your hearing? |
| A. | Well, I know that he did. |

| Q. | One key issue in relation to that act was the decision to remove the restrictions on foreign media ownership. Is that something that you were alive to? |
| A. | No. I don't -- I mean, although I was in charge of Tony Blair's media strategy and media relations, I was not -- I didn't see myself as a significant voice within the media policy debate, and I can't remember what else was going on at that time. Lots of things. But I don't remember being too involved in the policy discussions on the Communications Act. |

| Q. | When the bill was going through the Lords, it
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<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td>&quot;implied/express deal&quot;. Let's use none of those words.</td>
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<td>Let me just understand what's going on here. The</td>
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<td>government was more than just contemplating heading for</td>
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<td>A. Mm-hm.</td>
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<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td>LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: It was obviously understandable if</td>
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<td>they wanted to discover what the reaction from those who</td>
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<td>are responsible for our media was going to be, and</td>
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<td>I could equally understand why a Prime Minister might</td>
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<td>think it of value to seek to get across, in an</td>
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<td>unvarnished way, unmediated by other press content, what</td>
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<td><strong>12</strong></td>
<td>was really going on in his mind, to try and put the best</td>
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<td>case, which of course is presumably what he was thinking</td>
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<td>about, for the conclusion that he'd reached. But what</td>
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<td>I'm interested to know is where that leads. Is it</td>
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<td><strong>16</strong></td>
<td>requesting support? Is it neutral as to whether you</td>
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<td>have support, is it -- I mean, what's going on here? Do</td>
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<td>you understand my question?</td>
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<td><strong>19</strong></td>
<td>A. Yeah. I mean, look. By this point, as you say, it was</td>
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<td>perfectly clear where this was leading, and equally it</td>
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<td>was perfectly clear that most of the media were opposed</td>
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<td>to what we were doing and Mr Murdoch's titles were in</td>
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<td>favour of what we were doing, and I think it's also fair</td>
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<td>to say that the Prime Minister -- he would have</td>
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<td><strong>25</strong></td>
<td>appreciated that support at that time, because it was</td>
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**Page 42**

| **1** | A. No. | **1** |
| **2** | Q. Go back, please, to paragraphs 51 to 53 of your | **2** |
| **3** | statement. | **3** |
| **4** | A. Yeah. | **4** |
| **5** | Q. We're going back now to Mr Murdoch, still, I suppose, on | **5** |
| **6** | the theme of implied deals. The three telephone calls | **6** |
| **7** | just before the start of the Iraq war in March 2003. | **7** |
| **8** | A. Yes. | **8** |
| **9** | Q. It's not something I think you can give very clear | **9** |
| **10** | evidence about, save for the facts that they probably | **10** |
| **11** | occurred or did occur, but the substance of the calls | **11** |
| **12** | you can't assist us with; is that so? | **12** |
| **13** | A. Well, I can only give you evidence so far as it relates | **13** |
| **14** | to what I wrote in my diary. I don't actually remember | **14** |
| **15** | the calls, but I did write on March 11, 2003 about one | **15** |
| **16** | of the calls. I don't remember the calls themselves, | **16** |
| **17** | but I've obviously spoken to Tony Blair about one of | **17** |
| **18** | them and I've written something in my diary. | **18** |
| **19** | Q. Which is the "odd, not very clever" comment? | **19** |
| **20** | A. Yeah. | **20** |
| **21** | Q. But that doesn't throw very much more light upon it. | **21** |
| **22** | A. Well, only it does make -- it does appear to suggest | **22** |
| **23** | that it wasn't, as it were, a call that Tony Blair had | **23** |
| **24** | made. But whether that helps you or not, I don't know. | **24** |
| **25** | LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Let's not use the phrase | **25** |

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| **1** | **1** |
| **2** | probably the most difficult decision he ever had to make. It was the most difficult period of the time that I was with him, bar none, but as I say in my statement, in terms -- I wouldn't want to put too much significance -- given all else that he was dealing with at that time, when he was speaking to presidents and prime ministers around the world the whole time, I wouldn't overstate the significance of a couple of phone calls with Rupert Murdoch.

So in terms of what I think is going on here -- and as I say, I'm relying on what I've written in my diary -- what I think is going on is that Rupert Murdoch has placed the call and Tony Blair has taken that call and Rupert Murdoch is just wanting to have a chat about what's going on. I go back to the point I made earlier: Rupert Murdoch -- one of the things that makes him different to some of the other media owners, some of whom you saw last week, is that he's a news man. He's interested in what's going on in the world. So I think that's what's going on, but I can't help you beyond that because I don't remember the call.

But certainly at that time, it was a very -- he was in a very, very difficult position and we were all -- there was -- in terms of the decisions that were being taken and the policy that was being pursued, it was
1. It's just the fact of them against all the other competing demands upon his time. He knew what the view of the Sun was. They'd made it abundantly clear. He didn't have to speak to Mr Murdoch. He could pick up the a copy of the Times -- well, the Sun, actually.

2. A. He could have picked up a paper of any of his newspapers around the world.

3. LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Yes, yes.

4. A. I can see why you ask that, but I think it is important as well to remember that -- you see, when you're looking at this now, you're asking me to -- and people may think it's odd that I don't remember something that I've written about, but I just don't. And for me as well, there was so much else going on at that time and -- but it doesn't strike me as that odd, not least because by then I think it's fair to say Tony Blair had very few strong supporters in the media left. So whether one of these calls came from him, two of them, I have no idea, I have no idea. Whether one of them was actually about placing the call, I don't know, I don't know.

5. LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: There's a limit to how far we can go placing the call, I don't know, I don't know.

6. MR JAY: I think you want to correct something you said in your statement.  But the -- look, it was the biggest issue you're saying to me that I should not read too much into this, you know, without Rupert Murdoch's support we couldn't have done the Iraq war. That's complete nonsense. Tony Blair believed in what we were doing and the government supported what was being done and so did Parliament, and that was, way, way more important than any newspaper's support.

7. LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: All right. I think that's probably a convenient moment to take just a break for the shorthand writer. (The luncheon adjournment)

8. (3.15 pm)

9. (3.23 pm)

10. MR JAY: I think you want to correct something you said in relation to the five pledges in the Labour Party manifesto --

11. A. Yeah. I thought it was one of the five pledges but I checked; it's not.

12. Q. The euro?

13. A. Yes. But it was announced before that article.
Q. Paragraph 53 of your statement.
A. Yeah.
Q. This is the backdoor point. You say:
"This tends to be a media presence in Downing Street most of the time, and if there is no particular need or desire to advertise a meeting, it makes sense to avoid the front door."
Not very transparent that, some would say.
A. I'd accept that, yeah.
Q. Then you say, slightly tongue in cheek:
"Partly our thinking was that for the rest of the media, Murdoch was uniquely neuralgic."
A. No, it's not tongue in cheek; it was what we thought, that if Rupert Murdoch wandered into the building, it started a whole flurry of: "What's he doing there, what's he talking about?" I do make the point that when I left in 2003, whenever I went back afterwards, I tended to go in the same door. It's just a way of avoiding attention, I guess, but I take your point.

LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Do you think there's something about the fact that the government now make their links with senior editors and proprietors much clearer, that you're going to get rather more concern that some proprietors and editors get rather more excess than others and that's not fair?

A. I would hope that what comes out of all this is not just the greater openness and transparency that you were talking about this morning with Gus O'Donnell but also perhaps a greater distancing between the two sets of people. As I said in my statement, I think there is a real public interest in politics and other walks of life having relationships with the media that allow them to debate, be challenged and so forth, but I think if we could get to a situation where there wasn't this sense of it being relationships that just get mangled. The political, the personal, the commercial. I can see why you might think they're all just kind of interwoven.

LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: It's a topic I would certainly welcome your view but we'll let Mr Jay take his own course, and then, if it's not covered, we'll come back to it.

A. Yeah.
MR JAY: There's one further point about Mr Stelzer I missed out. As a footnote to page 634 of volume 1 of your diaries, you describe him as:
"Rupert Murdoch's economic guru, often described as Rupert's representative on earth."
The second point, I'm sure, is flippant, but the first point, "Rupert Murdoch's economic guru", you were making a serious point there, weren't you, Mr Campbell?

A. I promise this is not me sort of passing off but I didn't write all of the footnotes. I think he was an economic adviser. "Guru"? One of those words. But, you know, he was close to him, he was close to him. Still is, I think.

Q. When Mr Murdoch was not around and someone was talking to Mr Stelzer, was there a sense that you were talking to Mr Murdoch in some way?
A. No, I wouldn't say that. I wouldn't say that. He wasn't, as it were, a spokesman. No, I wouldn't put it like that.

Q. Can I ask about Mrs Brooks, who obviously we've seen recently. You say in your statement that you attended, I think, both her weddings.
A. No, I attended the reception for the first one and the wedding for the second.
Q. Okay.
A. Just on the first one, I was, as it were, independently friendly with her husband.
Q. Would you describe it as a friendship or a relationship borne out of circumstances?
A. I think it's difficult, once you're at a certain level in politics -- in fact, again in one of these books, Tony Blair and I have a discussion about this. I think it's difficult to develop friendships with people from any walk of life where they might actually feel that they can get something from you, so I think I would -- we were friendly, we were very friendly and I liked Rebekah, but I think "friendship" overstates it. Most of the friends that I have who are journalists are people that I used to work with when I was a journalist. But, you know, I liked her and obviously because of my job and her job, we spoke a lot.
Q. Many people have observed and some witnesses have said that she's a consummate networker. Is that something --
A. Yeah, and I think she would see that as part of her job.
Q. In the late 1990s, did you assess that her star, as it were, was clearly in the ascendancy and therefore it was important that Mr Blair and the Labour government become close to her?
A. No, not particularly. I think she was obviously very bright. You always -- I had a sense very early on that Rupert Murdoch really liked her, and I think within the Rupert Murdoch set-up, then, you know, there's that sense of who's he, as it were, bestowing his favour upon, and I think Rebekah was a rising star. And I think we would have ensured that Tony Blair, as I say in my statement, right across the piece of all the media titles, not just News International, that over time he would see move the key people. I think that's what we...
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<th>Q.</th>
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<td>In paragraph 64 of her statement, she referred to her being almost a constant presence in and around Mr Blair's senior cabinet ministers and special advisers. Would you agree with that assessment?</td>
<td>I don't think so. I don't think so. Ministers might not have been.</td>
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1. Morgan or one of the people around the Prime Minister.

2. Did she manipulate the increasingly fractious relationship between Mr Brown and Mr Blair?

3. A. I don't think so, no. In fact, I think she was -- it was a very difficult part of my job, was the fact that the press were writing about the difficulties in that relationship all the time and I was having to go out there as an advocate for the government explaining what we were trying to do and focusing on the important things and so forth. So no, I don't think she did.

4. I think -- I knew that she spoke to Gordon and the people who worked for him and that perhaps they sometimes said things to her that they wouldn't have said to us.

5. Q. Was she increasingly seen as having influence over Mr Murdoch?

6. A. I think -- my sense always was that the most influential person in terms of influence on Rupert Murdoch was Rupert Murdoch. Was she increasingly important within the organisation? Yes.

7. Q. Were ministers afraid of her?

8. A. I don't -- well, if they were, they were -- they shouldn't have been.

9. Q. Yes. Do you think they were?

10. A. I don't think so. I don't think so. Ministers might have been -- there were various -- one of the reasons why, even though it's fair to say I think I'm somewhat PNG at News International now, I would -- Rebekah was always very, very straightforward to deal with. There were a number of stories which I dealt with her which were very difficult for individual ministers -- Robin Cook was one, Stephen Byers was another -- where she was always -- we had a sense of I had a job to do, she had a job to do, but we could be straight with each other.

11. Q. Was the Sun ever fed stories by you?

12. A. Yeah. So were other papers. I would say that we were one of the prime sources for every media organisation in the country.

13. Q. So it wasn't a question of prioritising the Sun, you feel? It was just part of your job to --

14. A. Look, we made a lot of changes in 1997, the biggest of which was putting the briefings on the record, and most of my contact with the media was on the record briefing.

15. I don't think we've -- every single paper thought that we favoured other papers. The Mirror thought we favoured the Sun, the Sun thought we favoured the Mirror, the Guardian thought we favoured the Telegraph, the Telegraph thought we favoured the Times. You couldn't win, really.

16. Q. In terms of the Mirror, Mr Morgan told us, I think, that Page 54

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32. Q. In terms of the Mirror, Mr Morgan told us, I think, that Page 55

33. there were at least 60 meetings had he with Mr Blair when Mr Blair was Prime Minister and you were often present at those meetings. Would that be right?

34. A. It might be. I think Piers would also accept that some of those would be receptions and -- what does that work out? Six a year? Is that a lot? Piers was the editor of the one Labour-supporting newspaper. There was an annual lunch that we had at the Labour Party coverage. But certainly, I would be present at most of those meetings, probably.

35. Q. But obviously they were on side, save, of course, in relation to the Iraq war when Mr Morgan in particular was hostile. Was it a question, though, of enabling the Mirror to put the best possible gloss on stories?

36. A. This whole thing about spin, I think, is totally overdone. Journalists aren't stupid and the public aren't stupid and most of the presence of the Prime Minister in people's lives would be what they saw on the television and when they saw him on the news and they saw him in the House of Commons. So most the discussions I would have had with Piers would actually -- certainly during the Iraq war we had a fairly fundamental disagreement. In other situations, he would be and was often angry because he thought that we favoured the Sun, just as I say the Sun sometimes...
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A. Absolutely. I totally accept that.

