1	Monday, 6 February 2012	1	to resolve, and I'm prepared to do that at some stage
2	(2.00	2	that is convenient to the parties.
3	(2.00 pm)	3	MR JAY: Indeed. I'm asked to point out this, I think,
4	(Proceedings delayed)	4	is implicit in what you know already that there is no
5	(2.21 pm)	5	sound going to our annex. I think it's part of the same
6	LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Mr Jay, I understand that there is an		syndrome as the streaming problem you mentioned.
7	IT difficulty, so that although the proceedings are	7	LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I didn't know there was no sound
8	being recorded, they are not presently being streamed	8	I am also getting information to the effect that there
9	live. This is a problem that hasn't previously arisen,	9	is sound.
10	and I don't feel it's appropriate to wait any longer	10	MR JAY: Then I will ignore that last message. Maybe the
11	while it is resolved. What it will mean is those who	11	sound has just arrived.
12	wish to follow this afternoon's proceedings will be able	12	Sir, may we press on then with Mr Paul Dacre?
13	to do so but not contemporaneously. As soon as the link	13	LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Yes, let's do that.
14	is restored, it will happen, and we will make sure that	14	MR PAUL MICHAEL DACRE (sworn)
15	the recording in any event is placed on the web so that	15	Questions by MR JAY
16	it is available for anybody to see thereafter.	16	MR JAY: Mr Dacre, if you could kindly make yourself
17	MR JAY: Sir, may I mention some evidence which is to be	17	comfortable and provide us, please, with your full name?
18	read or possibly read at this stage. You will have seen	18	A. It's Paul Michael Dacre.
19	a statement from Ms Jemima Khan dated 27 November 2012. LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Yes.	19 20	LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Mr Dacre, I thank you, as I've thanked the editors of other newspapers who have allowed
20			
21 22	MR JAY: There's no difficulty with that statement. Then on Friday and Saturday there was a late flurry	21 22	me to visit their newsrooms. I know you weren't there at the time but I'm grateful to you for allowing me to
23	of evidence. The second supplementary witness statement	23	do so.
24	of Mr Hugh Grant, together with an exhibit, which also	24	MR JAY: Mr Dacre, you have signed and dated a witness
25	contained a statement of Patricia Owen and a voice file.	25	statement, 25 October of last year. It runs to 48
23	Page 1	23	Page 3
	1 480 1		1 100 0
1	That arrived at about 4.30 in the afternoon.	1	paragraphs. Is this your main evidence to the Inquiry?
2	Then there was a supplementary witness statement of	2	A. Yes.
3	Mr Paul Dacre, together with an exhibit. That arrived	3	Q. Thank you very much. You also were kind enough to
4	in my inbox at around 9.00 in the evening. It wasn't	4	address the seminar which took place on 12 October of
5	received by the solicitor to the Inquiry, since the	5	last year. Are you content to adopt what you said then
6	email bounced back, but in any event it was far too	6	as part of your evidence?
7	late. So there's that statement to address, and then	7	A. Absolutely.
8	there's a second statement of Mr Mark Thomson, which	8	Q. Thank you very much. Mr Dacre, in terms of your career,
9	I understand you haven't seen, of Saturday's date,	9	you are the longest-serving editor on Fleet Street. You
10	4 February.	10	have been editor of the Daily Mail since 1992, and
11	All I would wish to say is that it's disappointing	11	editor-in-chief of Associated Newspapers since 1998.
12	that this evidence has come so late, but it's for you to	12	Could you kindly explain to us what "editor-in-chief"
13	decide how to address it.	13	means, in particular in the context of each individual
14	LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I can't pretend that I have studied		title, which I understand has its own autonomous editor?
15	it at length, although I have seen at least one of the	15	A. It's a firm principle of my group,
16	statements to which you have just referred. I'm very	16	Associated Newspapers, that we that the editors of
17	anxious that this Inquiry is not diverted into a dispute	17	our individual titles edit their papers. They're
18	between one of those who's given evidence and one of the	18	autonomous. My role as editor-in-chief is to decide the
19	newspaper core participants. I think we should proceed	19	strategy for the group, look after the financial
20	to hear the evidence that we need to hear. Mr Dacre has	20	implications of the individual papers, to deal with
21	a lot of ground that he can cover and has already	21	areas that cover all the papers the promotions and
22	demonstrated in the seminar how he has been thinking	22	marketing strategy and, you know, from time to time,
23	about the future. I am not prepared presently to	23	have chats with my editors and discuss how we can
24	publish any of these statements until I've heard some	24	forward the fortunes of our group and their individual
25	argument as to how far they take the issues that I have	25	papers.
	Page 2		Page 4

- Q. Thank you very much.
- 2 A. But I would like to stress that just as I am given the
- 3 freedom to edit by our management, I leave the
- 4 individual editors of the titles -- it can't be any
- 5 other way. You can't edit by remote control.
- Q. Thank you. I'll come back to that issue in due course. 6
- 7 In terms of your career in relation to the PCC and
- 8 related bodies, you were a member of the Press
- 9 Complaints Commission between 1998 and 2008. You've
- 10 been a director of PressBoF since 2004, and when you
- 11 left the PCC in 2008, you then became chair of the
- 12 Editors' Code of Practice Committee?
- 13 A. Correct.
- 14 Q. And I think you remain the chair of the Code of Practice
- 15 Committee as we speak.
- 16 A. (Nods head)
- Q. I'm going to take your first statement really as read, 17
- 18 and if I may, start off by asking you a number of
- 19 general questions about philosophy before looking at
- 20 your ideas for the future and then some more specific
- 21 matters.

9

- 22 You said at the seminar on 12 October that this
- 23 Inquiry's panel of experts, I quote, "don't have the
- 24 faintest clue how mass-selling newspapers operate". I'm
- 25 not going to ask you to seek to justify that remark, but
 - Page 5

- I, single-handedly and with great and total willpower, 2 impose my will on the paper. It, again, is a misunderstanding of how newspapers work.
- 3 4
- First of all, I employ an immensely diverse range of 5 journalists. We invest, at Associated, in quality journalism. It's our philosophy. We employ the best
- 6 7 writers, the best leader writers, the best reporters,
- 8 the best executives, the best sub-editors et cetera to

9 produce quality papers to appeal to our market.

- 10 On any given day, the paper will adopt a position on 11
- things in its leader column. I will call a leader 12
- conference. It will be attended by some of my top 13 writers, some brilliant leader writers, a diverse
- 14 assembly of people. We vigorously debate the issues of
- 15 the day. There is no world view there imposed by me.
- 16 Diametrically opposed views. On one side, I'd have Alex
- 17 Brummer, my distinguished City editor, violently
- 18 disagreeing, on an almost daily basis, with my
- 19 distinguished political commentator, Simon Heffer. Out
- 20 of that debate, we adopt a view that we feel best
- 21 represents our position for our readers in looking after
- 22. their interests.

23

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- Again, you know, the Daily Mail is a huge, huge paper. It's a huge product. It's 120 pages. Are you telling me that I impose my views on the brilliant
 - Page 7

- which or what aspects of the operation of mass-selling 1
- 2 newspapers require, in your view, enlightenment?
- 3 A. That's a difficult question to answer. What I was
- 4 trying to say was that, distinguished though they are,
- 5 the assessors come from a somewhat narrow area of
- 6 journalism. 20 million people read the popular
- 7 newspapers. I suspect most of these assessors don't
- 8 read those newspapers and therefore don't understand how
 - those newspapers operate. I think it would have been
- 10 advantageous for everybody if someone from that
- 11 background could have been included.
- 12 Q. I think the question was more not so much to justify
- 13 what you say -- I understand the answer you've given --
- 14 but which or what aspects of the operation of
- 15 mass-selling newspapers require enlightenment.
- 16 A. Well, how they think, how they work, how they are
- 17 produced. Their values, their approaches.
- 18 O. Let's see if we can delve into that to some extent, and
- 19 examine it in this way: your role as editor of the
- 20 Daily Mail, two general points. To what extent does the
- 21 paper bear the imprint of your personality, your
- 22 management style and your world view?
- 23 A. Well, any editor who edits a paper, his values, his
- 24 world view will obviously be relevant, but can I deal
- 25 with this? Because I think it's a bit of a canard that
 - Page 6

- writers we employ? Do you think I tell Sir Max Hastings 1 2 what to write? A distinguished historian who graces our
- 3 pages every day? He has his own views. Do you think
- 4 I tell Janet Street Porter, from a different political
- 5 perspective, what to write? She's a columnist. Do you
- 6 think I Craig Brown, one of Britain's premier parodists,
- 7 what to write? These people would leave if I imposed my 8 view to them.
 - All our writers -- and I'm leaving out some brilliant ones -- have their strongly held views, many of them different. It's a rich, diverse spectrum of

13 Again, the Daily Mail -- you know, the Daily Mail --

14 different parts in different parts of the country.

opinion that permeates the paper.

- 15 I appoint editors to reflect the interests of their
- 16 readers, not impose their wills. In my time, I launched
- 17 the Scottish Daily Mail. It's now the biggest selling
- 18 paper in Scotland. The editor there has values and
- 19 views, which he represents in his papers because he's
- 20 reflecting his readers' interest, which are totally
- 21 antipathetic to the views in London. Ditto in Ireland.
- 22 We started the Irish Daily Mail. It's proving very 23 successful. Some of the views espoused by its editors
- 24 there make my hair go white, but nevertheless he's
 - appealing to his local market, representing his readers' Page 8

2 (Pages 5 to 8)

- 1 interests.
- 2 Q. I've been asked to ask you to slow down a bit, Mr Dacre.
- A. I'm so sorry.
- 4 Q. You also say that in order to sell newspapers, you must
- 5 connect with your readers' views and reflect their
- 6 interests and aspirations. That obviously means that
- 7 you must empathise with your readers' views. Is that
- 8 right?
- A. I hope so.
- Q. Does that include your readers' fears and prejudices, do 10
- 11 you think?
- 12 A. "Anxieties" rather than "prejudices", is the word I'd
- 13
- 14 Q. What is your vision for your organisation as we move
- 15 forward, Mr Dacre?
- 16 A. To sell -- to create as many quality products -- and
- 17 indeed, you know, I left out before on the list that --
- 18 it was Lord Rothermere's brilliant idea, but I launched
- 19 Metro. Did I impose my world vision on Metro? Metro we 19
- 20 decided to launch as a paper targeted at young urbanites
- 21 in London. We decided they weren't interested
- 22 particularly in political opinion. It's a politically
- 23 neutral paper, has no leader columns, no political
- 24 stance. It's been immensely successful with young
- 25 readers, and again, we appoint an editor who understands Page 9
- that market. It's been immensely successful, and we'd 1
- 2 like to expand in that area. We're expanding into the
- 3 Internet area and I repeat, our mantra is we invest in
- 4 quality journalism, we let our editors edit and we
- 5 believe that commercial success follows from that.
- 6 Q. We know that Associated Newspapers are successful and 6
- 7 solvent, unlike some other newspapers. Does it follow
- 8 from that that you have more resources at your disposal
 - to check the accuracy of stories?
- A. We are a well-resourced paper.
- 11 Q. In your view, is there any causal relationship between
- 12 the decline in newspaper circulation and what you see as
- 13 the development of a judge-made privacy law?
- 14 A. No, I see no connection whatsoever.
- O. Your statement deals with the perennial problem of 15
- 16 balancing the public interest against the private rights
- 17 of individuals. Is it your position that the public has
- 18 the right to be informed about the immoral behaviour of
- 19 private individuals?
- 20 A. Immoral behaviour of private individuals? That's a huge
- 21 question. I'd like to, if I may, draw on one of my
- 22 files here.

- 23 My position, I suspect, is that -- we're talking
- 24 about privacy here, aren't we?
- 25 O. Mm.

Page 10

- A. Well, I suspect -- I suspect that the individuals --
- 2 latitude should be given to papers who look into the
- 3 lives of people who intrude into their own lives; in
- 4 other words, into their own privacy. In other words,
- 5 a lot of celebrities, celebrity chefs, sportspeople make
- 6 a lot of money by revealing their lives to the public.
- 7 I believe newspapers should be given some latitude to
- 8 look into their lives when they err.
- Q. Sorry, by "err", do you mean err morally?
- 10 A. Well, we're then going into a definition of what
- morality is, aren't we? Your questions are so broad, 11
- 12 with respect, that it would help me if you gave me, you
- 13 know, more specific examples.
- 14 Q. Some would say that the Daily Mail's world view, or at
- 15 least part of it, propounds the virtues of family life,
- 16 of traditional matrimony and traditional values. (a) Is
- 17 that fair, and (b), if it is, if someone's morality
- 18 doesn't fit into that pattern, is it something which you
- would feel free to comment on and, if necessary,
- 20 criticise?
- 21 A. Yes.

- 22 Q. Okay. In your view, I think, Mr Justice Eady has been
- 23 the vanguard of developing a privacy law which is
- 24 morally neutral; to use your term, amoral. Are you
- 25 suggesting that the law should be developing principles Page 11
 - which instead reflect a moral system?
- A. What I -- I mean, let's go back to that. What I was --2
- 3 in that Society of Editors speech, I was trying to say
- 4 several things. It was a broad speech. I was clearly
- 5 trying to express the growing concern by newspapers in
 - this country that certain areas of the jurisprudence
- 7 were going in an anti-newspaper, anti-democratic
- 8 direction. Number one, we felt that libel tourism was
- 9 something that was deeply shocking, and I made that
- 10 point in my speech. We were very worried about the
- 11 growth of CFAs --
- 12 Q. You're going a little bit outside the boundaries of my
- 13 question.
- 14 A. You brought up Lord Justice Eady and I thought it
- 15 helpful to put the speech in that context.
- Q. It was more in terms of the development of a privacy law 16
- 17 and of principles of law, not so much CFAs and libel
- 18 reform.
- 19 A. Okay, well, that's the second point. All right, yes,
- 20 and I accused Judge Eady's judgment -- not the man -- of
- 21 being amoral and arrogant. Arrogant in the sense that
- 22 I felt it was worrying that one man, one judge, seemed
- 23 to be handling some of the more contentious privacy
- 24 cases. One man seemed to be attaching much more weight 25 to the right to privacy in the Human Rights Act rather
 - Page 12

- 1 1 than the right to freedom of expression, and, yes, 2 2 several -- several very significant cases seemed to 3 3 indicate that he believed the law should be morally 4 4 neutral. I'm delighted to see since then that the 5 pendulum has been swinging the other way, and I think 5 6 there's been some judgments by Justice Tugendhat and 6 7 7 Justice Nicol which have been very significant. If 8 8 I could just refer to them --9 Q. Don't worry, Mr Dacre. We know which they are. I think 9 10 10 you're in danger of making a legal submission, which 11 11 others can develop for you in due course. 12 Can I move on to a different --12 13 A. Can I just -- with great respect, you may know it, but 13 14 I don't think people listening will know and Tugendhat's 14 15 words I think strike to the very quick of what I believe 15 16 in. Is that --16 17 17 Q. You can come up with one quote, but I think a list of 18 judgments is not necessarily going to assist us greatly 18 19 19 because it can be dealt with more economically by 20 written submission. If there's one quote you want to 20 21 21 draw to our attention, please do. 22 A. "The freedom to live as one chooses is one of the most 22 23 valuable freedoms, but so is the value to criticise, 23 sums up --24 24 within the limits of the law, the conduct of other 25 members of society as being socially harmful or wrong. 25 world in many of its ramifications; is that fair? Page 13 It is as a result of public discussion and debate that 1 1 2 public opinion develops." 2 3 3 Could I develop that point, because I would like 4 just to read out a few quotes by Tim Luckhurst, the 4 5 Professor of Journalism at the University of Kent. 5 A. I do. 6 Q. I don't --6 7 A. It captures beautifully what I think -- and you've asked 7 8 me the question. It would be helpful if I could just 8 9 run through them. Is that acceptable? 9 10 Q. I don't know how many there are there, Mr Dacre, and 10 there's a lot of ground to cover. 11 11 12 A. But --12 13 Q. It's in danger of turning into a legal submission. 13 A. No, this is an article by a professor of journalism and 14 14 obviously. 15 you asked me my questions on privacy. I do think it 15 16 really does capture it beautifully. I think he refers 16 17 to the subject, the sanction of public interest, and 17 18 I do think that's --19 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Mr Dacre, if you want to say it, by 19 20 all means do. However, we will certainly want to get 20 21 through all we need to get through, and that means that 21 22 if we can't finish it, then we'll have to come back and
- entirely private and do not matter to the wider world is an affront to the very idea of community. A taste for titillation must explain some people's interest in Ryan Giggs' alleged extramarital activities, but for many others, cheap thrills were the last thing in their mind when they rebelled against private injunctions and remote judges. This (inaudible) majority resent public figures who think they can turn publicity on and off. We reserve the right to scrutinise and censure the conduct of people who have grown rich on our wages, or claim authority over our lives. In asserting democratic accountability, we are proclaiming our loyalty to a virtuous principle. Philosophers have developed a concept called the sanction of public opinion. They concluded that popular materiality should not ban infidelity or imprison men for betraying their wives but it could create an incentive to behave responsibly. People tempted to stray might be persuaded to think again by the certainty that their friends and neighbours would think less of them. Perversion in society has been with us for a long time --" Et cetera, et cetera. Okay, I think that very well MR JAY: I'm sure what he says chimes with your view of the
 - A. I think that's fair, yes. Q. At the seminar, you said that the PCC has changed the
 - very culture of Fleet Street. You said that four months ago. Is that a view which you still hold, Mr Dacre?

- Q. You also said:
- "The press is vastly better behaved and disciplined
- [I'm adding the word "now"] than in the 1970s."
 - Again, is that a view which you still hold?
- A. I hold it strongly, yes.
- Q. Were you intending to say that, phone hacking aside, the
 - behaviour of the press is in general acceptable?
- A. Acceptable? No, there's always room for improvements,
- O. Of course, there's always room for improvement, but were
- you intending to say that the behaviour of the press
- was, in general, acceptable?
- A. I think it's much improved than it was. I think there are areas where we can still improve things, but by and
- large, as I say, I think they have improved to a much
- more acceptable level. I don't know what you want me to
- 22 say here.
- 23 Q. You refer, again in the seminar, to the myth, to use
- 24 your term, that the PCC is not independent because
- 25 editors do not, of course, sit in judgment on Page 16

4 (Pages 13 to 16)

find some other time. But please do.

"The notion that moral failures such as adultery are

Page 14

A. Right, thank you very much.

23

24

- 1 themselves. Do you accept that at least there is
- 2 a public perception of lack of independence because
- 3 serving editors are on the PCC?
- 4 A. I think that the critics of self-regulation promote that
- 5 misconception. As you know, the lay members are
- 6 a majority. In the many years I sat on the Commission,
- 7 I found the actual editors much tougher on their fellow
- 8 editors than the lay majority.
- 9 Q. Do you accept that there may be something in the related
- 10 point that given that the jurisprudence of the PCC, to
- 11 be found in its adjudications on cases, really sets the
- 12 standards -- there are very few adjudications, as we
- 13 know -- there may be a tendency for editors not to wish
- 14 to make adverse adjudications because they're setting
- 15 standards which may be turned against them subsequently?
- 16 A. Absolutely I don't accept that, no.
- O. Okay. 17
- 18 A. Never heard anyone suggest that.
- 19 Q. You also said at the seminar that the PCC has genuine
- 20 sanctions in its armoury. You were referring to the
- 21 publication of adverse adjudications. Were you
- 22 intending to say that the sanctions available to the PCC
- 23 at the moment are sufficient?
- 24 A. I think in dealing with complaints, they are, yes. But,
- 25 I mean, if you're moving into a standards area, then, as Page 17

- 1 your view that it's the PCC code which is responsible for that, rather than other factors?
- 2
- 3 A. No, no, no, no. I was trying to say that one of the
- 4 results of the industry tightening up its code, trying
- 5 to behave in a more acceptable way, in a more ethical
 - way, was that the Sunday newspapers used to be given
- 7 great latitude to reveal truly sensational stories which
- 8 enabled them to create great circulations. They no
- 9 longer have that latitude for all kinds of reasons: the
- 10 growth of the privacy law, the growth of, as I say, the
- 11 code, the tightening up of the code.
- 12 Some people would argue it's a good thing that those 13 papers no longer break those stories. Other people
- 14 might say it's a pity that they're dying and the
- 15 political and serious journalism that went along with
- 16 those sensational stories is no longer being
- 17 disseminated by those papers. I wouldn't have had the
- 18 News of the World in my house, but it did break great,
- 19 great stories and put a lot of serious political
- 20 coverage in it, actually. That no longer now is
- 21 reaching their 3 or 4 million readers. I think that's
- 22
- 23 Q. You said, as part of your annual report for the year
- 24 2009/2010, in your capacity as chair of the Editors'
- 25 Code of Practice Committee, this:

Page 19

- 1 I said in my presentation, I believe the industry, in
- 2 the light of what's happened over the last two years,
- 3 needs to possibly think, where there are exceptional
- 4 examples of malfeasance, to impose tougher sanctions.
- 5 Q. You said "in the light of what's happened over the last
- 6 two years". What are you referring to specifically?
- 7 A. Obviously the revelations about the phone hacking and
- 8 all those things.
- 9 Q. "And all those things"? What other things, if any?
- 10 A. Well, I suppose payments to police and -- I wouldn't go
- 11 much further than that, actually.
- 12 Q. Is this right: that your recognition that standards may
- 13 need to change and the system needs to change is limited
- 14 to an acceptance that the problem lies in phone hacking
- 15 and in payments to the police and nothing much he is
- 16
- A. No, clearly -- I think you're trying to put words into 17
- 18 my mouth. There are broader issues that the industry
- 19 needs to look at. You know, the problem of paparazzi.
- 20 That worries me. I think we need to try and look
- 21
- 22 Q. I think you also said at the seminar that the PCC code
- 23 has blunted Sunday newspapers' ability to secure the
- 24 kind of sensational stories which were the bread and
- 25 butter of huge circulations in the past. Is it really Page 18

- 1 "They will probably never concede the truth ..."
- 2 The "they" is the reference to the critics of
- 3 self-regulation.
- 4 A. Mm.

10

- 5 Q. "... which is that the PCC has over the years been
- 6 a great success story."
- 7 Does that remain your view?
- 8 A. Absolutely.
- 9 Q. If that is right, in the light of what you've also said,
 - why is there the need for any change at all?
- 11 A. Well, it was you that used the word "perception".
- 12 I think the code has improved over the years. It's
- 13 changed, as you know, 40 times in 20 years. I think the
- 14 PCC, the complaints area, has improved.
- 15 Self-regulation cannot be above the law. By and
- 16 large, the scandals that have emerged over the last few
- 17 years and recently have been to do with issues that were
- 18 above the law. Hacking phones is illegal. Paying
- 19 policemen is illegal. I'm not quite sure what
- 20 a self-regulatory body was meant to do about that.
- 21 However, the perception is clearly, from the
- 22 Prime Minister down, that self-regulation has broken and
- 23 therefore I think we need to address that.
- 24 Q. I think the thrust of your evidence is that although you
- 25 don't personally accept that there's a need for change, Page 20

5 (Pages 17 to 20)

- 1 you recognise that there is a political --
- 2 A. No, no, no.
- O. Is that right?
- 4 A. I accept -- I accept that the PCC, as it was
- 5 constituted, couldn't deal with press standards and
- 6 wasn't dealing with it. I've now accepted that in the
- 7 light of what we've learnt, I think it would be for the
- 8 good of the industry to have another body sitting
- 9 alongside the PCC to deal with standards. I said in my
- 10 presentation I thought this could be run by some kind of
- 11 ombudsman figure, advised by senior retired editors, and 11
- 12 they should have the power to look into malfeasance,
- 13 abuses of standards, it should have the powers to call
- 14 editors and journalists and impose some kind of
- 15 sanctions.
- 16 Q. Are you prepared to accept that the culture, practice
- 17 and ethics of the press are such that a different system
- 18 is required?
- 19 A. I think I would say that the complainants part of
- 20 self-regulation has been doing a pretty good job and
- 21 should be allowed to continue doing that. I think -- as
- 22 Lord Hunt argued, I repeat: I think there's areas where
- we can improve things by having a standards arm into
- 23
- 24 this self-regulatory system.
- 25 Q. I just think in relation to this question, Mr Dacre, is Page 21

- 1 those terms, to the Lord Hunt contractual proposal?
- 2 A. Of course.
- 3 Q. We've heard from Lord Hunt that the devil may be in the
- 4 detail. The detail, of course, at the moment, isn't
- 5 there, is it, Mr Dacre?
- 6
- 7 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: To be fair, I think that was my
- 8 phrase rather than Lord Hunt's.
- MR JAY: I think he accepted it.
- 10 I just want to understand, Mr Dacre, what you are
- prepared to sign up to. Are you prepared to sign up to 12 the principle or are you prepared to sign up to the
- 13 reality, whatever might be found in the detail of it?
- 14 A. I really -- I may be missing something but I don't
- 15 understand the drift of this conversation. I think, if
- 16 I may be so immodest, it was me who set some of these
- 17 hares running in my presentation to the Leveson Inquiry.
- 18 It was I who suggested that we needed a new standards
- 19 arm and of course I'd be willing to sign up to it.
- Q. That leads on to the next question, the genesis of the
- 21 Lord Hunt idea. Were you central to putting the
- 22 contract idea out, as it were, and seeking to persuade
- 23 the industry as a whole to sign up to it in any
- 24 manifestation of it?
- 25 A. No. As an individual editor, I put forward my views on Page 23
- the answer "yes" or "no"? Once you've given a "yes" or 1
- 2 a "no", then qualify it as you see fit. The question
- 3 was: are you prepared to accept that the culture,
- 4 practice and ethics of the press are such that
- 5 a different system is required?
- A. I think a system -- a new system can improve things.
- 7 Q. I'm not sure you are prepared to answer the question
- 8 "yes" or "no" and then develop any broad answer, as you
- 9
- A. I don't think I have anything to add to that, really.
- 11 Q. Okay. But I think you probably do accept, if you don't
- 12 tell me, that the public must have reassurance that
- 13 regulatory regimes are fit for purpose. You would
- presumably agree with that? 14
- 15 A. Of course.
- 16 Q. Does that not include an assessment of any failings in
- 17 the current regime? Because you don't know whether
- 18 something's fit for purpose until you've had a look at
- 19 what may be wrong now. Would you agree with that?
- 20 A. I suppose so. I don't quite know what you're ...
- 21 Q. Okay. Can I ask you, please, about the new regime.
- 22 A. Mm-hm.
- 23 Q. I know you have some ideas you wish to share with us,
- 24 and of course you're going to do so.
- 25 Are you will fully signed up, if I can put it in Page 22

- 1 the way forward.
- 2 Q. But was your view at an early stage -- we know there was
- 3 a meeting on 15 December last year when a significant
- 4 number of editors attended. Did you attend that?
- 5 A. I did.

- 6 Q. Was it your viewpoint at that stage that the contractual
 - proposal was the most desirable solution?
- 8 A. I think it's one solution. I don't think it's the only
- 9 solution. I think it's a very attractive idea if it can
- 10 have real teeth and it's robust. I think it's an
- 11 excellent idea. But certainly -- I don't think the
- 12 contractual part of it was ever suggested by me earlier.
- 13 I think that was David Hunt's idea.
- 14 O. Okay.
- A. And yes, it sounds very interesting. 15
- Q. Some commentators have suggested -- and therefore I put 16
- 17 this out as an idea -- that it's only being put forward
- 18 by the press as, really, an attempt to save themselves
- 19 from what would happen otherwise -- or what might happen
- 20 otherwise, pardon me -- namely some sort of statutory
- 21 solution. Is that a fair comment?
- 22 A. Clearly -- it is clearly a determined and robust attempt
- 23 by the industry to put up a proper form of
- 24 self-regulatory structure that locks people into
- 25 self-regulation and somehow avoids statutory regulation, Page 24

6 (Pages 21 to 24)

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- 1 which I believe would be thoroughly, thoroughly
- 2 undesirable.
- 3 Q. How do you bring in, then, Mr Desmond into this
- 4 contractual fold?
- 5 A. Now, I have got some suggestions that I'd like to make.
- 6 Do you want me to move into those now or do you wish me
- 7 to discuss -- because one of my central suggestions, it
- 8 does involve what I call the Desmond factor, and it
- 9 could be anybody. It's how you lock a major player into
- 10 self-regulation who leaves not once but twice.
- 11 Q. Well, maybe it's the time now to develop your ideas --
- 12 A. All right.
- 13 Q. -- for the future. Do you mind if we just take them
- 14 slightly out of order?
- 15 A. Sure, sure. Can I just find my paperwork, please,
- 16 because I've been deluged with so much paper over the
- 17 last few days. Okay, yeah.
- 18 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: You should have been here for the 18
- 19 last three months, Mr Dacre.
- 20 A. My sympathy is with you. Yes, please.
- 21 MR JAY: Let us assume, Mr Dacre, that licensing of
- 22 journalists may well be unattractive to virtually
- 23 everybody, including this Inquiry. So how, in
- 24 a nutshell, in your view, do you lock papers into
- 25 self-regulation?

Page 25

- 1 cost and I guess how much cost the industry would
- 2 bear -- can bear, because of the parlous state of it --
- 3 I genuinely don't know. But look, it's a very welcome,
- 4 very positive, very constructive suggestion.
- 5 My worry is how much it will lock Desmonds into it.
 - By and large, Mr Desmond -- and this is not Punch and
- 7 Judy show -- he doesn't produce the kind of
- 8 journalism -- with the exception of the McCanns, it's
 - more celebrity bland journalism -- that would end up in
- 10 this court, in this court of arbitration. So I'm not
- 11 sure how much of an inducement it would be to him --
- 12 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: It depends whether there was a cost
- 13 regime associated with going to the law which made it
- 14 more attractive to go down an arbitral route.
- 15 A. What I'm trying to suggest -- I don't think, with the
- 16 exception of the McCanns, his papers are involved in
- 17 cases that do go to law. They don't produce, by and
- large, that kind of journalism. OK magazine is very
- 19 bland, slightly sycophantic journalism. I think the
- 20 point I wish to make --
- 21 MR JAY: I think we're on the point of locking people in.
- 22 How are we going to do that?
- 23 A. All right. Well, I've just listed two areas where I did
- 24 have my doubts but I have one suggestion to make -- and
- 25 I need to stress that I'm not making this on behalf of

Page 27

- A. Right, we've discussed the civil -- the contract, which 1
- 2 I think is attractive and should be explored and it
- 3 needs to convince Lord Justice Leveson that it would
- 4 work and it would be robust and have teeth. I'm turning
- 5 this a little bit backwards, but I think someone else
- 6 has proposed this arbitration arm to the new system, the
- 7 new tri-part system of arbitration. I welcome that. If
- 8 cheap and quick justices can be -- or decisions can be
- 9 established in this way and in privacy and defamation
- 10 cases, clearly everybody, but particularly the newspaper
- 11 industry, would benefit, because you know we're reeling
- 12 from the extraordinary costs involved in no win no fee
- 13 cases.
- 14 I must say, I welcome it, but I have my doubts.
- 15 I wonder whether it's going to be as cheap as you think
- 16 it is. I don't know how such a set-up, such a structure
- 17 would deal with a Mosley. I cannot believe it's not
- 18 going to need some kind of secretariat. I cannot 19
- believe that when big, big players, very wealthy 20
- players, come along, they're not going to bring along
- 21 expensive silks and then the industry is going to have
- 22 to supply its lawyers, but nevertheless --
- 23 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Well, it could be inquisitorial 23
- 24 rather than --
- A. Yes, I accept that, but I still think it would involve 25 Page 26