1. thought we favoured the Mirror, but -- you know, he was
an editor. I was the Prime Minister's Director of
Communications and strategy. It was an up and down but
pretty good relationship.
2. Q. In paragraph 46 of your statement, you deal with
contacts with other proprietors as well.
3. A. Mm-hm.
4. Q. Interestingly, you recall what Viscount Rothermere did
not, the dinner I put to him -- it's the middle of
paragraph 46, 00821 -- where his wife complained about
the way the Express Newspapers intruded upon their
privacy.
5. A. As I say, an irony lost on all but her and her husband.
6. Q. I'm sure this is an example of genuine amnesia on the
part of Viscount Rothermere. I'm not suggesting for one
moment that he might be misleading us, but anyway, I do
mention that.
7. Paragraph 26, please.
8. LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: 26?
9. MR JAY: 26 now.
10. LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Are you moving away from proprietors?
11. MR JAY: I'm moving to the more general, but I'm not dealing
with proprietors now in particular.
12. LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Let me just ask a question about
them. There's obviously much, much more contact, and

Page 57

13. for understandable reasons, between proprietors and
senior editors and very senior government ministers and
people such as yourself than there would be for other
interest groups. Is there a risk, do you think, that
that access can indeed work the other way so that
therefore there is a risk which has to be guarded
against -- and I'm not saying it can't be guarded
against -- that their particular interests -- and that
could be commercial, or personal, by which I mean the
paper, or it could be that which they are campaigning --
achieves a greater prominence than would be achieved by
somebody in a quite different situation who doesn't have
the same sort of access?
15. LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Using your experience, both as
a journalist and as somebody who's worked in government
and the rather higher grade view you've been able to
take of life since you ceased, how can that be fixed?
16. A. I think openness is an important thing, and
transparency. So when Mr Jay said it's a bit odd that
they come through the back door, I think that's right.
I think I'm right in saying that, for example, the
American President's diary is published, so that you can
see what he's doing with his time. But I do think that
it has -- it can only be fixed -- I say this when
I address the point about the Phillips report in my
statement. I think it can only be fixed if both sides
of this acknowledge the problem is not just the other
side. There is a tendency for those of us on the
political side to say, "It's all your fault", and
there's an even stronger tendency on this side to say,
"It's all your fault." I think unless we can get beyond
that, we're not going to get anywhere.
17. So openness and a greater explanation from --
I think the politicians have done a very, very bad job
of standing up for themselves in terms of what their
legitimate role is, what their legitimate functions are
and how they have to engage with the media because if
they don't, they're going to get blown away. So there's
got to be a proper reckoning of each other's power and
each other's status, and I think that where we've got to
is a position where some elements of the media kind of
think they're above politics and they're even
(inaudible) phone hacking above the law.
18. LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I'd articulate it slightly different,
or I'd suggest to you that it might be possible to
articulate it slightly differently by saying this: if
the story's big enough, the rules don't count.
19. A. Anything to get a story.
20. LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Well, it's actually not quite --
21. A. But a lot of the phone hacking stuff wasn't about big
stories at all.
22. LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I agree with that, and I'm not
actually talking about what might be criminal. I'm
talking about a slightly different idea. Possibly by
borrowing Mr Morgan's phrase, I'm taking it out of
context. Let me start and articulate it again. Let me
say this: "We, the press, are not necessarily bound by
the same rules that govern other behaviour."
23. A. Mm-hm. And, the extension of that, going back to what
we were talking about a moment earlier, the sense that
they don't think anything will happen to them as

Page 58

1. is that much more potent.
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4. a journalist and as somebody who's worked in government
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7. A. Mm-hm. And, the extension of that, going back to what
we were talking about a moment earlier, the sense that
they don't think anything will happen to them as
They've made that decision and then, through their assumptions about their readers and describe them almost as a homogeneous block. So when Rebekah, for example, talked about: well, they were following their readers in shifting from supporting Labour to supporting the Conservatives, or back then, the other way, the idea that their readers are all sort of sitting there moving in the same direction at the same pace is nonsense.

MR JAY: I know you dealt with this first in your statement, A. Correct, correct, correct, and I have addressed that in part when we get on to the --

MR JAY: -- future. But I think that is the point. They sit in judgment on and expect openness and transparency from every other part of our national life, apart from themselves. And that's, I think, why they're in the mess that they're in.

LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: We have moved on a bit, but before you left the proprietors I wanted to elicit your view, and I've got it. Right.

MR JAY: I know you dealt with this first in your statement, A. No.

Q. Why not?

LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Let me add one other element to it.

MR JAY: The concept of newspapers and power, but I was seeking to bring the strands together at the end of this section of your evidence. Paragraph 26, 00809. Paragraph 26 contains a general statement of your view.

A. Partly they do. But, for example, some of the smaller circulation papers are amongst the most influential. I think any newspaper can, at a certain point, pick up a campaign and provided they do it in a professional and sophisticated way, they can make that campaign work. So I don't think it's just a question of circulation.

And also I think the newspaper editors make huge assumptions about their readers and describe them almost as a homogeneous block. So when Rebekah, for example, talked about: well, they were following their readers in shifting from supporting Labour to supporting the Conservatives, or back then, the other way, the idea that their readers are all sort of sitting there moving in the same direction at the same pace is nonsense.

They've made that decision and then, through their coverage, they try to lead their readers in the same direction.

LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I think that's in response to a question I asked, Mrs Brooks accepted that there was an element of leadership there.

A. Yes. Yes. So -- and they're very good at marketing themselves. For example, the Daily Mail presents itself as the voice of middle England, the Sun presents itself as the voice of the white working class man. The Guardian, the liberal intelligentsia. And that's a perfectly legitimate thing for them to do, but I don't think that's in a sense where what you call their power necessarily comes from. I think it's a useful thing for them to say. I'm not sure it's necessarily right.

MR JAY: And a reader, of course, won't necessarily have a view on a particular issue, particularly if it's an issue of some complexity, unless and until the agenda is set and the issues are described.

A.Yeah.

Q. But which time the viewpoint is already being moved in a certain direction by the direction the paper's taken.

A. Yeah.

Q. I'm looking at paragraph 26, Mr Campbell. You say your own assessment, three lines down, is that: "They have more influence on the terms of the debate than actual power to dictate policy."

A. Yes.

Q. The terms of the debate. We're into areas such as the culture of negativity, matters you've outlined elsewhere.

A. It's also kind of what's important. A news bulletin running order is a set of decisions that are made by executives. If a -- at the moment, pornography in the Internet, for example. The Daily Mail, very involved in a campaign. Perfectly legitimate. Serious issue. Is that more likely to make the politicians think that they might look at it, try to address it? Yes. Is there anything wrong with that? No. But that's what I mean about the terms of the debate. I don't think they will necessarily decide the policy, but I think in terms of where the debate is, what is deemed to be important.

I say elsewhere in my statement, for example, the fact that issues like industrial action are almost always covered from a very narrow single perspective: disruption. The welfare debate is always about "scroungers" as opposed to the people who actually need benefits. That's what I mean about setting the terms of a debate.

Q. Although the terms of the debate having been set, the political response which is to dictate policy may flow
From that, might it not?

A. Sorry, what do you mean by that?

Q. If the newspapers have set the terms of the debate --

A. Oh yes, sorry, I get the point.

Q. -- then the political response, which is the setting of policy, may have been determined by the terms of the debate. Would you agree?

A. It might have been but not if the policy-making processes are working properly. In other words, you can get -- I think it's always important to differentiate between a media-driven campaign on something which they say is important, which they say needs addressing, and actually whether in reality it does when all the other issues are there.

I think it is important to accept -- and I think this goes for David Cameron, Gordon Brown, Tony Blair -- that the amount of time and emergency that they -- not just the people who work for them, but they, as prime ministers, have to devote and dedicate to kind of dealing with what are ultimately media management issues, it's grown. It's grown and it's grown because of the way that the media's developed, and I think that's a problem to.

Q. Then you continue:

"They only have power if politicians let them have power."  

A. Yeah.

Q. Of course, the terms "influence" and "power" are not synonymous. One is weaker than the other, and you prefer "influence" rather than "power", although some would say they're just different points on the same spectrum.

Would you agree with that?

A. No. I think "power" is a different thing. I don't think newspapers have power. I think politicians have real power but I think that hopefully what comes out of this is a resetting of that balance so it becomes much clearer where power does lie.

Q. By which, of course, you mean it is within the gift of politicians to prevent the press having power but that might, of course, have obvious ramifications for a free press. But it also presupposes that politicians are not going to yield to the obvious influences and powers which might intrude on their decision-making. Would you agree with that?

A. You see, I think a lot of this started under Margaret Thatcher, because I think that newspapers were given a sense of power. The numbers that received the peerages and the knighthoods and the sense that they were almost part of her team. I think it changed under John Major, and then I think when we were in power, I think that we -- I think we maybe did give the media too much of a sense of their own place within the political firmament when we should have challenged it more.

Q. You're talking about the conferment of power. One of the reasons why the newspapers have such power is the good reason you've identified, namely the virtues of a free press. We understand that. But the bad reasons -- you list three of those at the end of paragraph 26. You refer to the patronage system. Well, the evidence on that you set out. But then the second and the third aspects:

"The privileged access governments of both colours allow ..."

Which is the point Lord Justice Leveson made five minutes ago, which is the reason why the politicians have let the press have power; is that right?

A. Yeah.

Q. And the efforts made to win media support.

A. Mm.

Q. Which is, again, another aspect of the same phenomenon, isn't it?

A. Yeah, I think we might disagreed on the word "power", because as I say, I think ultimately the politicians do have the power, but I think all three there are factors within this that have led to a change that is probably unhealthy.

Q. Of course, the terms "influence" and "power" are not synonyms. One is weaker than the other, and you prefer "influence" rather than "power", although some would say they're just different points on the same spectrum.

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newspaper editor.

A. Mm-hm.

LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: But doesn't that longevity give them rather more than influence? I agree it is not the power to change the law or the way in which this country is run, but it is a very real force, at the very strongest form of influence. Would that be fair?

A. Yes, I think in Rupert Murdoch's case it would be, because of the point you make. If you sort of analyse power and influence year by year over the last four decades, and as you say, he's been a big player throughout that time.

But, for example, I can remember being struck once, in a discussion with George Bush, Bush asking us what Rupert Murdoch was like because he'd never met him, which I found quite surprising. Whether he's met him since, I don't know, but that was -- and I think when Rupert Murdoch went to the Select Committee and said, "Sometimes I wish these guys would leave me alone", I think that was a little bit disingenuous because as I said, I think he is interested in powerful people. He is interested in the people who make the decisions and make the news, but I don't -- I see it as a different sort of power. I think political power -- and I think the political class has to some extent ceded too much on this ground and needs to get it back.

A. Yes.

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A. Yes.

Q. Background to the breakdown. This is page 7. We were told that three major factors had contributed to the breakdown of the relationship between the government, the media and the public: the communications strategy adopted by the Labour administration on coming into power in 1997, the reaction of the media and the press in particular to that and then the response of the sieve service:

"Labour's past experience of handling the media in its belief that government communications staff were not up to the mark saw a rise in the media-handling role of politically appointed, unelected special advisers."

You're, of course, at the epicentre of that.

"Their more aggressive approach and their increased use of selective briefing of media outlets, in which government information was seen to be being used to political advantage led to a reaction from the media that produced a far more adversarial relationship with government."

No doubt cause and effect there may be disputatious. It's inevitably mixed up and you would say you certainly can't date this to 1997, you should go earlier in time and your evidence says that, but the basic thesis advanced here is not far wide of the mark, is it?

A. No, although the specific -- the same page says the specific trigger for this Inquiry, I think I'm right in saying, was the very difficult relationships between civil servants and special advisers in one department, the Department of Transport, and also then the difficulties we had in relation to what became known as -- because everything has to have a "gate" -- Cheriegate and the Bristol flats.

So I think that was the background and then, as the Phillis report sets out, we then got into the difficulties with the BBC over Iraq. So I think the relationship had got into a very, very bad place, there's no doubt about that, and as I say in my statement, I think a lot of the media put the blame on us, I think we put most of the blame on them, and that probably exacerbated the problem.

But I do emphasise, as I said earlier, that it's --
Q. It may be a different sort of smile. I can’t see it.
A. That’s what I call the "herd mentality" in my statement.

Q. Yes, that's true.
A. "... and the cynical way in which some were favoured because they worked for Rupert Murdoch while others were sneered at because they worked for Conrad Black disgusted many who worked for neither."

Q. Yes, that's true.
A. Well, again, the person that at the Sun with whom I would have had most day-to-day contact was Trevor Kavanagh because he was the political editor and I think it's fair to say Trevor and I disagreed about most things. He was -- I go back to the point I made earlier. Everybody thought that I was favouring somebody else. Everybody thought that anything that appeared in the press somehow came from me. The whole thing was absurd. The absurdity, I think -- I say in the statement that one of the best examples of spin done by journalists is the extent to which the issue of spin became so central to the debate. I had a job to do. My job was to brief the press on behalf of the Prime Minister and to advise the Prime Minister and other ministers, and I did that job in an incredibly exposed place. There were half a dozen -- and I know you have a couple of journalists coming later this week who no doubt will go into them in huge detail. There were half a dozen issues that get thrown back again and again and again and again. I dealt with thousands of

Q. Did that happen?
A. There may have been some that were invited to Chequers.
Not many. I’m afraid I don't buy this thesis, no.
Q. But the political --
A. As I said to you earlier, most of my contact with journalists who defended what I call the institutionalised dishonesty of the old lobby system --

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<th>Page 77</th>
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<th>stories. I dealt with thousands of briefings, and I would defend the accuracy and the honesty of those against any journalist any day of the week.</th>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Q.</td>
<td>You get a rather different --</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>LORD JUSTICE LEVESON:</td>
<td>Without exception?</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>A.</td>
<td>No, there are some terrific journalists.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>LORD JUSTICE LEVESON:</td>
<td>No, no --</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>A.</td>
<td>No, no, we made mistakes, for sure, but I do think, given the pressures we were under, they were extraordinarily few in number.</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>MR JAY:</td>
<td>A different perspective from Mr Powell, page 194.</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>A.</td>
<td>I did actually read Andrew Marr's book over the weekend because it was on your reading list and there were some places where he was very, very nice about me. I was rather shocked to read that.</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>LORD JUSTICE LEVESON:</td>
<td>That's why we've not referred you to them, Mr Campbell.</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>MR JAY:</td>
<td>This is Mr Powell speaking:</td>
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| 11 | Q. | "Alastair was unfairly criticised for politicising the government press service. Actually, what he did was to professionalise and modernise it. When we arrived it was in a parlous state and by the time we left it, it had regained its confidence and become far better at what it did. The seamier side of political press briefing is the domain of ministers' special advisors."