- 1 PressBoF. You know, I'm really not, and I'm not making
- 2 it on behalf of the NPA or the Editors' Code Committee 3 because this is my own idea, I haven't discussed it with
- 4 any people -- I say it's my idea; it's an idea that
 - we're been thinking about at Associated.
- 6 As you've said, there have been several calls to
- 7 your Inquiry for the licensing of journalists. It is
- 8 clearly unacceptable. However, I do believe there's an
- 9 opportunity to build on existing haphazard press card
- 10 system -- there are 17 bodies at the moment providing
- 11 these cards -- by transforming it into an essential kite
- 12 mark for ethical and proper journalism. The key would
- 13 be to make the cards available only -- only -- to
- 14 members of print news-gathering organisations or
- 15 magazines who have signed up to the new body and its
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- The public at large would know the journalists carrying such cards are bona fide operators, committed to a set of standards and a body to whom complaints can be made. Reporters and photographers would use the
- 21 cards as proof that they are responsible journalists.
- 22 There would, however, be universal agreement that briefings and press conferences by government bodies, 24
 - local authorities and the police, access to sporting, royal and celebrity events, material from the BBC and Page 28

7 (Pages 25 to 28)

1 ITV, and information from medical and scientific bodies 1 licensing? 2 would only, only be given to accredited journalists. It 2 A. Because it's the industry doing it. 3 would, after all, be in the interests of those bodies to 3 Q. You say it would require the universal agreement of 4 agree to this, as many of their members make complaints 4 a number of bodies, including governments, don't you? 5 to the PCC. Indeed, such bodies would have -- or 5 A. Mm-hm. 6 shouldn't have access to the new regulator if they dealt 6 Q. So the industry does it, but government would have to 7 7 with a non-accredited journalist. agree to it; is that right? 8 It is my considered view that no publisher could 8 A. I think it would be in the governing -- for press 9 survive if its reporters and writers were barred from briefings of ministries and lobby arrangements, I mean, 9 10 10 such vital areas of journalistic interest. It would be why shouldn't they subscribe to that? If journalists 11 11 part of the civil contract, if you like, that the abuse those systems, then they should have right of 12 ombudsman figure would have the right to recommend that 12 redress against those journalists. 13 accredited journalists guilty of gross malfeasance have 13 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I think that's quite a good question 14 their press cards cancelled, as the GMC strikes off 14 but somebody may say: on what basis is the government, 15 doctors. 15 for example, removing my right to attend a briefing? 16 I think the beauty of the system, the attraction of 16 Are they closed briefings or could they be open to 17 the system, is it will be the newspaper industry 17 anybody? I don't know. I'm asking the question. A. I don't know. To use your phrase, the devil's in the 18 registering and disciplining journalists, not the state. 18 19 19 detail, but I do think it's in the interests of both There would be no threat to freedom of opinion, because 20 non-press card holders would still have the freedom to 20 sides -- the news obtainers and the news providers. 21 21 express their views, and commercial interest would I mean, bear in mind, a huge amount of material comes to 22 dictate that every publisher signed up to regulation. 22 the BBC and ITV companies. Why should they not expect 23 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I've been thinking about press cards, 23 that they have the right to deal with accredited 24 24 actually, quite recently, but these 17 bodies, they are journalists behaving responsibly, and why should 25 25 presumably commercial organisations? journalism not expect them to take their part of the Page 29 Page 31 A. I don't absolutely know if any of them are. They 1 contract and not deal with journalists who aren't 1 2 accredited? After all, they often complain to the PCC, 2 include -- the National Union of Journalists distributes 3 3 a percentage of them. The NPA distributes a percentage these bodies. 4 of them. I think television bodies have their own press MR JAY: So a non-accredited journalist, as a private 5 5 cards. But there are 17 of them. I am suggesting they individual, is this right, would be denied access to 6 6 a sporting event, a government briefing, anything -- any should come under one umbrella. Whether it's the new 7 management committee of the new regulatory arm or 7 event or --8 whether it's under the Newspapers Publishers 8 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: He couldn't be deprived access to 9 9 a sporting event because he could buy a ticket. Association, I don't know, but it should be one body 10 A. No, but he could be deprived access to sporting press issuing them, registering them and they actually mean 10 11 conferences, interviews with the managers afterwards 11 something. 12 If I'm very honest, the existing press cards don't 12 that are always provided by these bodies --13 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I see. 13 mean much. MR JAY: So there would be some restrictions which --14 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Presumably that needn't just be 14 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: He would be entitled to do what any 15 restricted to print journalism, but could cover digital 15 16 16 citizen is entitled to do? journalism? 17 A. He could go and watch the match, yes. 17 A. Yes. I haven't thought that through, but in principle, 18 yes. Digital journalism is global, as you know, and 18 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: And write whatever he wanted for 19 19 whomsoever he wished to write it? already there's considerable evidence that news 20 providers outside Britain enjoy an advantage over our 20 A. But he wouldn't have access to the stars after the 21 21 match, the managers for quotes and things like this, digital journalists because they are, at the moment, 22 22 observing the code, and so they should be. But yes, which are given to bona fide journalists. 23 those cards could be used by them. 23 MR JAY: Okay. So that's one idea you put forward. You've 24 MR JAY: If there's going to be one umbrella body with these 24 helped us with arbitration. Can you develop, please, 25 25 powers of accreditation, how does that differ from with your thoughts in relation to paparazzi, Mr Dacre?

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- A. Yes. I mean, like a lot of people, I think we've been 2 distressed at some of the evidence we've heard about 3 paparazzi given to this Inquiry. It's the age-old 4 problem, how you define paparazzi. What is the 5 difference between a paparazzi photographer and 6 a genuine freelance photographer, a freelance 7 photographer working for a newspaper? It's a very 8 difficult area to define. The greatest problem, of 9 course, is that the great majority of paparazzi pictures 10 are sold abroad, where there's a vast, vast market for 11 them, I'm afraid. Our streets are free, in theory, therefore, you know, this needs -- it's a very difficult 12 13 problem and it's now compounded by the fact that 14 everybody with a BlackBerry or a mobile phone becomes 14
 - I mean, literally, you can take high quality pictures with your mobile phone and there are lots of -there are several agencies now online advertising for citizen pictures of showbusiness or celebrity or newsworthy events. So, you know, this is a difficult problem.

However, I do think it is beholden to the industry to do something about this. I think the Editors' Code could look at this and the Editors' Code book. My own picture editor, although his evidence wasn't read out, Page 33

1 Inquiry -- it wouldn't just be an inquiry comprising

2 editors but also lawyers -- to consider what the public

interest means?

4 A. Yes, that's a suggestion I'd like to make. I think

5 "privacy" is, as Kenneth Clarke(?) told the Select

6 Committee, is impossible to define. I think the public

7 interest is a different matter. I think at the moment

8 it's too loose in the code and I think it would be

a worthwhile exercise at least to set up some kind of

10 inquiry -- experts, lawyers, senior editors could take

11 part -- to define what the public interest is and try 12

and codify that in some way.

It may sound -- the one constituent of British life that hasn't been consulted by this Inquiry is the general public. Maybe it would be useful to take opinion polls of their views of the public interest.

But the aim would be to define -- to produce

18 a definition of the public interest which all newspapers

19 in the industry I could subscribe to.

Q. Thank you. Your last point relates to appointments.

21 A. Yes, it's a --

22 Q. You're proposing a more independent --

23 A. I believe so. I believe that at the moment, although an

24 independent assessor is involved, and independent

25 headhunters, PressBoF's appointment of the industry's Page 35

suggested a list of guidelines that I think we can start 1

2 examining much more carefully. Was the subject in

3 a public place when the photograph was taken? Was the

4 photographer standing in a public place when the

5 pictures were taken? Was the subject visible to the

6 members --

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7 Q. I think we did hear --

a citizen photographer.

A. You had all that, did you? Fine. Well, I think those considerations I think need to be considered by the 10 Code.

> What I would liking to suggest -- most paparazzi use several agencies to sell their papers to newspapers. I believe those agencies should now be encouraged to join the new self-regulatory body and abide by the code. Agencies that do not sign up to regulation should not be used by picture desks. Papers or magazines who use their pictures should, in the event a complaint is upheld, be penalised -- and the PCC's desist notices have been very successful and it may be worth bearing in mind by this Inquiry that better use be made of the harassment law.

22 Q. Thank you. There are two further ideas I think you want 22

23 to share with us. The first relates to privacy.

24 I think you're suggesting there, Mr Dacre, that the

25 Editors' Code Committee should commission its own Page 34

1 chairman, because it's so opaque, provokes unnecessary

2 controversy. I'm suggesting that in future, senior

3 appointments to whatever self-regulatory or whatever

4 regulating body should be made by an independent panel,

5 which would include lay and newspaper representatives.

6 Q. Have I correctly understood this: that your proposals,

at least as regards appointments and arbitration, would 7

8 be part of the contractual structure which Lord Hunt has

9 outlined?

10 A. I think that would make sense, but I stress these are my

views. I haven't discussed them with PressBoF, 11

12 I haven't discussed them with the Editors' Code

13 Committee because there hasn't been the opportunity.

14 Q. Thank you. So those are your proposals for the future;

15 is that right?

A. They are some of my proposals, yes. I mean, I've given 16

17 this considerable thought over the last week to see how

18 the industry can make a positive contribution to this

19 and I think they're worth some discussion, thought.

20 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I entirely agree with that, and as

21 I said in relation to your proposals during the course

of the seminar, any suggestions that advance the debate

23 are welcome, and it's important that the solution should

24 have the support of your industry. But it has to cope

25 with all the other problems as well.

- 1 A. Of course.
- LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: As I know you understand.
- 3 A. Of course, of course, yes.
- 4 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: That's how I left it with Lord Hunt 4
- 5 and Lord Black. By all means, carry on and we'll see
- 6 where we get to. Of course, I'll also be carrying on.
- 7 A. Absolutely.
- 8 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: That's all to the advantage of the
- 9 better understanding of what we can do.
- A. I think it would help the industry if they could move to 10
- 11 some transitional arrangement as quickly as possible, at
- 12 least to show their good intent, but that's up to the
- 13 industry.
- 14 MR JAY: Or, some would say, to avoid the sword of Damocles.
- 15 Would you agree with that?
- 16 A. No, I wouldn't say that, Mr Jay.
- Q. Moving off that topic -- because I know you were very 17
- 18 concerned to address it not at the end of your evidence.
- 19 I understand you wanted to deal with it slightly
- 20 earlier, but I did have some general questions.
- 21 Can I deal now with the issue of corrections and
- address some general principles. The Daily Mail now has 22
- 23 a corrections page; is that right? I think that was
- 24 brought in the day before you gave your evidence to the
- 25 seminar. You gave your evidence on 12 October and the Page 37
- corrections page started on 11 October of last year; is 1
- 2 that correct?
- 3 A. If you say so, yes.
- 4 Q. You said at the seminar, I quote:
- 5 "I believe corrections must be given more
- 6 prominence."
- 7 What were the underlying reasons for that belief?
- 8 A. I think it was an idea whose time had come. There was
- 9 growing criticism of papers that they buried apologies.
- 10 It's not a criticism I accept. Our policy, by and
- 11 large, was always to carry the correction on the
- 12 page that the article occurred. That was more and more
- 13 becoming the policy of the PCC, where newspapers had to
- 14 agree with the director the placings of adjudications,
- 15 and it seemed to me to have a regular slot in the paper
- 16 where people could see where the mistakes had been made
- 17 had great virtue. It's not a page in the paper; it's
- 18 page 2, as you perhaps know.
- Q. Would you agree that it's a failing in the PCC that it 19
- 20 is not able to dictate where an apology or adjudication
- 21 should go in a newspaper?
- 22 A. I'll have to come back to the exact wording on that but
- 23 they now have agreed that they have to do it in
- 24 discussion the director of the PCC.
- LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Yes, that's right.

- 1 A. Yes.
- LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: It's a conjoined decision. I think
- 3 Mr Jay's suggestion is that ultimately shouldn't the PCC
- have the ability to say, "I'm very sorry -- you may want
- 5 to put it there but we think it ought to be there."
- A. I think the director will be representing the PCC in
- 7 those discussions, so I would hope anyway he was
- 8 reflecting their feelings.
- 9 MR JAY: My understanding of the evidence we heard from
- 10 Mr Abell last week was that although the rule has been
- 11 changed such that the location and prominence must be
- 12 agreed with the PCC, the PCC doesn't have the ability to
- 13 dictate exactly where it goes.
- A. It would be a pretty unacceptable moment for a newspaper 14
- not to agree to that. I haven't sat on the Commission 15
- 16 for many years. I've certainly heard of no cases of
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- 18 Q. But would you agree with this: that in order to maintain
- 19 public confidence in any regulatory system, there should
- 20 be an express rule which enables the regulator, either
- 21 the PCC or regulator properly so-called, to be able to
- 22 dictate exactly where a correction, apology or
- 23 adjudication should be published and in what prominence?
- 24 A. Well, as I say, I think it exists in a form already,
- 25 with the set-up of the PCC. The Irish Press Council Page 39
 - position on this is quite interesting. I think they
- 2 said it must occur on the same page where the mistake
- 3 was made, or, if it was on the front page, it should
- 4 appear on the first four pages. The problem with
- 5 a regulator insisting where it goes -- you're
- 6 undermining the freedom of the editor to edit his paper.
- 7 If, for instance, he said it had to appear on the front
- 8 page, I think that would discriminate against those
- 9 papers at the red top end of the market which, by and
- 10 large, only have one story on their front pages. It's
- 11
- easily dealt with by broadsheets who have plenty of
 - stories on their front page.
- 13 Q. Maybe, Mr Dacre, but it may be said that this is really
- 14 a litmus test paper issue, that it's because the PCC
- 15 cannot dictate, that the editors are given too much
- 16 discretion and they tend to come up with the arguments
- 17 you've just advanced, that under a regulatory system
- 18 with teeth, the PCC would be able to say, "Like it or
- 19 not, you must publish it in a certain way", and that is
- 20 likely to be a greater punishment for the very reasons
- 21 you're suggesting, that if a red top doesn't have much
- 22 room on the front page, it's all the more painful to 23 force a red top to do it on the front page?
- 24 A. No, I was trying to explain to you that -- you know,
- 25 that it's very easy for a broadsheet to accommodate such Page 40

- an apology, and it's -- but look, there's no rough --
- there's no absolute ruling here. I don't rule out the
- 3 existing PCC -- and it may indeed have done it, insist
- 4 that the apologies be on the front pages. If an
- 5 egregious error is made, that may be correct. I'm not
- 6 arguing the toss with you on that.
- 7 Q. So if there were to be a rule which would, in express
- 8 terms, empower the PCC or successor regulatory body to
- 9 be able to insist exactly where the apology or
- 10 correction went, you wouldn't resist that; is that
- 11 right?
- 12 A. Well, I'm saying as far as I can see, it virtually
- exists at the moment, because the director, representing
- the views of the Press Complaints Commissioners, has the 14
- right to insist where something goes with the paper. If
- the paper refuses to do that, that would be seen as
- a very serious position to take and would be viewed
- very, very dimly, I would have thought, by the
- 19 Commission.
- 20 Q. Was there a policy in the Daily Mail to bury apologies
- 21 in its online edition?
- 22 A. I'm utterly unaware of that. I've never heard that.
- The beauty of the Mail Online is that it doesn't have to
- 24 carry many apologies because it corrects things
- 25 instantly. It gets the complaint and changes it
 - Page 41
- 1 immediately, either drops the article, carries
- 2 a correction -- instantly.
- 3 MR CAPLAN: Can I just interrupt to say one thing in
- 4 relation to the PCC. I do apologise. Our understanding
- 5 is that although the Press Complaints Commission cannot
- 6 say where an apology goes, it can say that it has not
- 7 been given due prominence and find a second breach if
- 8 the publication is not given due prominence.
- 9 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: That's right, but it can't say where
- it goes. Mr Dacre's point about there only being one
- big story on some of the newspapers' front page may be
- dealt with by the argument that if the story was the one
- story on the front page, there is an argument that if
- it's appropriate -- and one has to expect everybody's
- going to exercise power responsibly -- then they should
- be able to direct the same. But I recognise that lack
- of due prominence can give rise to another complaint.
- 18 MR CAPLAN: Yes, thank you.
- 19 MR JAY: Just so that my last question, Mr Dacre, was clear,
- 20 I'm not talking about the online edition's policy in
- 21 relation to apologies and corrections; I was addressing
- the Daily Mail's policy. Was it the Daily Mail's policy
- 23 to bury apologies which relate to the Daily Mail in the
- online edition of the paper?
- 25 A. You can't do that. It obviously has to appear in the Page 42

- 1 print -- if the mistake was made in the print version,
- 2 the apology will occur in the printed version of the
- 3 Daily Mail.
- 4 Q. Okay.
- 5 A. I mean, I can't -- where has that suggestion come from?
- 6 Q. Well, it's not for me to answer that, Mr Dacre.
- 7 A. Well, but nevertheless, you are making quite a serious
- 8 accusation. It would be quite interesting for me to
- 9 know where it came from.
- $10~~{\rm Q.}~{\rm It}$ has been suggested to me by a number of people, but
- 11 we hear what you --
- 12 A. But anybody can make suggestions and then smear a paper
- in this way. I give you my assurance that every
- 4 correction or complaint or adjudication we carry
- regarding the print version of the Daily Mail appears in
- 16 the Daily Mail.
- 17 Q. Thank you. Can we deal with PCC complaints and
- adjudications. Is it the Daily Mail's policy to avoid
- 19 adjudications at all costs?
- 20 A. No. I mean, if we think we've got something wrong, we
- 21 take it on the chin.
- 22 Q. I think I can be more precise. Do you, as some other
- 23 newspapers might also do, play the system to this
- extent: that you wear down complainants and see perhaps
- 25 the least you can get away with by publishing an
 - Page 43
- 1 apology, a correction or a clarification, rather than
- face the risk of an adverse adjudication? Is that your
- 3 strategy?
- 4 A. I don't know what you're trying to say. If someone
- 5 makes a complaint to the PCC, they investigate it, they
- 6 decide whether it goes for adjudication and a decision
- 7 is made, and then we will carry that ruling against us
- 8 in the paper and the reasons why the PCC found against
- 9 us.
- 10 Q. But you know well, Mr Dacre, that there's an earlier
- stage, that if the PCC decides to investigate, there's
- then a mediation between the newspaper and the
- 13 complainant, and attempts made --
- 14 A. That's a very valuable role they play, yes.
- 15 Q. -- an attempt made to reach an accommodation between the
- two. Of course, it may be in the Daily Mail's interest
- to avoid adverse adjudications, but do you have
- a strategy whereby you seek to achieve that by wearing
- 19 complainants down and --
- 20 A. Clearly, we try to avoid it going to adjudication, but
- 21 where we reach an agreement with both sides on how to
- solve the problem. If that is a correction placed in
- 23 the paper on a certain page and the other side is happy
- with that, then clearly we proceed with that
- 25 (inaudible). I mean, it would be sensible.

- Q. Do you then is help what Mr Davies says at page 367 of
- 2 his book, Flat Earth News:
- 3 "With most of the successful complaints [he's
- 4 referring now not to adjudications but to rulings] the
- 5 Mail resolved the problem by publishing a clarification,
- 6 usually with far less prominence than the original
- 7 story."
- 8 Is that --
- 9 A. Yes, but that clarification -- the placing of it would
- 10 have to have been agreed with the PCC when we were
- 11 reaching agreement with the other side. That would be
- 12 part of the agreement.
- Q. But that agreement was reached at a point where the 13
- 14 other side -- it might be said by some -- had been worn
- 15 down by a war of attrition.
- 16 A. Not at all. They're liaising with the PCC, a case
- 17 officer. They say, "Look, the newspaper got this wrong
- 18 about me." The PCC goes on to the newspaper and says,
- 19 "Look, a member of the public is saying you got this
- 20 wrong. Will you put it right?" The newspaper says,
- 21 "Yes, we'll put it right. We can put it right on this
- 22 page. We can carry an agreed form of wording." The
- 23 newspaper carries -- the PCC gets back to the
- 24 complainant. They say, "Yes, I'm happy with that", and
- 25 it goes ahead. I don't know quite what you're trying to Page 45

- Q. Can I try and help you or lead you to this extent? The
- 3 Inquiry received evidence from Mr Peter Wright, the Mail
- 4 on Sunday editor, and he said that he was aware of
- 5 Operation Motorman at the beginning of 2004, in view of
- 6 the Bob Crow story, which of course was published in the
- 7 Mail on Sunday and not the Daily Mail, which
- 8 I understand, because the name of the person riding the
- 9 scooter, who in fact was Mr Crow's PA, was obtained
- 10 through Mr Whittamore. Mr Whittamore did a check on the
- 11 registration mark of the scooter and then got the
- 12 gentleman's name. Do you follow me?
- 13 A. (Nods)
- 14 Q. Were you aware of Operation Motorman as a result of that
- 15 particular issue?
- 16 A. I suppose I must have been, yes. I don't recall it
- 17 exactly, but I must have been aware.
- Q. Yes, because the -- I think the journalist involved was 18
- 19 interviewed and it was going to be part of
- 20 Operation Glade, if not Operation Motorman.
- 21 Operation Glade was the Metropolitan Police operation
- 22 into this rather than the Information Commissioner's --
- 23 A. This was a Mail on Sunday journalist?
- 24 Q. Yes, it was. So you were aware of it from that route,
- 25 as it were. Were you aware that in February 2004, the Page 47

- 1
- 2 Q. I think your evidence is you strongly repudiate that
- 3 suggestion?
- 4 A. I think I do, yes.
- 5 Q. May I move on to Operation Motorman. I think the
- 6 starting point for this is paragraph 43 of your witness
- 7 statement, the last sentence. This is our page 21819.
- 8 You say this:
- 9 "Until the Information Commissioner's 2006 reports,
- 10 I was not personally aware of the extent that our
- 11 journalists were using search agencies."
- 12 By using the term "extent", were you intending to
- 13 accept there that you were aware that the Daily Mail was
- 14 at least using these search agencies?
- 15 A. Yes.
- Q. But you weren't aware of the scale of the problem --16
- A. The numbers. The numbers I wasn't aware of. 17
- 18 Q. Were you aware before 2006 that the Daily Mail had been
- 19 using Mr Whittamore?
- 20 A. Yes.
- 21 Q. When were you first aware of that?
- 22 A. I don't know. We're talking about many, many years ago,
- 23 and a system that was used by all the media, insurance
- 24 companies, law firms, everybody. I suspect -- I suspect
- 25 some time about 2004/2005-ish I think I became aware of Page 46

- 1 managing editor of the Mail on Sunday sent an
- 2 instruction that Mr Whittamore was only to be used in
- 3 very limited and circumscribed circumstances?
- 4 A. I honestly don't recall, but I may have been told. But
- 5 you're talking six, eight years ago.
- 6 Q. I appreciate that, Mr Dacre, but the question is whether
 - you, in the Daily Mail, responded in the same way or
- 8 not.

14

- 9 A. From 2005, after the trial in which the -- I recall, and
- 10 have now checked on the files, we sent a series of
- 11 emails and letters to staff asking them to observe the
- 12 Code Committee's guidance note on the Data Protection
- 13 Act. We wrote to Mr Whittamore and said that -- could
- he give us an assurance he was acting within the law. 15 As I say, we sent several emails and letters to our
- 16 staff during that period, yes.
- 17 Q. Is this the period 2004/2005?
- A. I think it's 2005 -- the trial ended in 2005; is that 18
- 19 correct?
- 20 Q. April 2005, that's right.
- 21 A. Yes, yes. From then to -- the next 18 months, yes, or
- 22
- 23 Q. Do you know when the Daily Mail stopped using
- 24 Mr Whittamore as opposed to the Mail on Sunday
- 25 stopped --

- 1 A. I don't know exactly because the actual bills being paid
- 2 don't necessarily refer to the time when we stopped
- 3 using him. But you know in 2007 we brought the shutters
- 4 down and banned absolutely the use of all these -- of
- 5 Whittamore enquiry agencies.
- 6 Q. It might be said by some -- or indeed by many -- that
- 7 looking at the position in 2004/2005, you really should
- 8 have conducted an inquiry in the Daily Mail to ascertain
- 9 the extent to which Mr Whittamore's services were being
- 10 used?
- 11 A. I don't think that's fair because everybody --
- everybody, every newspaper -- and I see the BBC spent
- 13 nearly as much on enquiry agents as we did -- was using
- him. We didn't realise they were illegal. There was
- a very hazy understanding of how the Data Protection Act
- worked and this was seen as a very quick way of
- obtaining phone numbers and addresses to corroborate
- 18 stories.
- 19 Q. Regardless of what other bodies might have been doing
- with search agencies, we're talking about what the
- 21 Daily Mail was doing with Mr Whittamore, who, after all,
- 22 had had his collar --
- 23 A. Well, I mean -- no, but I mean all newspapers were
- 24 using -- virtually all newspapers were using Whittamore.
- 25 Q. Are you saying that that would be a reason for the Page 49

- 1 question and he gave us an assurance that he was
- 2 behaving within the law.
- 3 Q. You say that you didn't believe that Mr Whittamore was
- 4 acting illegally. Of course, that was in
- 5 contra-distinction, really, to the position of the ICO
- 6 and the police, who did believe that he was --
- 7 A. I think the ICO kept saying he had no evidence that
- 8 journalists were behaving illegally. Repeatedly I think
- 9 he said that.
- $10\,$ $\,$ Q. He didn't quite say that, Mr Dacre. He said he wasn't
- prepared to give you the evidence, but his position was
- 12 not --
- 13 A. No, no, this was much later, much later. He felt he
- 14 couldn't give us the evidence when we asked for it
- because he said that in itself would have been an
- offence of the Data Protection Act.
- 17 Q. On what basis did you come to the conclusion that your
- journalists were not or probably not acting illegally?
- 19 A. I've tried to explain -- if I could put this in context.
- For years, newspapers had vast shelves full of
- 21 directories, phonebooks. Some of them -- most of
- 22 them -- all of them had reverse telephone books to get
- addresses, but it was a laborious process. If you
- 24 wanted birth and depths, you would have to go to
- 25 Somerset House. It would take days. If you wanted to Page 51
- 1 Daily Mail not carrying out a proper investigation into
- 2 the extent of the possible illegality, Mr Dacre?
- 3 A. Well, it's very difficult to say that. The story of
- 4 Operation Motorman barely registered on the
- 5 consciousness. I don't think it made much in the
- 6 papers. One was aware of it, I suspect, that the man
- 7 had been given a conditional discharge. All newspapers
- were still using this agency. I repeat: we thought it
 was -- we believed and the journalists believed that it
- was we believed and the journalists believed that i
- 10 was to get phone numbers quickly. I'm not sure an
- investigation at that stage was warranted.
- 12 Q. Regardless of how quick and efficient this might have
- been as a means of obtaining information, the concern,
- of course, is that this mode of information-gathering
- was illegal. Didn't that cause you greater concern,
- 16 Mr Dacre?
- 17 A. We didn't believe it was illegal. Our journalists were
- asking for information and I'm not sure that the
- 19 implications of the Data Protection Act were understood
- at that stage.
- 21 Q. But didn't you, at the very least, obtain some advice
- 22 about it?
- 23 A. I've said yes, from 2005 on, the Editors' Code Committee 23
- issued a guidance note, we repeatedly communicated that
- 25 to our staff and we wrote to the enquiry agency in Page 50

- 1 get up the Electoral Register, that was a long and
- 2 laborious process.
- 3 Somewhere in the early part of the new century, the
- 4 technology provided for these things to go on CD Roms.
- 5 Journalists thought they were getting the same kind of
- 6 information much, much quicker and much more
- 7 efficiently.

- 8 Q. Did you carry out any enquiries to ascertain whether
 - that was the belief of your journalists, rather than
- speculate, as you've done, and give us evidence as what
- 11 you hope might have been the position?
- 12 A. I think at some stage -- I may have to come back to you
- on this because I can't recall it, whether it was '5 or
- 14 '6. I think a managing editor had conversations -- held
- conversations with a lot of journalists and heads of
- departments and said, "Look, do you know -- what do you
- believe you were doing here?" They said they were only
- 18 getting phone numbers and addresses and they didn't seem
- 19 to think they were behaving illegally.
- 20 Q. I don't think you give any of that evidence in your
- 21 witness statement or schedule 1 to your witness
- statement, do you, Mr Dacre?
- 23 A. I don't know, Mr Jay.
- 24 Q. When you got the second report through from the
- 25 Information Commissioner and saw that the Daily Mail was Page 52

13 (Pages 49 to 52)

- top of the league, with 958 transactions which were
- 2 positively identified as illegal, involving 58
- 3 journalists, what was your reaction to that?
- 4 A. Well, obviously it brought things home to me. I would
- 5 point out that when we subsequently got to look at the
- 6 files, there was a lot of double counting in there.
- 7 I would point out that other titles had almost as many
- 8 complaints. I would point out proportionally the
- 9 Observer, as many as us, coming out one day a week.
- Look, everybody was using them. Law firms use them
- even now. Local authorities use them. Insurance
- companies use them. We were trying to get addresses and 12
- phone numbers to corroborate news stories, to check the
- 14 facts.
- 15~ Q. How do you know that you were trying to get addresses
- and phone numbers to corroborate news stories?
- 17 A. Because that was the main use to which they were put.
- 18 Q. How do you know that, Mr Dacre?
- 19 A. Because I, at the time, talked to my managing editors.
- 20 Q. Because we know from the material -- and we've seen
- some, not all, of the underlying material -- that there
- were requests made by Associated titles for police
- 23 national computer checks and friend and family numbers.
- 24 Those couldn't reasonably have anything to do with
- checking out news stories, could they?

- 1 A. I would say that that information could all be obtained
- 2 legally, but it would take time. This was a quick and
- 3 easy way to get that information.
- 4 Q. Yes, but that would tend to suggest that it was illegal,
- 5 because --
- 6 A. No, not at all. Time --
- 7 Q. -- very often legal routes --
- 8 A. Time -- time is everything in journalism.
- 9 Q. Often illegal routes are quick, easy, but also,
- 10 I'm afraid, expensive, as we know this one was, £500 for
- 11 ten friends and family numbers. On the face of it, it
- looks as if your titles, or one of them -- I think it
- was Femail actually in this case -- was seeking to
- obtain those numbers in order to snoop around the target
- to see who might be of interest to the Mail?
- 16 A. Those are pejorative words. They were to find
 - information or check facts, as we heard about.
- 18 Q. You don't have the first clue, do you, in the particular
- 19 example? I think you're know the one I'm referring to,
- do you, Mr Dacre?