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<th>Page 78</th>
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<th>and, of course, of ministers themselves.&quot;</th>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Q.</td>
<td>Would you agree with that?</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>A.</td>
<td>That's the point I made earlier, that whenever anything appeared in the press that came from the government, people assumed it was me, but often it wasn't. I would certainly agree that the government communications system that we inherited was not fit for purpose. A lot of change had to be made. Robin Butler, the cabinet secretary, was very, very clear with me that I had the authority to make change. He then set up the Mountfield review, which led to substantial changes. I think they're changes for the better. Most of them are being kept by Gordon Brown and David Cameron and other people got up on all sorts of stuff. There's no doubt about that, and that is part of politics. It's part of life. I tried to control at the centre. I tried to keep a grip of things, but the reality is there are hundreds of people out there the whole time who -- anybody who works in Downing Street in the eyes of a journalist is a senior Downing Street source. Anybody who works in the Home Office is a senior Home Office source. I think we did a pretty good job in having proper coordination at the centre, but it's very difficult to maintain that.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Q.</td>
<td>Mr Powell points the finger of blame in a particular place. He says:</td>
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| Page 79 | 1 | "It's the special advisers like the Damian McBrides, Charlie Whelans and Ed Ballses, not departmental spokesmen who specialise in character assassination through the pages of the newspapers. What always surprised me was that the assassins managed to persuade the press to keep quiet about their activities, however many incriminating emails or texts they sent."

<table>
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<th>Page 80</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>&quot;Most lobby journalists [he said] have been deliberately misled or lied to by Downing Street.&quot;</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Followed by zero evidence whatsoever.</td>
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<td>&quot;New Labour's culture of deception or manipulation of statistics, secretive smear campaigns ...&quot;</td>
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<td>Then all this: Mo Mowlam, David Clark, Keith Hellawell, the drug tsar. No evidence whatsoever. And Mo Mowlam is a very good example. Mo came to believe that we were briefing against her because it kept being written, and there's not a single journalist has ever produced a shred of evidence, and that's what I mean by them being spin doctors.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Q.</td>
<td>Finally, Mr Powell:</td>
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<td>&quot;They succeeded [this is the special advisers again] in building up a dependency among the political correspondents by feeding them a constant supply of stories so that the journalists were reluctant to endanger that supply by revealing their methods.&quot;</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>A.</td>
<td>Correct. And that's why if you look at -- there's David Cameron now. He's the Prime Minister. He has his own media team. I don't think George Osborne is necessarily comparable, but take somebody like Boris Johnson. I'm not saying this is going on but if Boris Johnson and the people around him want to be briefing the press in a way to undermine David Cameron, they can do that and they...&quot;</td>
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know the journalists aren't going to drop them in it because it's too good a story for them. So we had that in relation to the people who worked for Gordon Brown, no doubt.

Q. Of course, by the end of your time in Downing Street, Mr Campbell, you were somewhat jaded, it may be fair to say. Mr Blair points out, pages 301 to 302 of his book: "Alastair was getting exhausted and ratty and he was getting set upon by the media, whom he was coming to loathe. He was therefore not handling quite right."

I'm not interested a bit in "handling quite right", but you were coming to loathe them, presumably?

A. Not all of them. I was coming to loathe -- well, I had come to loathe the culture that I have set out in my statement. There were some individuals that I had come to loathe. I'd come to loathe their self-obsession, their obsession with me, the negativity, the trivialisation. I had come to loathe all that, yeah.

But let me just say on the other hand, as I said in my first statement, some of them were and are fantastic first-rate journalists who I think were as worried about their obsession with me, the negativity, the trivialisation. They were still judging their success or failure on the basis of what sort of press they were getting. There comes a point where the Prime Minister will say, "I need to get a sense of their own power back. You made the point earlier about access. They probably do spend too much time -- look, diary secretaries are used to fobbing people off and saying, "No, there's not enough time in the diary." I think the senior politicians need to do more of that with the media.

The great thing about the whole sort of change and the Internet and social media and so forth and direct channels of communication now -- just as the public can shape a different media landscape, so can the politicians and they should. But I think there's a sense of the media still judging their success or failure far too much on what sort of press they're getting. When I saw, for example, the list of direct contacts there's been between this government and the Murdochs since the election -- Michael Gove, for example -- I couldn't believe it. Waste of his time, to my mind. Better things to do.

MR JAY: We will look at the future again at the end of your evidence, but I've been asked to put to you a line of questions from various sources, most of them core participants, so I'll do that now, Mr Campbell.

A. Am I allowed to guess which they are?

Q. I don't think it really matters, Mr Campbell. It's the question, not the messenger, but feel free.

Paragraph 7 of your statement, page 00794. In the third line, you refer to taking a more strategic and more proactive approach to communication. Did this entail, on occasion, economising with the truth, more particularly the tensions between Mr Brown and Mr Blair, which you continued to deny as an invention of the press?

A. I don't think I ever denied them as an invention of the press but I may have dealt with them in the way that I felt would both benefit the government. You have to remember my job was not -- I wasn't the press' representative in Downing Street. I was the Prime Minister's spokesman. We talked earlier about the -- if you have a roomful of journalists being present, it's an interview Mr Rawnsley carried out with Lord Mandelson, referred to page 9 of Mr Rawnsley's book:

"There was a great emphasis on managing the media at the expense of managing policy. There was a sense that if you'd got the story right, you'd achieved something and that's not how government is."

Do you feel that there's any validity in that comment?

A. No. I think the policy process was always taken more seriously, but I think we all spent far too much time focused on -- and I speak as the guy who was in charge of this. The politicians spent way too much time worrying about this stuff.

LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Well, it chimes with what you said: media issues take up much too much time of the Prime Minister and other senior ministers.

A. Yes. But in their defence, it's very difficult when these full-on frenzies are coming at you. There comes a point where the Prime Minister will say, "I need to get out there and deal with this." My point is I think they can have a lot more space. The public are much more savvy about this now and I think the more strategic the politicians are, the better it will be for them. The less they're focused on the day-to-day -- back in the beginning, when we started out, I think we had to adopt the approach that we had because we had to recalibrate the playing field, but I think now, hopefully, there's the window, to use your word earlier, to get to a much, much better position, but it's going to require change from both the politicians and from the media.

LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: You said politicians need to get political power back.
briefed by other people somewhere in the system that there's this problem, then I'd be stupid if I sat there and said there wasn't a problem, but what I would do is say, "Look, we're not going to focus on that, we're going to focus on this. We're going to focus on the budget, we're going to focus on welfare reform, whatever."