17

- 21 A. I really don't know what you're talking about, no.
- 22 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I think you might have the chance to
- 23 find out which example, but I'd like to cut through
- a lot of this, if I can, and ask this: I don't know
- 25 whether you've seen the information that the core

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- 1 A. Of course, yes. You need to get to the people in
- a family to check a story, and also we don't know
- 3 whether the reporter asked friends and families. We
- 4 established that often Mr Whittamore supplied
- 5 information that wasn't necessarily asked for.
- 6 Q. In one case -- it is quite a stark case -- the request
- 7 was made for friends and family numbers and there were
- 8 ten phone numbers and that cost £500, and an Associated
- 9 title paid £500 for it. That couldn't have been an
- unsolicited request, could it? Do you know the one
- we're talking about?
- 12 A. I don't know.
- 13 Q. Is it your evidence that the reason for the request for
- 14 friends and family numbers was in order to contact any
- one of those individuals in order to corroborate stories
- rather than to find out who the friends and family were
- 17 of someone who was of interest to the Mail? Do you see
- 18 that?
- 19 A. If they were of interest and they were involved in
- a major story, and you needed to get to them or
- 21 information about them, yes, you would try to talk to
- them or members of their family.
- 23 Q. Is it your position that that is within the Data
- 24 Protection Act; in other words, not in breach of
- 25 Section 55? Request for friends and family numbers? Page 54

- 1 participants have seen, including leading counsel acting
- 2 for Associated, but it seems to me that it is extremely
- 3 difficult to justify some of the requests that were
- 4 made. I'm not saying you knew about them, but my
- 5 question is: do you admit the possibility that at least
- 6 some of these enquiries could not be justified by the
- 7 type of explanation that you have given? I'm not
- 8 concerned to ask how many or who because that's a detail
- 9 which, for the purposes of my Inquiry, I don't believe
- I need to go to, but I would be keen to know whether, as
- a broad proposition, you are prepared to accept that
- 12 possibility.
- Now, what I think we'll do is I think we'll take
- a break, because we need a break to give the shorthand
- writer a few minutes off, and I would have no difficulty
- at all about your discussing that question with
- 17 Mr Caplan, if you wish to.
 - I'm not trying to label your newspaper at all. I'm
- simply trying to get the overall picture so that I can
- 20 move on, because I don't want to spend more time on what
- is a very long time ago than is absolutely necessary.
- 22 I'm sure you'll understand that.
 - I hope that doesn't cause embarrassment to you or to
- 24 Mr Caplan. Thank you.
- 25 (3.38 pm)

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18

(A short break)

- (3.54 pm)2
- MR JAY: Mr Dacre, over the short break, have you been able
- 4 to ponder an answer to Lord Justice Leveson's question?
- 5 A. I'll do my best. I don't want to bore you, but I do
- 6 want to stress that this was ten years ago and it was
- 7 a system being used by everybody. But from what we know
- 8 now, I would accept there was a prima facie case that
- 9 Whittamore could have been acting illegally. I don't
- 10 accept that this is evidence that our journalists were
- 11 actively behaving illegally. We have to know the facts,
- 12 whether there was a public interest. We don't know what
- 13 the journalists asked for, we don't know what it related
- 14 to and whether it actually was provided, whether the
- 15 information was actually provided.
- 16 O. You accept, therefore, a prima facie case; is that
- 17 right, Mr Dacre?
- 18 A. That Mr Whittamore may have been behaving illegally,
- 19 yes, from what we know now.
- 20 Q. But you accept that you didn't carry out an
- 21 investigation in 2006 or earlier to ascertain the facts,
- 22 don't you?
- 23 A. Because, as I say, we didn't know then what we now know.
- 24 Q. But what was set out in the Information Commissioner's
- 25 second report was quite clear, wasn't it, in relation to

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- the Daily Mail: 958 transactions --1
- 2 A. As you keep saying, and I'm pointing out the BBC paid
- 3 nearly as much as we did on such enquiries, and what
- 4 I want to stress is I immediately acted with huge
- 5 willpower and vigour to stamp out and change all this.
- 6 We did so more than any other paper. Goodness knows
- 7 I don't know what more I could have done. I banned the
- 8 use of these agents. I wrote the Data Protection Act
- 9 into our journalists' contracts. I held seminars on the
- 10 subject. And I'm glad to note that the
- 11 Information Commissioner accepts now that the Daily Mail
- 12 and Associated Newspapers titles no longer use these
- 13 agents.
- 14 Q. Given that you did not investigate at the time, you're
- 15 not in a position to say whether a public interest
- 16 defence would have operated in any individual case, are
- you? 17
- A. I'm not, but equally I -- no. 18
- Q. No. Is Mr Whittamore's data, or rather data obtained as 19
- 20 a result of his activities, still on the Daily Mail's
- 21 systems?
- 22 A. Can you explain that? I'm sorry.
- 23 Q. Well, Mr Whittamore provided Associated with a vast
- 24 array of data. We know from the report 958 transactions
- 25 had been positively identified. Have those data been Page 58

- erased --1
- 2 A. No, as I said, when we looked at the books eventually,
- 3 we found a lot of double counting. But anyway, go on,
- 4
- Q. Have you conducted any Inquiry to ascertain whether 5
- those data are still on your system? 6
- 7 A. I don't think the data is on the systems, no. I didn't
- 8 look into it but I'm sure it's not. I think we have
- 9 references to bills and that's all. In fact, I'm sure
- 10 that's all.
- 11 Q. The information must have been given through
- 12 Mr Whittamore to Associated's journalists. Associated's
- 13 journalists -- just wait --
- 14 A. I'm so sorry.
- 15 Q. They must have put it somewhere. They must have filed
- 16 it. It was provided, presumably, by telephone in
- 17 virtually every case. They must have kept a note of it.
- 18 Are those data still on your system?
- 19 A. I think that's a misunderstanding how it works. It
- 20 would have been given to the individual journalist.
- 21 Q. That's right. That's what I said.
- 22 A. Yeah, but with a telephone phone call, he would have
- 23 made a note on his notebook possibly. I don't know, but
- 24 it wouldn't have gone into our computer system I don't
- 25 think.

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- 1 Q. No, not necessarily your computer systems. I said
- 2 "systems" more widely, by which I include filing
- 3 systems.
- 4 A. No, because this would have been individual journalists
- 5 rushing to a story, needing to ascertain how to get in
- 6 touch with people, and it would have been given over the
- 7 phone presumably by Whittamore to that journalist.
- 8 Q. The information must have been stored somewhere and
- 9 retained; would you accept --
- 10 A. No, not necessarily, it wouldn't.
- 11 Q. How do you know?
- 12 A. Well, let me enquire and come back to you, but I don't
- 13 think so. I think it's a misunderstanding of how
- 14 journalism works. They're rushing to a story, they are
- 15 in a car, they phone the news desk and the news desk
- 16 tells them what they know. The journalist then possibly
- 17 contacts Whittamore, he gets the phone numbers and 18 that's how it happens.
- 19 Q. The point is being made to me by others, and therefore
- 20 I'm advancing it, that it can't be said that this is
- 21 prehistoric because it could still well be the case that
- 22 these data, prima facie illegally obtained, are still
- 23 somewhere in Associated's offices, because you've made
- 24 no steps to erase them or destroy them. Is that fair or
- 25 not?

- 1 A. I can't say any more than I've said. I don't think it
- 2 was necessarily recorded or filed.
- 3 Q. It must have been written down. It's not something --
- 4 A. Why? It's just a few phone numbers or an address or
- 5 a name.
- 6 Q. But an address or a registration mark or --
- 7 A. Yes, the reporter would have written it down and --
- 8 Q. Common sense would dictate you would have to write it
- 9 down unless you had a photographic memory. Wouldn't you
- 10 accept that?
- 11 A. Yes, but in the reporter's notebook.
- 12 Q. Which might still in Associated's offices?
- 13 A. Funnily enough, it's so long ago that most of the people
- involved have actually left the paper, are working
- 15 elsewhere or emigrated.
- 16 Q. In 2009, the Information Commissioner made a public
- statement both to the Select Committee and to the
- 18 Society of Editors conference that he would provide
- 19 relevant information on request to editors. Why did
- 20 Associated wait until July 2011 to ask for it?
- 21 A. I've looked at that. I think I, in common with the rest
- of the industry, weren't aware that he'd made that
- offer. As I say, at a previous Select Committee
- 24 hearing, one of my senior managing editors had actually
- $25\,$ asked for the access to Whittamore's books. At that
- 1 meeting, as you know, the then Information Commissioner,

- 2 Richard Thomas, said he couldn't do that because that
- would be an offence itself under the Data Protection
- 4 Act.
- 5 I gather this offer was made by the next
- 6 Information Commissioner. It wasn't picked up by us.
- We'd been asking, as I said, over the years.
- 8 Subsequently, at a Society of Editors informal lunch,
- 9 that offer was again made by the new Information
- 10 Commissioner and at that stage we took it up.
- 11 Q. Is it really your position -- does it amount to this:
- that given that the Daily Mail were acting in good
- company with everybody else who was also acting in
- breach of the Data Protection Act, there was no need for
- the Daily Mail or any of Associated titles to do much
- is the Daily Mail of any of Associated tries to do mach
- about this?
- 17 A. No, it's not my position, but when you knew that every
- other paper was doing it, I suppose one dropped one's
- 19 guard slightly. All I'm trying to tell you is when
- 20 I did know the extent of it, I moved decisively and
- 21 ruthlessly to stamp it out. Other newspapers didn't,
- and we did.
- 23 Q. And that was in 2007, wasn't it?
- 24 A. Precisely.
- 25 Q. Okay. May I move on to another topic, please, and that Page 62

- 1 is -- it relates to some evidence we heard quite
- 2 recently on, I think, Thursday afternoon. It's the
- 3 Baroness Hollins evidence. It's under tab 37, please,
- 4 of the bundle, and a piece in the Daily Mail dated
- 5 12 November 2005. The reason why it's appropriate to
- 6 ask you this is that her evidence was that the
- 7 Daily Mail was, as it were, the worst offender. Have
- 8 you seen that evidence, Mr Dacre?
- 9 A. I -- yes, I have.
- 10 Q. Do you have the piece to hand? It's a piece by Lucie
- 11 Morris --
- 12 A. I have got the piece to hand, yes.
- Q. Thank you. The headline is "Abigail, the brother who
- dotes on her and the riddle of another random brutal
- 15 attack".

1

- 16 She made two complaints about this. The first
- 17 complaint relates to identifying the brother by name and
- by stating -- which was the case and is the case -- that
- 19 he was born with learning difficulties. Why did the
- 20 Daily Mail print that information?
- 21 A. Can I say as strongly as I can that this, I believe,
- shows how the Inquiry doesn't understand how newspapers
- work. To my mind, this is a story and a feature handled
- with superb sensitivity. I've been through it. I think
- 25 it's written with massive compassion. I think the Page 63
 - family come out of it wonderfully. The love between the
- 2 brother and sister is extraordinary. The religious
- 3 faith of the family comes across. The learning
- 4 disability -- the mother and the son wrote a book about
- 5 that, on how to handle court cases for people with
- 6 learning disabilities. I think that's a wonderful
- 7 message to get out to the public. I think that was an
- 8 extraordinary story. A girl stabbed, paralysed, having
- 9 a baby. We then learn that her brother was stabbed in
- similar circumstances years ago. An open court
- discussed that case. It was reported by the local
- papers. That's how our journalists knew about it.
- 13 I repeat: I think this story was handled with massive
- 14 sensitivity.
- 15 Q. I don't think Baroness Hollins' complaint related to the
- lack of sensitivity or compassion. It related to the
- identification of her brother and as well the attempt to
- link this attack, namely on her daughter, with the
- 19 attack on the brother when there was no need --
- A. I think the police initially discussed that possibility
 with the family. Both stabbed in mysterious
- 22 circumstances. It's not an absurd suggestion.
- As to the identifying the brother, I'm afraid we
- have an open court system. His name would have been revealed in court. If anybody had wanted to take
 - revealed in court. If anybody had wanted to take Page 64

16 (Pages 61 to 64)

- 1 revenge on him, they knew who he was.
- 2 Q. That may be right, Mr Dacre, but we see a photograph of
- 3 the brother on the next page. We see his name. Why was
- 4 that information in the public interest to print?
- 5 A. Because it had already appeared in a court case, and
- 6 it's an extraordinary story. It's a moving story. It
- 7 tells you volumes about the experience of people with
- 8 learning disabilities and the problems they face in
- 9 court. The story also revealed that his attacker was
- 10 out of his mind on drugs, an interesting point the
- 11 public should know about, and those who demand the
- 12 decriminalisation of drugs should consider.
- 13 Q. I'm not sure you were making that point in this article,
- 14 were you?

- 15 A. I think it's part of it, yes.
- 16 Q. But the attempt --
- 17 A. I think it's a very --
- Q. The attempt to link the two attacks, when you referred 18
- 19 to the "riddle" of another random brutal attack --
- 20 I mean, the attacks were entirely disassociated, weren't
- 21 they? They were tragic coincidences. One occurred one
- 22 year, the other occurred several years later. There's
- 23 no nexus between the two.
- 24 A. I think most reasonable people, members of the public,
- 25 would say, "What an extraordinary coincidence." It

- - Page 65

raises questions about policing. It raises questions

- subsequently she wrote very, very fully about it.
- 2 about what kind of people commit these attacks, and
- 3
- 4 or committed suicide and was presumed to have attacked

indeed it emerged later that the man who attacked her,

- 5 Abigail, was another huge drug user.
- 6 I refer to the piece -- it said:
- 7 "It did cross their minds in those first few hours
- 8 that perhaps Abigail had been the victim of some kind of
- 9 revenge attack by associates of the man who were jailed
- 10 for Nigel's attack. The police asked them about every
- 11 possible enemy the family may have had and the link was
- 12 explored by detectives."
- 13 Q. So I think your position is that Baroness Hollins is
- 14 being oversensitive by being critical of this article;
- 15 is that right?
- 16 A. I don't know the circumstances of Baroness Hollins, but
- 17 I would like to point out that two years later she gave
- 18 an exclusive interview to our health pages. It's
- 19 headlined "Abigail's journey":
- 20 "Two years after Abigail Witchalls was paralysed by
- 21 a deranged attacker, her psychiatrist mother describes
- 22 her amazing recovery and surprisingly insists we must
- 23 not toughen our mental health laws."
- 24 That article was exclusive to our good health pages
- 25 and it subsequently received an award from the Mental

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- 1 Health Media Awards.
- 2 "The awards organiser told the journalist she'd been
 - dominated by one of the great and the good and described
- 4 the article as the most uplifting piece about recovery
- 5 from mental illness he had ever read."
- 6 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: It's very interesting, though, isn't
- 7 it, Mr Dacre, that a president of the Royal College of
- 8 Psychiatrists, professional lady, who has gone through
- 9 all this and who has been prepared to provide
- 10 information as you've just described, should feel so
- 11 strongly about an article which you applaud?
- 12 A. I do, actually, yes. I'm sorry.
- 13 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: But there is an interesting
- 14 inconsistency, isn't there? I'm not saying who is right
- 15 or who is wrong but there is a lady who has been through
- 16 all this, who feels victimised by this. I mean, you
- 17 doubtless heard her evidence or have seen it.
- 18 A. I did.
- 19 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: And yet you feel very strongly that
- 20 there is absolutely nothing wrong with it at all, and on
- 21 the contrary --
- 22 A. If it clearly distressed her, Baroness Hollins, then
- 23 I hear that, but I am saying I cannot understand how
- 24 this piece could have been written more sympathetically.
- 25 I don't think it intrudes into their grief because
 - Page 67
- 1
- 2 I think it's in the public interest to know about this
- 3 story. We need to write about crime as journalists, so
- 4 the public can have faith in our institutions, the
- 5 police and the courts.
- 6 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I agree with that entirely, and I've
- 7 publicly said that, wearing a different hat, on more
- 8 than one occasion. But I am just pointing to the
- 9 difference of view, because whatever you might say about
- 10 some people, this is a lady who is clearly in tune with
- 11 the Mail because she was prepared to be interviewed, but
- 12 still felt very strongly about what you'd done on this
- 13 occasion.
- 14 A. I can't explain that inconsistency.
- 15 MR JAY: Another piece, under tab 25. It's the Jan Moir
- piece, 16 October 2009. 16
- 17 A. Could I just gather my notes, please?
- 18 Q. Yes, of course. I don't know whether you have it
- 19 separately or in the bundle we provided.
- 20 A. I don't know. Right, okay.
- 21 O. I don't know whether this article is available for
- 22 putting up on the screen. I can't think of any reason,
- 23 unlike the previous article, why it shouldn't go up on
- 24 the screen, although it attracted vast number of
- 25 complaints at the time.

- 1 The version we have has a different headline from
- 2 the original headline. Do you see it? The headline we
- 3 see is "A strange, lonely and troubling death".
- 4 A. That's the one I have here, yes.
- 5 Q. The original headline was this: "Why there was nothing
- 6 'natural' about Stephen Gately's death." That's right,
- 7 isn't it?
- 8 A. This is a terrible thing to admit. If you say that --
- 9 I don't know. Can I get back to you on it? It's very
- 10 rare for us to change a headline.
- 11 Q. It's clear that was so --
- 12 A. We're not talking about the Mail Online, are we?
- 13 Q. -- because that's made clear from the PCC adjudication.
- 14 This is the Daily Mail, not the Mail Online.
- No, I think you're right, that the online article
- was originally headlined "Why there was nothing --"
- 17 A. Well, let me --
- 18 Q. Just hold on.
- 19 A. All right sorry, but it is very unhelpful.
- 20 Q. You're right; the article we see, this is the original
- and correct headline. The online edition had
- a different headline, "Why there was nothing 'natural'
- about Stephen Gately's death", and that headline was
- 24 changed fairly quickly. Do you follow me? Do you know
- why that was so?

- 1 A. I haven't got a clue. As I said, Mail Online has its
- 2 own separate editor. I'll make an intelligent guess:
- 3 that -- it's done in an enormous rush this, okay? It's
- 4 done very fast. The online moves 24 hours, changing its
- 5 stories all the time. My guess is they might have seen
- 6 that headline and half an hour later thought it was
- 7 a little insensitive and changed it.
- 8 Q. Okay. When the furore blew up at the time, presumably
- 9 you became immediately aware of it; is that right?
- 10 A. Well, the following day or whenever it was, yes.
- 11 Q. What was your view about this piece when you read it?
- 12 A. When I read it in the paper?
- 13 Q. Yes.
- 14 A. My view was that perhaps when the furore -- perhaps the
- timing was a little regrettable. I think the piece --
- the column could have benefited from a little judicious
- 17 subediting. But I -- you know, I'd die in a ditch to
- defend a columnist to have her views, and I can tell
- 19 this Inquiry there hasn't a homophobic bone in Jan
- Moir's body.
- 21 Q. Right. Because many have said -- and so I suggest to
- you that it may be the case so you can comment -- that
- 23 the whole tone of the article is homophobic and there
- was a cack-handed attempt, if I can put it in those
- 25 terms, to link this man's death, which was due to

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- 1 natural causes, with his particular lifestyle.
- 2 A. Okay. Well, can I just --
- 3 Q. Do you accept that?
- 4 A. No. Before I answer that, can I just place this in
- 5 a context? Jan Moir's column, it's opinion, was placed
- 6 on page 37 of the Daily Mail.
- 7 Q. Mm-hm.
- 8 A. There it is. That day and previous days, these were the
- 9 headlines that appeared in popular newspapers: "Stephen
- 10 killed by 8-hour binge", "My hot romp with Stephen and
- 11 his hubby", "I did have sex with Stephen on night he
- died", "Cops: Stephen had smoked cannabis".
- 13 I would suggest that on page 37 of the Daily Mail
- 14 was not the same tone as that kind of material and other
- people had said far more offensive things, and the
- timing, again, was inappropriate.
- You keep using the phrase "a lot of people"
- 18 complained about this. You realise that these are all
- online complaints and this is an example of how
- 20 tweetering can create a firestorm within hours. A
- 21 well-known celebrity, who admitted he hadn't read the
- 22 article, said it was unpleasant. It was then tweeted to
- other people who retweeted and we had a viral storm.
- Most of those people conceded they hadn't read the
- 25 piece. That's where the 25,000 complaints came from to Page 71
 - the PCC.

1

- 2 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: It may, of course, be that all the
- 3 headlines are legitimately subject to some criticism.
- 4 A. I'm trying to put it in context, that even though there
- 5 were certain words that I would have liked to have
- 6 removed in this piece, I think the theme was fair
- 7 comment. Indeed, Matthew Paris, probably one of our
- 8 more brilliant commentators and a sincere gay rights
- 9 campaigner, reached the same conclusion.
- 10 MR JAY: Let me just read out some of it:
- "But hang on a minute [this is on the penultimate
- column on the left-hand side]. Something is terribly
- wrong with the way this incident has been shaped and
- spun into nothing more than an unfortunately mishap on
- 15 a holiday weekend ..."
- 16 A. What are you reading from?
- 17 Q. I'm reading from the print edition, the left-hand
- 18 column, penultimate paragraph.
- 19 A. Yeah, yeah.
- 20 Q. "... mishap on a holiday weekend, like a broken teacup
 - in the rented cottage."
- 22 I'll miss out some words:
- 23 "The sugar coating on this fatality is so
- 24 saccharine-thick that it obscures whatever bitter truth
- 25 lies beneath. Healthy and fit 33-year-old men do not

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6

- 1 climb into their pyjamas and go to sleep on the sofa,
- 2 never to wake up again. Whatever the cause of death is,
- 3 it is not by any yardstick it is not by my means a
- 4 [italicised] natural one."
- 5 That's going too far, isn't it?
- 6 A. I've already said that the piece could have benefited7 from judicious subbing.
- 8 Q. But you presumably approved this piece before it went
- 9 out, didn't you?
- 10 A. I think I am famous over 20, 22 years an editor for the
- amount of hours I put in at the office. It's a very
- rare night when I leave before 10 o'clock. On that
- night in question, when that piece went in the paper,
- I was at a delayed birthday present for my wife at theopera.
- 16 Q. Okay. I think you accept that there are parts of this
- article with which you're not comfortable; is that
- 18 right?
- 19 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: He's said that.
- 20 A. I've said that several times, although I repeat I would
- 21 die in a ditch to defend any of my columnists' rights to
- say what they wish, and my right to suggest that
- 23 occasional sentences or words could be adjusted.
- I repeat: Ms Moir, who used to work for the Guardian, by

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- 25 the way, hasn't a homophobic bone in her body.
- 1 Q. In fairness to you, it should be pointed out that Janet
- 2 Street Porter wrote a highly critical piece against Jan
- 3 Moir --
- 4 A. That's how the paper dealt with it. We had another
- 5 eminent columnist. She profoundly disagreed with
- 6 Ms Moir. We conducted an online debate and published
- 7 lots of letters from readers. It should be said, by the
- 8 way, that very view of our readers complained about it.
- $9\,$ $\,$ Q. Do you mean by that complained directly rather than to
- the PCC?
- 11 A. By email or letter to us or phone call.
- 12 Q. Can I deal with Mr Jefferies? There were libel
- proceedings, I think it's right to say, which culminated
- in a settlement and apology. Is that right?
- 15 A. Yes, but contempt proceedings weren't taken against us.
- 16 Q. That's right. The contempt proceedings were taken
- against the Mirror Group and News International. The
- piece itself is under tab 23. It's dated 31 December
- 19 2010 and it's our page 31969. Do you have that?
- 20 A. I don't know.
- 21 Q. Then the next page, 31970.
- 22 A. Yes.
- $\,$ 23 $\,$ Q. It should be made clear that the Attorney General took
- the view, as has already been pointed out, that contempt
- 25 proceedings should not be taken against the Daily Mail Page 74

- in relation to this piece, and some would say it's less
- defamatory than pieces we see elsewhere and which the
- 3 Inquiry --
- 4 A. I would certainly say that, and indeed on television at
- 5 the time, which for some reason, seems to have got away
 - with this completely.
- 7 Can I just explain -- there's several factors
- 8 considered here. Over the years, I think the Attorney
- 9 General has been less and less clear on what constitutes
- 10 contempt, and it may be welcomed that Dominic Grieve is
- 11 now providing more guidance. I think standards did slip
- in this area. I'm prepared to accept that. I think our
- treatment of this story was at the very modest end of
- 14 offensiveness.
- 15 I repeat -- I want to go back to the point I made
- before. The police made this man a suspect. We need to
- be able to report crime. Police need an independent
- press, but the press need an independent police force.
- 19 It is very, very helpful in these cases, the publicity
- given by the police to help solve the crime.
- 21 Q. But those matters, taken either individual or
- cumulatively, are not a justification for this sort of
 - piece?

23

- 24 A. No. I apologise to Mr Jefferies. We learnt from the
- 25 process. I repeat: ours, I think, was the least

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- 1 offensive of many of the papers that day, including one
- 2 of the broadsheets, and we've learnt from the
- 3 experience.
- 4 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Is there something about the fact
- 5 that if one paper starts a particular line, there's
- 6 something of a snowball effect and it might impact on
- 7 the way in which other newspapers report the same story?
- 8 A. I think there may be a temptation to that, yes. I think
- 9 this all occurred on the same day from memory, but yes,
- 10 I think the way the boundaries are pushed by the press
- 11 collectively almost encourages some papers, not all
- papers, to push the limits too far.
- 13 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: But that's itself a potential
- 14 problem. I mean, obviously you're looking at what your
- competitors are doing all the time, because you see it
- online --
- 17 A. Yes, it's a potential problem, but I repeat -- you know,
- contempt of court hasn't been tested for many, many
- 19 years. I think it was becoming too relaxed, and I think
- 20 people felt they could get away with more and more,
- 21 particularly television companies, and I welcome Dominic
- 23 observe.
- 24 MR JAY: This was over the holiday period. Were you, as it

Grieve's firm guidance now as to standards we should

were, in the saddle the night before, 30 November?

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- A. I was, and the headline was cleared by our lawyers.
- 2 I don't offer that as an excuse. The editor carries the
- 3 responsibility ultimately. In fact, the back bench had
- 4 written the headline after I'd gone, but I stand by it.
- 5 I'm editor.
- Q. Can I move on to the McCanns, which is another example 6
- 7 this Inquiry's been looking at. Both Doctors McCann
- 8 complained of defamation against both the Evening
- 9 Standard, which was then under the Associated titles,
- 10 and the Daily Mail; is that correct, Mr Dacre?
- 11 A. Yes.
- 12 Q. The Evening Standard made a donation to the Madeleine
- 13 fund and published an apology. Dr Gerry McCann's
- 14 evidence was that whereas the Daily Mail agreed to carry
- 15 a number of free adverts or appeals for information on
- 16 behalf of the campaign in their continental edition,
- 17 they were not willing to publish an apology because the
- 18 good stories, as it were, outweighed the bad stories.
- 19 Is his evidence correct or not?
- 20 A. I don't know. It was a confidential agreement, as you
- 21 know.
- 22 Q. Well, he's given evidence -- it was paragraph 80 of his
- 23 witness statement -- which made that specific point. Is
- 24 it something you feel you can deal with or not?
- 25 A. Sorry, what was the specific point?

- Q. That the Daily Mail refused to publish an apology 1
- 2 because the supportive articles balanced out the
- 3 pejorative articles. That was the thrust of his
- 4 evidence.
- 5 A. I honestly don't know. This was dealt with by the legal
- 6 department. I mean, we're in no position to refuse. If
- 7 he felt he had the right to an apology, presumably he
- 8 could have insisted on it. I just don't know.
- 9 Q. Weren't you involved at all in this case, given its
- 10 prominence and importance?
- 11 A. I had have known the broad brushstroke decision-making
- 12 but not the detail. I'm the editor-in-chief of a huge
- 13 newspaper company.
- 14 Q. But didn't you think it right, in the circumstances, to
- 15 offer the McCanns an apology or not?
- A. I think the Mail's reporting of the McCann story was 16
- 17 much more responsible than most papers. I can't say
- 18 more than that. Sorry.
- 19 MR CAPLAN: Can I just interrupt: my understanding is that
- 20 the settlement with the McCanns was an agreed settlement
- 21 between themselves and Associated Newspapers.
- 22 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Thank you.
- 23 MR JAY: You gave evidence to a Select Committee along the 23
- 24 lines -- I think this is a direct quote -- that you were
- 25 disappointed the McCanns did not complain to the PCC.

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- 1 Do you recall that evidence?
- A. I'm not sure whether the word "disappointed" is correct.
- 3 I certainly think it was a pity. As you know, the PCC,
- 4 I think, contacted the British embassy 48 hours after
- 5 the terrible tragedy --
- Q. Yes, we recall all that evidence. 6
- A. Okay. It would have nipped things in the bud much
- 8 earlier, I suspect, if the McCanns had lodged a specific
- 9 complaint about stories they felt were unacceptably
- 10 inaccurate. This -- you know, this was one of the most
- 11 awful tragic stories.
- 12 Q. But under the existing PCC regime, that would have
- 13 precluded legal action, wouldn't it, a complaint to the
- 14 PCC?
- 15 A. No, it doesn't preclude it, but you can't take legal
- 16 action at the same time as complaining to the PCC.
- 17 Obviously later you can take legal action. The PCC
- 18 won't take a complaint, I believe, if a legal action has
- 19 already been launched.
- 20 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Is there a justification for that or
- 21 do you think that's something that ought to be looked
- 22
- 23 A. I think the feeling is the one could prejudice the
- 24
- 25 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: It happens to doctors, solicitors,

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- 1 everybody else, that a disciplinary body will go
- 2 alongside civil proceedings.
- 3 A. I'm not aware of that, but I think it would be very
- 4 unfair to both parties if they were going on at the same
- 5 time. As I say, I would have thought it was
- 6 prejudicial.
- 7 MR JAY: Of course, a complaint to the PCC might well have
- 8 involved a complaint against the Daily Mail. What would
- 9 the Daily Mail have done in the face of such
- 10 a complaint?

12

- 11 A. Well, obviously we'd have looked into it, we'd have made
 - our defence and if we'd have been adjudicated against,
- 13 would have carried the court's -- but I repeat:
- 14 I think -- I mean, this was the most extraordinary
- 15 story. There have only been two or three in my
- 16 lifetime. You could actually see, when you got the
- 17 circulation reports of other newspapers that week,
- 18 people putting the McCanns on the front pages, their
- 19 circulations went up. I remember the rows and
- 20 recrimination in our offices that we weren't carrying
- 21 these stories. Well, in retrospect, I'm glad we didn't
- 22 carry those stories.
- But you have to bear in mind it was the Spanish 24
- police who named this family --25
 - Q. The Portuguese police.

- A. I do apologise, the Portuguese police. The family
- 2 appointed their own public relations expert, and I think
- 3 this was seen by some papers as giving the green light
- 4 that anything that kept this in the public domain and
- 5 increased the possibility that the girl would be spotted
- 6 would be helpful. I think that was a terrible mistake.
- 7 Q. You disassociate the Daily Mail, I suppose, from these
- 8 other newspapers?
- 9 A. No, I think looking back there was obviously the odd
- 10 article that we regretted. I think -- but I think, on
- 11 a balanced view of the Daily Mail's performance on that
- 12 story over the years, I think we were at the more
- 13 responsible end.
- 14 Q. Or, perhaps uncharitably turning around, less
- 15 irresponsible than other newspapers; is that fair or
- 16 not?
- 17 A. No.
- LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: It's interesting. That's the third 18 18
- 19 example we've just looked at -- Gately, Jefferies,
- 20 McCanns -- where there has been, as it were, a snowball
- 21 effect. It is an interesting aspect of these very
- 22 difficult, very high profile stories.
- 23 A. Yes. Gately was only over a few days, I think.
- 24 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Oh yes.
- 25 A. And Jefferies was only over a few days. This was a --

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I would risk destroying my career, I would put my

- 2 proprietor and my paper in that position, and that
- 3 I couldn't take a principled stand against something
- 4 I felt very strongly about, and that was only because
- 5 this man, at some stage many years previously, had done
- 6 some plastering work for me? I really do find that
- 7 insulting and it's with more sorrow than anger that
- 8 I respond to it.
- 9 Are you really suggesting that when the Daily Mail
- 10 launched a great campaign to provide the relatives of
- 11 the Omagh victims support in their action to take civil
- 12 action against the terrorists who ruined their lives --
- 13 and we raised money for them, and we financially
- 14 indemnified them, and the historic decision -- the
- 15 courts awarded damages to that family -- are you saying
- 16 that's because I knew someone from the Omagh campaign?
- 17 Well, I served in Ireland sat some time. Are you really
- saying that because I know someone who carries plastic
- 19 bags that we launched our great campaign to ban plastic
- 20 bags from Britain? Are you really saying that I needed
- 21 to know someone involved in the Garry McKinnon case, in
- 22 which an Asperger's victim, a vulnerable Asperger's
- 23 victim, is being extradited because of our unbalanced
- 24 extradition laws to America? I did that because I knew
- 25 someone?