So it wasn't that I was denying, but I would choose my words very carefully in how I deal with it.

Q. Okay. Paragraph 12 now, page 00797. At the very bottom of the page, you refer to the remarkable shift of opinion made by some of the Murdoch titles on the issue of Scottish nationalism and independence, and in particular the movement of the Scottish Sun. The Times made Mr Salmond man of the year. You're not suggesting some sort of causal connection there, are you, Mr Campbell, or are you?

A. Caused between what and what?

Q. Between the support the Murdoch papers were beginning to give Mr Salmond, in particular in Scotland, and the Times making Mr Salmond man of the year?

A. I think the -- I do think that Rupert Murdoch had decided that Alex Salmond was somebody he wanted to be very, very supportive of, for whatever reason. I think Alex Salmond was one of the men of that year. I'm simply making an observation. I do think there's a bigger point in that paragraph. I do think that the Prime Minister, David Cameron, and Nick Clegg and Ed Miliband, they're all getting disproportionately whacked in our case, the Prime Minister, and that's why I think that the politicians need to step back from that. It's not their job. Their job is to govern. So -- does that answer it?

A. Mm-hm.

Q. So you could enlighten us as to what the practice was between 1997 and 2003 and really take that no further?

A. I did stay involved with Tony Blair and later with Gordon Brown, but for example, when people talk about blaming their advisers or -- we've talked about some of Gordon's special advisers. I don't think it's enough for a politician to say they're freelance or they're doing their own thing. Jonathan and I were both very, very senior in the system, but if we were dealing with difficult, sensitive issues -- we knew at all times we were representing the Prime Minister, and special advisers are very personal appointments by ministers or, in our case, the Prime Minister, and that's why I think there was a lot of justified scepticism following the evidence of one of your recent witnesses.

Q. I've been asked by one core participant to ask you reality is that -- Andrew Lansley made a speech at the Royal College of Nursing today. I don't know whether he had any major announcements to make or not, but that would have been seen by the people who were there and there was bits on the news, largely of the hostile reaction on it. He, therefore, to my mind is perfectly justified then in going on to another venue at another day and saying the same thing again and hoping to get coverage. Is that reannouncing? I don't know.

Communication -- what my definition of "strategic communication" is is the communication of what you're trying to do over time, and retaining the media's interest in that is not easy when what they keep saying is: what's new? When we talked earlier about the whole business about politicians trying to be more strategic, the media want news 24 hours a day because that's the business that they're in and they look to the politicians -- because they're the most high profile people in the country, with the possible exception of footballers -- they look to them to provide that news.

Now, all I'm saying is I think the politicians need to step back from that. It's not their job. Their job is to govern. So -- does that answer it?
Day 70 - PM

Leveson Inquiry

14 May 2012

1 questions about the Black Rod incident in 2002, the
death of the Queen Mother, which was in April 2002.
2 A. Mm-hm.
3 Q. I've provided with you a little clip, Mr Campbell, of
materials which are actually not available. Can we get
the chronology right. There was a piece in the Mail on
Sunday --
4 A. No, I think the Spectator was the first piece.
5 Q. Right.
6 A. April 13, Peter Oborne, "How Tony Blair tried to muscle
in on the mourning". Totally untrue.
7 Q. Certainly one of the pieces you complained about to the
PCC was published in Mail on Sunday on 14 April 2002.
8 Do you recall that?
9 A. That's correct.
10 Q. We have a proof print of the story:
11 "Downing Street wanted Tony Blair to have a bigger
role in the ceremonies that marked the Queen Mother's
death, it was revealed last night. A senior Blair aide
telephoned Black Rod and asked if the Prime Minister
would be able to meet the coffin and the Royal Family when
they arrived at Westminster Hall. The PM's private
secretary, Clare Sumner, was told by Black Rod that
there was no role for Mr Blair and made it clear he was
not proposing to change his plan."

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1 A bit later on:
2 "The disclosure came amid claims that government
officials wanted Buckingham Palace to reduce the lying
in state from four days to three because they feared
there would be insufficient numbers [I paraphrase]."
3 Then, towards the bottom of the page, about ten
lines from the bottom:
4 "Black Rod, a former army officer, told her [that's
Ms Sumner], politely but firmly, that Mr Blair would not
greet the coffin and the Queen and the ceremony seen by
hundreds of millions of TV viewers over the world. The
plan had already been drawn up."
5 Then on the next page, four lines from the top:
6 "A Downing Street spokesman said last night:
7 "We contacted Black Rod to go through the
logistics. We did not suggest that the Prime Minister's
role should be changed in any way, nor did we put
pressure on anyone."

A. Correct.

20 Q. You complained to the editor of the Mail on Sunday on
21 5 April 2002.
22 A. Mm-hm.
23 Q. This was obviously the Monday morning, the following
day. You say:
24 "In the Mail on Sunday yesterday, Simon Walters
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1 That must be a reference to the earlier claim in the
Spectator; is that right?
2 A. Yeah.
3 Q. "... that Downing Street sought to change the Royal
Family's arrangements for the lying in state ... to
enhance the Prime Minister's role. The Prime Minister
has asked me to tell you that unless you print
a correction and apology which makes clear unequivocally
that this story is untrue and you accept it to be
untrue, we will be making a complaint to the Press
Complaints Commission under Clause 1 of the Code."

A. Mm-hm.

14 Q. I think you made the complaint on 24 April 2002 to the
PCC, but there was an intervening letter from Mr Wright
on 16 April, where he came out fighting, as it were.
17 The third paragraph:
18 "I do not believe it is in dispute that Clare Sumner
telephoned Sir Michael Willcocks to discuss the
arrangements ... it is our information that Ms Sumner
indicated surprise that Mr Blair would not be meeting
the coffin and the Royal Family when they arrived at
Westminster Hall. Sir Michael told Ms Sumner that that
was indeed the established plan and he was not prepared
to change it. In fact, he did make one change."

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1 Then Mr Wright asked for three questions to be
answered.
2 Finally, there was a letter by Black Rod to the PCC,
which we see at the back of this file.

A. Mm-hm.

6 Q. It's dated 8 May 2002 and came after a request by the
PCC made the previous day to respond to your complaint.
Black Rod in this letter effectively said that there
were conversations with Ms Sumner and the efforts were
made to change the plans. Would you agree with that?

A. If you look at page 3 of his statement -- there's the
indented top paragraph -- he writes the statement that
he gave to us that we were then able to use to rebut
these totally untrue stories. He says:
14 "In the immediate aftermath of the news of the death
of the Queen Mother, I was contacted by the staff at
Number 10 to brief them on the PM's role ... I did so
and explained the ceremonial. At no stage was I ever
asked to change these arrangements."
17 So why on earth he told us one thing, when, as his
letter then subsequently shows, he clearly, for whatever
reason, had been having these discussions with Simon
Walters -- but the point is that it became impossible
because the PCC said that they were not in a position
where they could adjudicate on fact, and so we just --
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with all the other things going on, we just said this is a complete waste of time and we dropped it, which of course, then the press took to say means the story was true. The story was untrue then and it's untrue now. I've given -- this was sent to me yesterday. I asked the Cabinet Office to dig out the file on it and I think -- I've sent to your team the copies of the correspondence on it from our perspective so that you do actually have the broader story and how we handled it.