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- what? One-year, two-year story? 1
- 2 MR JAY: That's right. It's only right, Mr Dacre, that
- 3 having mentioned three stories where some might say the
- 4 Daily Mail is worthy of criticism, there's a story which
- 5 I'm sure you would say is rather different, namely the
- 6 Stephen Lawrence story. There was a famous headline,
- 7 wasn't there, in 1997, where you -- and I think you will
- 8 freely agree that you were responsible for the
- 9 headline -- named the murderers, as you described them.
- 10 Two, of course, have been found guilty now. I'm right
- 11 about the date, it was 1997, and there were further
- 12 articles you wrote very recently about it.
- 13 That, I'm sure, is something that you are very proud 14 of; is that right?
- A. I am very proud. The Daily Mail is very proud of it. 15
- 16 Q. It has been suggested -- and I put this forward just so
- 17 that you can deal with it, but obviously I'm not
- 18 expressing any opinion. It's been suggested by some
- 19 that the reason for the Daily Mail siding with the
- 20 Lawrence family was the fact that Mr Neville Lawrence
- 21 did plastering work in your home several years
- 22 previously. Some would say that's very uncharitable
- 23 suggestion, but I offer it up for comment by you.
- 24 A. Well, it is an uncharitable suggestion. I mean, are you
- 25 really telling me that I would risk going to jail,

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- LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I don't think you need to --
- A. I'm trying to make the point that we do a lot of
- 3 campaigns, we passionately believe in it, and I find the
- 4 suggestion -- the begrudging suggestion on the left that
- 5 we can't do that quite disgrading(?).
- 6 MR JAY: I'm really the vessel through which a suggestion
- 7 has been made, Mr Dacre.
- 8 A. I realise that. I'm very --
- 9 MR JAY: When you say "you", I think you're directing it to
- 10 the world at large, rather than ad hominem to me, but
- 11 may I move on and address the case of Mr Grant. I'll do
- 12 it quite shortly, because I know that --
- 13 A. Hang on a minute. I have to find my Grant file, please.
- 14 Q. Our tab 36, a piece in the Mail 22 November 2011. Do
- 15 you see on the right-hand side, about halfway down, the
- 16 paper's response?
- 17 A. I'm so sorry.
- 18 Q. Do you have this one, Mr Dacre?
- 19 A. What page is it?
- 20 Q. It's our tab 36 in the bundle we've prepared for you.
- It's the piece in the Mail, 22 November. 21
- 22 A. 30 ... I have 34 ...
- 23 Q. 36.
- 24 A. 35 ... I know this sounds very stupid, but I have a 35
- 25 and a 37. I don't seem to have a 36. I have 35,

- 1 Hugh Grant's witness statement. I don't have a 36.
- 2 Q. It may be I can take is quite shortly, but if you want
- 3 to see the exact wording, please ask.
- 4 A. Okay.
- 5 Q. The paper's response -- the Mail on Sunday said -- and
- 6 I'll read it on out:
- 7 "The Mail on Sunday utterly refutes Hugh Grant's
- 8 claim that they got any story as a result of phone
- 9 hacking. In fact, in the case of the story Mr Grant
- refers to [I think have you it now] the information came
- from a freelance journalist who had been told by
- 12 a source who was regularly speaking to Jemima Khan.
- 13 Mr Grant's allegations are mendacious smears driven by
- 14 his hatred of the media."
- Now, that terminology, "mendacious smears driven by
- his hatred of the media", was that your form of words,
- 17 Mr Dacre?
- 18 A. Can I explain the circumstances of that? I was off that
- day on an outside appointment. Not off; out of the
- 20 office on an outside appointment, and I was driving back
- and the 4 o'clock news came on the BBC and the headline
- 22 was as followed:
- 23 "Another major newspaper group has been dragged into
- the phone hacking scandal. Actor Hugh Grant has accused
- 25 the Mail on Sunday -- Associated Newspapers' Mail on Page 85
- 1 Sunday of hacking phones."
- 2 It was a terrible smear on a company I love. We had
- 3 to do something about it. I discussed with the Mail on
- 4 Sunday's editor what our response was. A long
- 5 convoluted press statement was being prepared. I was
- 6 deeply aware -- and he was deeply aware -- that you had
- 7 to rebut such a damaging, damaging allegation, and we
- 8 agreed on the form of words: "It was a mendacious
- 9 smear."
- 10 Let me explain why I feel it was a mendacious smear.
- 11 You will have read -- you have already interviewed our
- legal director on this for a considerable amount of
- time. Our witness statements have made clear that
- 14 Associated is not involved in phone hacking and we've
- denied phone hacking in this instance, anyway,
- specifically. Mr Grant, on previous occasions, had made
- this allegation -- if I could just refer to them --
- 18 Q. I think we've noted those.
- 19 A. I don't think you have, because you haven't admitted our
- 20 latest statement, have you?
- 21 Q. Can we try and take this more economically, Mr Dacre?
- 22 A. It is terribly important --
- 23 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Yes, but hang on. I'm a bit
- 24 concerned that you've made your decisions based upon
- 25 a radio headline. Did you actually see the transcript Page 86

- 1 before you made --
- 2 A. But I had to rebut the fact that your Inquiry was being
- 3 told that we, Associated Newspapers and Mail on Sunday,
- 4 was hacking into phones.
- 5 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: But did you ask precisely what
- 6 Mr Grant had said?
- 7 A. Yes, of course. I had that because I was in liaison
- 8 with the office.
- 9 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: So you knew that the headline did no
- 10 reflect what he'd said?
- 11 A. Yes, but that -- the damage was being done and I'm glad
- to say that once we got our statement out, we had
- a much, much more balanced reporting of it by the BBC
- and other media. But if that had been allowed to stand,
- it would have been devastating for our reputation.
- 16 MR JAY: I just wonder, Mr Dacre, whether you didn't shoot
- 17 from the hip a little but too fast on this occasion.
- 18 A. Not at all. It needed rebutting instantly. This is how
- 19 modern communications work. It is my view that Mr Grant
- 20 made that statement on the opening day of the court --
- 21 Hacked Off, the organisation backed by the Media
- 22 Standards Trust, attempted to hijack your Inquiry with
- that highly calculated attempt to wound my company, and
- 24 I --

4

12

- 25 Q. I'm not altogether clear, Mr Dacre, whether you're
 - Page 87
 - saying that Mr Grant perjured himself. That's what
- 2 "mendacious smears" might suggest.
- 3 A. I'm not going to go into that area. I've tried to tell
 - you the context of why we had to rebut this.
- 5 I mean, let me say as clearly and as slowly as
- 6 I can: I have never placed a story in the Daily Mail as
- 7 a result of phone hacking that I knew came from phone
- 8 hacking. I know of no cases of phone hacking. Having
- 9 conducted a major internal enquiry, I'm as confident as
- I can be that there's no phone hacking on the
- Daily Mail. I don't make that statement lightly, and no
 - editor, the editor of the Guardian or the Independent,
- 13 could say otherwise.
- I'm prepared to make this -- I will withdraw that
 - statement if Mr Grant withdraws his statements that the
- Daily Mail and the Mail on Sunday were involved in phone
- 17 hacking.
- Q. I'm not sure I'm in a position to broker a deal between you, but can I just ask this, Mr Dacre: why didn't you
- 20 come back, as it were, in the measured way you're coming
- 21 to this Inquiry and then just say --
- 22 A. I've tried to explain -- sorry.
- 23 Q. And then say at the end:
- 24 "In the circumstances, Mr Grant is incorrect."
- 25 A. Because then it would have been too late. By then, it Page 88

- 1 would have been too late. My company would have been
- 2 smeared, my newspapers would have been smeared and
- 3 I wasn't prepared to allow that. This is how modern,
- 4 instant communications work. It's not in the measured
- 5 slow way of the court.
- 6 Q. But of course, Mr Grant had already made the statements,
- 7 and you were then saying it was a mendacious smear,
- 8 which, if anything, inflamed the situation.
- 9 A. No, he'd made his earlier statements, saying that we'd
- 10 used Paul McCullen (sic) -- and incidentally, McCullen
- said we didn't hack phones and Mr Grant on that day said
- we did. He'd already made these statements. We'd
- emailed his lawyers to tell him he was inaccurate. He
- 14 knew that we were denying it, yet he repeated that.
- 15 Q. Is this not an example of attack being the best form of
- 16 defence?
- 17 A. No, it was a perfectly sensible way to defend the
- reputation of my company, my newspapers.
- 19 Q. By being aggressive. Do you accept that?
- 20 A. Well, I think Mr Grant was being very aggressive by
- saying we hacked phones.
- 22 Q. Mr Dacre, I'm not -- because others may be more
- 23 concerned to do so -- going to go into the underlying
- 24 facts. I'm concerned only with "mendacious smear". Do
- you follow me? You've given your evidence on that,
 - Page 89
- 1 I think.

9

- 2 A. Thank you.
- 3 Q. There's one point which arises on your supplementary
- 4 statement, if I can just draw attention to that quite
- 5 briefly. I'm not concerned with most of it, for obvious
- 6 reasons. I think it's in paragraph 16. I'm just going
- 7 to read this out and ask for your comment.
- 8 "Mr Grant has attacked press intrusion and
 - harassment after the birth of his love child following
- a 'fleeting affair' with former girlfriend Tinglan Hong,
- yet he has repeatedly publicly spoken of his desire to
- be a father, either with Liz Hurley or particularly
- around the time he was promoting About a Boy, a film in 13
- which he single-handedly brings up a child."
- which he single-handedry offings up a clinic
- 15 Are you saying there that in the light of Mr Grant's
- public statements about his wish to be a father, it is
- 17 effectively open season, that the Daily Mail and
- everybody else is entitled to explore the circumstances
- of the child's birth --
- 20 A. I'm not saying --
- 21 Q. -- even if the mother wishes to remain private?
- 22 A. With respect, I'm not saying it's open season. What
- 23 I was trying to show here was that Mr Grant has spent
- 24 his life invading his own privacy, exposing every
- 25 intimate detail of his life --

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- 1 Q. That wasn't the question --
- 2 A. Hang on, please let me finish. Particularly he's spoken
- 3 frequently about his desire to have a child,
- 4 particularly at the time when he was making a film about
- 5 a child. It seems to me a little bit ripe that when he
 - does have a child, he and his press representatives
- won't confirm or deny that. I mean, it's not a question
- 8 of intrusion. In fact, the story broke on an American
- 9 website and that was the way it came out into the open.
- O D 441 and a 1 1 1 and a 1 1 1 and a 1 1 1 1 1
- 10 Q. But there's a whole apparatus of intrusion which is
- 11 involved here: trying to get information from a private
- hospital, sending a photographer around to the mother's
- 13 house --
- 14 A. That's not an intrusion. When someone has a baby, the
- press, through the ages -- popular newspapers have sent
- photographers around to ask if they can take a picture.
- 17 It's as old as time itself.
- 18 Q. Is it part of your analysis or argument that you are
- 19 entitled to intrude into these matters because of what
- you set out in paragraph 16, that Mr Grant has stated
- 21 publicly that he would like to be a father?
- 22 A. I don't say we have a right to intrude; I say we have
 - a right to make enquiries, legitimate enquiries.
- 24 Mr Grant is a major, major international celebrity.
- 25 People are very interested in his life, a life --
 - Page 91
- a narrative of a life which he's created with those
- 2 people

23

- 3 Q. What about the position of whom you describe as the
- 4 former girlfriend, who might and probably does have no
- 5 interest in these matters?
- 6 A. I don't know.
- 7 Q. You don't know? Is that something that you're ignoring
- 8 or just sweeping under the carpet?
- 9 A. No, it's legitimate for the press to ask for
- a photograph or to make enquiries about when someone has
- a baby by a major international film star, and it
- worries me that you can't understand this.
- 13 Q. Can I ask you just this question about this statement:
- 14 did you write this statement?
- 15 A. Which statement?
- 16 Q. The second statement of Friday's date.
- 17 A. The --
- 18 Q. The one we're looking at now.
- 19 A. Oh, I see. Obviously I knew about it and had a hand in
- 20 it, yes.
- 21 Q. It's your --
- 22 A. Well, obviously --
- 23 Q. It could be said a number of possibilities, that you
- 24 asked someone else to write it and then you checked
- 25 through it --

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- A. Obviously, I didn't write all this but I wrote it --
- I had input and it was done at my behest, yes.
- 3 Q. Language like "love child", did you put that in or did
- 4 someone else?
- 5 A. Where is" love child"?
- 6 Q. First line of paragraph 16.
- 7 A. I'm sorry, it's a shorthand phrase used by newspapers.
- 8 Q. By you?
- 9 A. Well, I'm a newspaper man.
- 10 Q. Why are we seeing this statement last Friday at
- 11 9 o'clock? Why not earlier on?
- 12 A. Well, because I'd been deluged with so many questions
- and so much paperwork on this earlier in the week that
- 14 I only got around to it then. I apologise for issuing
- it late, but I did want to make the point that there's
- a whole celebrity industry out there. You don't seem
- interested in this.
- 18 Q. No, I think the Inquiry is interest in this, and it
- would have been, if I may say so, more valuable, if
- there were good points made in this statement about
- 21 which the Inquiry is neutral, to have provided the
- 22 Inquiry with this material much earlier --
- 23 A. Oh, I --
- 24 Q. -- perhaps even before Mr Grant was called so these
- points could be put to him. Do you see that?
 - Page 93
- 1 A. As we didn't know what he was going to say at that
- 2 stage, I'm not sure that's correct.
- 3 Q. Certainly soon after he gave evidence on -- I think it
- 4 was 21 November, rather than two and a bit months later.
- 5 Do you see that?
- 6 A. In retrospect, yes. I don't think it negates what I'm
- 7 saying. I think the Inquiry has ample time to consider
- 8 it now.
- 9 Q. You've known for a considerable period of time when you
- were coming along to give evidence, haven't you,
- 11 Mr Dacre?
- 12 A. I'm trying to explain to you how -- as well as being
- editor-in-chief, I'm the day-to-day editor of the
- 14 Daily Mail. We've had an enormous amount of enquiries
- from your Inquiry which I've tried to deal with. In an
- ideal world, yes, it would have been nicer to get that
- 17 to you earlier. I repeat: I don't think it undermines
- what I say, which is a valuable debate, and I wish we
- 19 could spend the time discussing the fact that the
- 20 celebrity industry exists and how the press responds to
- 21 it.
- 22 Q. May I move on to another topic. As I've said, that's as
- 23 far as I feel I should go with Mr Grant and "mendacious
- smears". Tab 28, which is a piece which was in the
- Daily Mail, although we only have the online edition.