Q. What Black Rod says towards the end of page 3:

"Finally, we come to the Mail on Sunday articles.

Here, I did have contact with a their author, Simon Walters, before publication. He came to see me on 11 April to research a story on the costs of the lying-in-state operation. At the end of the interview he made it clear that he had sources which in effect substantiated the underlying thrust of the Spectator's original article. Although I repeated my on-the-record statement, I was surprised by the quality of his information because I could not, in truth, deny the main force of his contentions."

A. In which case it's very odd that he denied them on the record prior to that. If you're interested in this, you'd have to talk to Black Rod, because he does appear to be saying different things on the same piece of paper. All I know is that a very damaging story was run, first in the Spectator, then the Standard, then the Mail on Sunday and the story was completely and totally untrue. Clare Sumner, whose job in Downing Street was parliamentary liaison, she had to establish what the Prime Minister was meant to do on an event as important as the death of the Queen Mother. And then -- he goes on in his letter to talk about there were these visits from Downing Street. They happened to be the Prime Minister's protection team who advance everywhere that he goes. So forgive me if I don't take this as seriously as the people who wrote it at the time, but the story was total nonsense."

Q. Although Black Rod, for better or worse, on the last page says: "I find it rather difficult to fault the Mail on Sunday insofar as its articles dealt with my experiences..."

A. Well, he's obviously somebody who was very friendly with the Mail on Sunday and perhaps didn't want to say anything untoward about them. All I know is the story is untrue.

Q. Finally, I'm asked to put to you: you didn't reply to Mr Wright's letters of 12 and 17 June.

A. I have no idea if I did or I didn't.

"My chat with Kavanagh had been written up hard as a June election."

A. Yeah.

Q. Then you move on to a different topic:

"... and the first call of the day was DB [David Blunkett] saying he was pissed off it came out in the newspaper like that."

Or maybe you were still on the same topic, namely the timing of the election?

A. I'd have to check against the cutting, but I think that refers to a story about David Blunkett's position in the government. I could be wrong, because I think he was moved after the election. But the point I make in my witness statement is valid. The Sun ran a story -- look, it's obvious. Now we have fixed-term Parliaments so this question may not arise, but the timing of the election is a story that every single political journalist is looking for the whole time and they speculated about it all the time.

The truth is we had been planning to have the election on May 3 and it was postponed because of foot and mouth. Trevor Kavanagh had run a story earlier saying May 3, election day official. That didn't come from us and nor did the subsequent story saying that was going to be on whatever date in June it turned out to be.
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<td>1 Q. How would one go about properly exploring these motivations without seriously impeding the preeminent concern, the freedom of the press?</td>
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<td>2 A. I think by being aware of that, there's a possible concern. But if you look at -- we talked earlier about the fact that every other walk of life has some sort of oversight and scrutiny and regulation. Some of the reports that the broadcasting regulator publishes from time to time, I -- would be similar to this. I'm simply suggesting that whichever body replacing the PCC as well as investigating individual complaints against a code -- and as I said in my first statement I think the PCC code itself is a very, very good basis, but also to look at trends. You took evidence from the McCanns. I mean, had there been a regulator who, as that story was developing, could actually have said, &quot;We are going to have an investigation into the way this is being covered&quot;, that might have had an effect, and I think it would have been an effect for the good.</td>
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<td>3 I mention some of the specific issues there. News International's reporting of editorial line about the BBC. I'm not suggesting you should say you can't have a bias, but I think if an outside body were able to at least analyse whether they felt that there were one -- inevitably there's going to be some sort of...</td>
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<td>4 when the election was going to be, frankly.</td>
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<td>5 Q. You say it wasn't going to be May, it wasn't going to be July, because they never are in July, it's going to be June.</td>
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<td>6 A. Well, I think they'd all worked that out by then. But it became a source of huge contention because the Mirror then became convinced this we'd given them the election date. No such thing. We didn't.</td>
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<td>7 Q. Can we look to the future, Mr Campbell. It's 25 to 5 but we have time to do that. You pick it up at paragraph 32 of your statement, 00813. Just some ideas which you throw out. We're not going to cover all of them because we've read your statement. You say in paragraph 34 this is a very difficult area in which to regulate. We understand that. I'm interested in paragraph 36.</td>
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<td>8 A. Mm-hm.</td>
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<td>9 Q. You're suggesting that there should be greater transparency and the new regulator should be able to investigate the extent to which, really, opinion is being presented as fact, the extent to which they're fair and reasonable in their reporting, and the extent to which they're being sufficiently transparent in the interests which are driving their content.</td>
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<td>10 A. Mm-hm.</td>
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<td>11 when the election was going to be, but what I didn't do was brief him on the election date.</td>
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<td>12 Q. What's the difference, Mr Campbell?</td>
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<td>13 A. Well, the difference is he phones me up and says, &quot;Alastair, can you tell me when the election it?&quot; and I tell him what the date is. Having conversations -- and this is where it's very difficult. I just ask you to imagine what it's like being in my position, where I know the information, he thinks that he knows the information, he's trying to tease it out of me and he reads body language and he reads the way that I say things. I don't want to mislead him. Again, contrary to the sort of Oborne thesis, I never told them lies but I sometimes didn't tell them everything that I knew. He reads the language. By then, it was blindingly obvious...</td>
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<tr>
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<td>15 A. Mm-hm.</td>
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<td>16 Q. If you compare the last sentence of 39. You say: &quot;If, for example, a paper repeatedly distorts the facts in support of a political role, whilst there...</td>
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<td>17 subjectivity attached to this, but when this Inquiry finally writes its report, judgments are made. That's what people are put in these positions to do. So I'm suggesting some body is put in that position to make judgments so the public can be better informed. And I think actually, as I say later, that as a result of this Inquiry the public have learnt and seen things that they didn't know about, I think that's been to the public good already. But if this body were able to say, &quot;I am concerned about this issue, I'd like to interview an editor or an owner about that&quot;, what on earth is wrong with that? I don't see anything wrong it at all. I think it would be a good thing for press. I make the point that some of the -- you would probably know more about this than I do, but some of the regulation of the legal profession I think has probably strengthened the legal profession and it's been a mixture of statutory and non-statutory.</td>
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<td>18 Q. (inaudible) be a difference, if you compare the last sentence of paragraph 37 with the last sentence of paragraph 39.</td>
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<td>19 A. Yeah.</td>
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<td>20 Q. Start with the last sentence of 39. You say:...</td>
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A. Well, what I mean -- I don't think I explained that very well. What I mean by that is, for example, I talked earlier about the Sun has a particular view on Europe, or at the moment they have a particular view on Ken Clarke and his fitness to be Secretary of State. So you can take a fact, for example, the Eurozone is in crisis, we'll accept that's a fact, but then you can take that fact and you can turn it into a comment that justifies your position on Europe. Likewise with Ken Clarke. If the Select Committee report is published which is critical of the Justice Department, you can take that and flash it over your front page why Clarke has to go. I'm making the point that the facts will be in the story somewhere. The distortion is in the way they take them to build a comment which relate to a campaign that they're running.

I don't think you should stop newspapers from doing that. It's perfectly legitimate for newspapers to have strong positions. The fact is a fact. But I'm simply saying that if you have an outside body that says, for example, the Eurozone is in crisis, you can take that, you can turn it into a comment that justifies your position on Europe. Then the argument is like Full Fact and Media Standards Trust and these bodies are representing is a genuine public concern about what the media has become. That's accelerating, but why I think it's still important to keep the focus on the print industry is because these are the same people who, to be fair to them, were invented. How is a regulator ever going to get to the bottom of that? A journalist says somebody said it to me and you can't disprove it, that is true, but most people who's had a very high profile particularly in a political environment know because we've all been on the receiving end of stories we know to be untrue, we've just talked about one of them in relation to Black Rod, where a civil servant was accused of doing something she just never did and then I was accused of having put her up to it and then Tony Blair was accused of putting me up to it to put her up to it, based on anonymous quotes? No. Maybe somebody did say something, but it's very difficult when you know that what they said is untrue. I don't know what a regulator does about that, but I think that having a respected outside body that is able to investigate and look at things thematically, I think, would be a useful addition to this -- to this area.

Now, the other area where, of course, you have a problem is that you're looking at the print industry, which is really challenged at the moment for reasons that are obvious, technological change and advance. That's accelerating, but why I think it's still important to keep the focus on the print industry is because these are the same people who, to be fair to...
... them, are having to and in some cases are successfully adapting to this technological revolution. So actually if you do get the regulatory framework right for print journalism, I think that will have a profound effect on the way the Internet develops.

LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: It's not so much as whether -- Mr Lebedev made the point. It's not so much as whether your news comes on dead trees or through the --

A. Tablet.

LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: -- tablet or whatever. The fact is that it's about or may be about the thing that journalists do that nobody else does, which is to go out to get stories, to put the facts together and then to write about them in a way that is accessible to a wider population.

A. Mm-hm.

LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Which is perhaps different from those that are simply tweeting to one another or otherwise communicating on Facebook.

A. Yeah, but the -- when we had the little break and I was just sort of having a look at my phone and, I mean, the guys from the BBC and ITV and Sky who are covering this, they're not here. They're outside, they're watching it. Why don't they want to be in here? Because they want to tweet. Because that is now part of journalism as well.

So they tweet, they write, they blog, they go on television. They are journalists.

What I think is happening is that we're going to end up in a position where there has to be a redefinition essentially of what a journalist is. I think it would be absurd to expect you to have regulation for every single person who is on Facebook and Twitter because then you're not far off from saying we have to regulate the content of text messaging and so forth. It's absurd. So I think there has to be a definition of what a journalist is, what a media organisation is, and there, this is where I have some sympathy for the print industry, it's not just about the print industry.

LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I'm sure that's right. The problem is, as Lord O'Donnell made clear, that you've not merely got to capture where we are at the moment --

A. Where you're going to be.

LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: -- but to devise it in such a way that it is relevant to where we'll be in five years' time.

A. Yeah, and I think that is difficult because if you think that ten years ago Facebook, Google, Twitter, YouTube didn't even exist, and now they are dominant within this space and the newspapers are struggling to catch up, as Rupert Murdoch himself said, in their mind, being ripped off the whole time for content. That's a difficult -- you've been given the specific area, but I think in terms of this debate it's developing so quickly that -- I've heard you many times and read you in the transcripts talking about the elephant in the room.

Maybe for a while the elephant kind of has to the parked a bit, because I still do think if you get the PCC -- the new PCC, whatever that becomes and however it's constituted, if that works better than its predecessors, I do think that will have a big impact on the way that the rest of it, the blogosphere and so forth, develops, because again people aren't stupid. They can work out who knows what they're on about. When you see which of these websites get lots of traffic and which don't, it does tend to be the ones that invest properly in journalism and do real stories and so forth, and hopefully the best get to the top.

LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Well, the great problem is that you so define the issue that it is incapable of any sensible resolution, and that's a problem.

A. Mm. But I sort of sense that this press who have -- who I sense fear most what you may conclude are hoping that first you and then the politicians sort of say, "This is now so complicated we can't -- it's changing so fast we can't do anything about it." I think if nothing is done, given how we've got to where we are now, and the broader cultural issues we've talked about, I think we will be missing probably the only opportunity that we'll have for a generation to get this right. It's --

I totally understand what Gus O'Donnell was saying, but really not the role, I don't think, of legislators, let alone an Inquiry, to say: let's predict how the world is going to be in ten years and legislate for that. They have to take a decision based upon what's happening now.

MR JAY: In Lord Hunt's proposals, paragraphs 41 to 43, you make a number of points there. Paragraph 41, I paraphrase: without obvious carrots it's difficult to see what, other than goodwill and good faith, will bring everybody into the sheep pen, as it were. That point obviously is noted and understood.

Paragraph 43, third line: "Perfectly possible to have a system of regulation and accountability which carries the authority the government and Parliament can confer but in their operations are independent of government, Parliament and commercial vested interests."

And then you've furnished us with analogies from other regulatory spheres. And then you have --
A. I think the funding one is difficult because PressBoF -- back to this point about it's their system and they pay for it, but -- so how you would fund this, I think perhaps there does have to be a claim upon the public purse.

I think the Editors' Code has always been a major flaw the fact that serving editors are the people who are deciding what the Editors' Code I think is just so obviously a flaw in the old system.

I think Lord Hunt is doing a very good job to try and make sense of this, but he's an absolute passionate believer in self-regulation, so he's trying to get the last, last-chance saloon, and I think they have had so many last-chance saloons I think the public would think it were bizarre if we just basically said: well, we've had all this thing, we've had Milly Dowler, we've had the McCanns and all the rest of it; let's just have another PCC but call it something different.

Q. I'm asked to put to you this final question, it's on another PCC but call it something different.

A. Oh, you'd have to remind me what clause 1 says other than its commitment to accuracy. Is it fact, comment and conjecture? Is that the -- does anybody --

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Q. Comment and conjecture are outside clause 1 in that one can effectively say what you like, but fact is part of accuracy and within clause 1 and within therefore the jurisdiction of the PCC.

A. Right.

Q. I think that fairly summarises the position.

A. Well, I can't claim to --

Q. Okay.

A. -- carry the PCC code around in my head.

Q. It may be it's too precise a point, which --

A. I think your colleague has it on his screen.

Q. Yes:

"The press, while free to be partisan, must distinguish clearly between comment, conjecture and fact."

A. I think that's a very, very good principle.

MR JAY: Thank you very much, Mr Campbell.

LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Mr Campbell, thank you very much.

I'm very grateful for your help. Thank you.

A. Thank you.

LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Right. 10 o'clock.

(4.56 pm)

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