 Page 94

- 1 "Cancer danger of that night-time trip to the toilet".
- 2 A. Right, can I get a minute to get my file on it. Right.
- 3 Q. The reason why this has been chosen, (a) it's been drawn
- 4 to the Inquiry's attention online, but secondly, some
- 5 would say it's illustrative of the type of popular
 - science story that the Mail is good at, or not, as the
- 7 case may be.
- 8 First of all, we can see it's apparently by
 - a Daily Mail reporter. We don't know the name of that
- 10 reporter, do we?
- 11 A. No, but that's a common newspaper -- a practice common
- to all newspapers. Actually it's a layout device to
- break that line, if you put a Daily Mail reporter on
- 14 Steak that line, if you put a Barry Warr reporter on
- 14 a story that possibly came in from an agency and the
- Daily Mail reporter might have put a -- would change
- some of it.
- 17 Q. So is this right: that agencies specialise in this sort
- of story. They look at scientific articles, they try
- and summarise them, and they put the most attractive or
- 20 sensationalist spin on them. Is that fair?
- 21 A. No, I don't accept that at all.
- 22 Q. The underlying article, which I've obtained from Israel,
 - which was published in the Cancer Genetics and
- 24 Cytogenetics journal for 2010, is a very precise and,
- 25 some would say, uninteresting article, save for Page 95
 - ----
- t that 1 scientists, about flashing light at mice for one-hour
 - 2 pulses and seeing what happens to cell division in the
 - 3 brain. The conclusions of the two researchers -- it's
 - 4 Dr Ben-Shlomo in Haifa and Mr Kyriacou in Leicester -
 - 5 is that there was some sort of association between cell
 - 6 division and changes in the cells, but they find no
 - 7 causal relationship between turning on lights for
 - 8 a short period of time and cancer.
 - 9 A. May I read what their press release said:
 - 10 "Just one pulse of artificial light at night
 - disrupts circadian cell division ... damage to cell
 - division is characteristic of cancer."
 - 13 Q. You're reading from what?
 - 14 A. I'm reading from the press release that accompanied this
 - story, presumably from the University of Leicester and
 - 16 Haifa University.
 - 17 Q. Are you reading from a press release which the press
 - which the Press Association or someone else --
 - $19\,$ $\,$ A. No, no, no, a press release would have been handed out
 - 20 by the university.
 - 21 Q. Could you read it out again?
 - 22 A. "Just one pulse of artificial light at night disrupts
 - circadian cell division. Damage to cell division is
 - 24 characteristic of cancer."
 - 25 Q. The article, which is referred to specifically in the Page 96

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Daily Mail piece, says something more precise. It refers to an association between the disruption of circadian clock in mammals and interference in the regulation of cell cycle and malignancy, and it says:

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"The molecular intracellular signalling pathways by which light regulates and modifies the expression of the cell cycle in tumorigenesis genes is not yet clear. The increased relative risk for cancer among shift workers raises the question of whether this is a causative phenomenon or spurious association."

11 But it says nothing about increasing cancer by 12 flicking on light switches when one is going to the 13 toilet.

14 A. Yes, I can read that quote, but I can also say that 15 our -- it was (inaudible) the agency that supplied us 16 with this story. They included the line about going to

17 the loo. They got this man talking to one of the

18 researchers and they put that over as a quote. 19

Unfortunately, in the copy -- it was taken out of 20 a quote and put in the copy.

Q. The University of Leicester felt so strongly about this that they put out a press release which made it clear

23 turning on the light to go to the toilet does not give 24 you cancer, and saying:

25 "There's no connection between illuminated nocturnal 25 Page 97

respect. I checked with my news desk on this. They

2 receive two or three stories a day which we don't put in

the paper or they don't put in the paper because they

4 don't trust the providence. Those stories regularly

5 appear in other papers, including the broadsheets.

Q. Because one of the authors, Professor Kyriacou, told 6 7 **AOL** Health:

8 "The switching on of lights causes cancer when you 9 go to the bathroom at night is an eye-catching 10 fabrication of the press."

11 In other words, of you. Presumably you don't, at 12 present, accept that?

A. I've read out their press release to you. 13

Q. You don't accept this is an example of imprecise 14

15 journalism, if I can put it in those terms?

16 A. I don't, really, I'm afraid.

LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Do you think there is a point, 17

18 though, that actually great care has to be taken?

19 I heard the evidence last week -- I think it was last

week -- from a lady who is concerned with the way in

21 which science is reported, and she provided a whole host

22 of -- a large number of examples of headlines which

actually caused enormous concern and damage, and was

24 keen to encourage me to look at ways of facilitating the

better reporting of science. Do you think there is Page 99

calls of nature and cancer, despite what concern 1

2 newspapers are claiming."

3 Then they mention the Daily Mail.

4 A. I've equally read out to you either their press release

5 or the University of Haifa's press release.

6 Can I just put it in some context? This was a small

7 little story at the bottom of page 18 and

8 I categorically dispute this -- that we adopt

an irresponsible attitude to medical or science stories.

Every week we have a 14-16 page good health supplement 10

11 that is full of wonderful information about the

12 developments in medicine.

13 Q. If it was possible for me very straightforwardly by 14 email to request a copy of the original article from

15 Haifa, as it happens, because the key author has given

16 her email address, why didn't the Daily Mail do exactly

the same before publishing a piece in its paper?

A. You misunderstand how journalism works. The Daily Mail 18 18

19 has hundreds of stories in it. Thousands of stories in

20 a week. It's 120 pages. If they come from an agency,

21 a reputable agency, we put them in the paper.

22 Q. Because the Daily Mail publishes loads of material which

23 suggests alleged causes of cancer or material which says

24 certain things prevent cancer --

25 A. That's a caricature of the Daily Mail, with great Page 98

something in that?

2 A. Well, I think we should address this constructively,

3 but -- you know, the great challenge for a newspaper is

4 to take an incredibly complicated subject like this --

5 in this instance, this was done by an agent's report --

6 no one in this room understood a word of what you were

7 saying when you read out the description -- and put in language which is accessible to people -- ordinary

9 people who don't have a scientific or medical

10 background.

LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I agree with that, and indeed I have 11

applauded a number of articles in a number of newspapers

13 which do create understandable pieces around extremely

14 complex subjects. But that carries with it an enormous

15 responsibility as well, doesn't it?

16 A. Yes, of course.

17 MR JAY: I'm not sure that the article, which I have

provided to Associated, is that complicated. The

19 authors are saying quite clearly that there is no

established causal relationship between flashing light

21 pulses at mice, even for one-hour periods, and cancer --

22 A. I can only keep reading out this press release. And

23 incidentally, you know, our paper's done an immense

24 amount of good on the medical front. We've carried

25 campaigns on osteoporosis, on Alzheimer's, prostrate

- 1 cancer. A huge amount. We've done a series on it,
- 2 raised money for these complaints.
- 3 MR JAY: May I move off science --
- LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I think that was the point I was 4
- 5 making when I addressed my question to you.
- A. Fine, thank you. Indeed, I'd ask you to get the
- 7 representative of those three areas and ask them to come
- 8 here, because I think they would sing our praises very
- 9
- 10 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: You don't need to convince me about 10
- 11 the good work that can be done.
- 12 A. I understand.
- 13 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: However --
- 14 A. I understand.
- 15 MR JAY: Mr Dacre, I would like to ask you about
- 16 Mr Morrissey's case, only because in a succinct and, if
- 17 I may say so, well-written submission, a number of
- 18 points are made. It's under tab 34. I don't have the
- 19 URN number, although it has been provided.
- 20 Mr Morrissey is a well known television actor. He's
- 21 best known for a comedy, "Men Behaving Badly", and this
- 22 was a piece in the Mail published in March 2011 where
- 23 the headline was: "Man behaving badly -- TV star banned
- 24 from bar near his idyllic French retreat after locals
- 25 object to 'le binge drinking'."

- What happened here, if I can seek to summarise the 1
- 2 position, is that a Mail reporter did try and contact
- 3 Mr Morrissey, or through his agent, before publication.
- 4 The allegations were strongly denied. The point was
- 5 made that Mr Morrissey did not want his privacy
- 6 compromised and yet the Mail went ahead and published.
- 7 So far so good. Is that what happened, so far as you're
- 8 aware?
- 9 A. Well, our journalist had spent several days interviewing
- 10 the bar owners and his clients and believed the story.
- 11 They had ample evidence for the story and support for
- 12 the story. The allegations were put to Morrissey's PR
- 13 agent, who initially denied that he had ever drunk at
- 14 the bar. She then admitted that he had attended it and
- 15 had left the bar without paying for his drinks, as the
- 16 article alleged.
- Q. But Mr Morrissey was denying the main thrust of the 17
- 18 article, which was about binge drinking, wasn't he, so
- 19 far as you were aware?
- 20 A. "His solicitors did not deny that he'd been banned for
- 21 drunken rowdy behaviour. They simply stated that he,
- 22 Morrissey, was unaware of any ban and had no means of
- 23 knowing if it was true. Morrissey has been accused of
- 24 rowdy, drunken and intolerable before. See attached
- 25 article on his flight from Australia on a BA plane."

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- Q. The questions which I have been asked to put to you in
- 2 relation to this: do you accept that whether or not
- 3 Mr Morrissey had been banned from a bar for alleged
- 4 rowdy or drunken behaviour was not a matter of any
- 5 significant public interest?
- A. No, I deny that. I think it's a matter of public 6
- 7 interest.
- 8 Q. What was the public interest?
 - A. This man is a famous actor, a celebrity who appears in television programmes. He's a role model to young
- 11 people. It doesn't seem to me a very attractive way of
- 12 persuading young people to behave properly.
- 13 Q. Isn't it simply the case that it's rather amusing that
- 14 the television comedy is called "Men Behaving Badly" and
- 15 here we have Mr Morrissey allegedly behaving badly.
- 16 That's what interests the Mail and nothing much more
- 17 than that, isn't it?
- 18 A. No. No, it's a major celebrity. It was an interesting
- 19 story. At odds with his image as a TV actor.
- 20 Q. Right. The point is then made that -- I think this must
- 21 be accepted by you -- the allegation was nonetheless
- 22 obviously potentially highly damaging, as well as
- 23 extremely insulting and hurtful. Do you accept that?
- 24 A. I accept that our journalist spoke to people and when it
- 25 later came to be looked into and it was possibly going Page 103
- to court, the people who had given them this evidence 1
- weren't prepared to go to court to stand up the story. 3 Obviously we did pay damages, we made amends. He issued
- 4 a unilateral statement in open court in which he said he
- 5 felt fully vindicated.

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- 6 Q. I think we're moving on a bit, Mr Dacre. The question
 - was: the allegation was obviously potentially highly
- 8 damaging, as well as extremely insulting and hurtful.
- 9 Do you accept that or not?
- 10 A. If untrue, it was damaging, yes. Not hurtful.
- 11 O. The next point was made:
 - "It wasn't necessarily or desirable that the piece
- 13 be given immediate publicity."
- 14 Do you accept that?
- 15 A. I'm sorry, what are you trying to say?
- 16 Q. That you should have carried out further enquiries,
- 17 particularly in the light of Mr Morrissey's denial.
- That's the point which is being made. Do you accept --18
- 19 A. Well, his PR admitted that he had attended the bar,
- 20 having first denied that he'd ever drunk there, that
- 21 he'd left the bar without paying for his drunks and that
- 22 we had a picture of a poster put up by the bar in
- 23 question: "Do not serve this man."
- 24 Q. You're making it sound as if, Mr Dacre, you shouldn't
- 25 have settled the libel action, which you did do, didn't

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- 1 you, and you paid him and apologised?
- 2 A. I have explained very carefully that the people who
- 3 alleged this and gave us this story were not prepared to
- 4 go to court. It does happen. You know that it does.
- 5 But I'm saying we acted properly, we offered amends, we
- 6 paid damage, we carried two apologies and he read out a
- 7 unilateral statement in court in which he said he felt
- 8 fully vindicated.
- 9 Q. Do you accept that Mr Morrissey's denial of the
- 10 allegation was not included in the articles?
- 11 A. I'd have to look at it but I don't know. I can get back
- 12 to you on that. We carried the statements from the PR,
- 13 didn't we?
- 14 Q. This was a whole-page spread, wasn't it?
- A. It was one page, I believe. Yes, one page. Two-thirds 15
- 16 of a page. Hardly.
- 17 Q. Isn't this a classic example of a story whose value, if
- 18 it exists at all, is only to entertain, but it is an
- 19 intrusion of privacy --
- 20 A. If true, which we clearly believed at the time, I think
- 21 it is a valid story for a middle market paper, a lot of
- 22 whose readers watch his programmes, to carry.
- 23 Q. Because it might amuse them; is that right?
- A. No, because I think it interests them and I think it has 24
- some relevance. Allegedly, we believed he had behaved 25 Page 105
- 25

- in this irresponsible fashion. 1
- 2 Q. What happened then was a letter of complaint was written
- 3 by solicitors to you on 23 March 2011.
- 4 A. To me?
- 5 O. Yes. To the editor-in-chief.
- 6 A. It would have just gone straight to our legal
- 7 department.
- 8 Q. The letter made it clear that if a retraction and
- 9 apology were given promptly, he would forego any claim
- 10 to damages. Is that right or not?
- 11 A. I don't know. I can get back to you.
- 12 Q. The letter apparently went unanswered for a month. Is
- 13 that typical?
- 14 A. It's very untypical. I'd be surprised if that was true.
- 15 Let me look into it, I'll get back to you.
- 16 Q. The line that was taken when there was a reply from your
- 17 legal department on 21 April was that the articles were
- 18 not defamatory to Mr Morrissey and what's more, they
- 19 portrayed him in a sympathetic light, which is a phrase
- 20 you have given us in relation to another piece.
- 21 A. I think that was the Abigail --
- 22 Q. Yes.
- 23 A. Yes. Totally different.
- 24 Q. Yes. But do you feel that that was a fair way of
- 25 putting it, that the article portrayed him in

Page 106

- 1 a sympathetic light?
- A. I don't know whether that was said. I don't know who
 - said it. I'm very happy to look into it and get back to
- 4
- 5 Q. It was also said in the letter that the Mail did not
 - stand by its story. It did not, as it never would,
- 7 suggest the allegations of rowdy drunken behaviour by
- 8 Mr Morrissey were true or that he had in fact been
- 9 banned from the bar, but you refused to withdraw or
- 10 apologise for publishing the allegations; is that right?
- 11 A. I'm sorry, you keep asking me questions. I don't know.
- 12 This came in very late last week. We will look into it
- 13 and we will get back to you in a very considered way.
- 14 Q. The upshot was that there wasn't an apology, there were 15 libel proceedings --
- 16 A. We published two apologies.
- Q. Eventually you did, didn't you, Mr Dacre? There was an 17
- 18 offer of amends and eventually a libel settlement. But
- 19 one aspect of this -- the final aspect of this which
- 20 I should deal with -- is paragraph 24 and 25 of the
- 21 submission, which I know you have.
- 22 It's that during the course of the litigation, your
 - solicitors decided to proceed with the publication of an
- 24 apology, and that was done in the Corrections and
 - Clarifications column, which was a fairly new column --Page 107
- 1 it had only been set up a few days before -- and that
 - 2 was done on 18 October without reference to
 - 3 Mr Morrissey, wasn't it? 4 A. I'm very sorry, Mr Jay. I can't answer these questions.
 - 5 I repeat: I'm an editor-in-chief of a major publishing
 - 6 group. I edit the Daily Mail on a day-to-day basis.
 - 7 I don't drill down into this micro detail on these
 - 8 things, but I promise I'll get back to you very, very
 - 9 fully with the full answers to all these questions.
 - 10 Q. So you don't drill down into the detail, even when
 - 11
 - they're extant libel proceedings; is that right?
 - 12 A. No, I don't.
 - 13 Q. Is it going to be the practice, though, of the Mail in
 - 14 future to publish apologies in the clarifications and
 - 15 corrections column? Because after all it's not an
 - 16 apologies column; it's a clarifications and corrections
 - 17 column, isn't it?
 - 18 A. I think if an apology is needed, that's an appropriate
 - 19 place to put it. I don't think it's occurred yet, so we
 - 20 need to look into that.
 - 21 Q. I can see that if it's just an error, one would want to
 - 22 correct it quickly and prominently, but isn't it
 - 23 slightly misleading that if an apology is going to be
 - 24 included, the column is just described "clarification
 - 25 and corrections" rather than "apologies" as well? Page 108

27 (Pages 105 to 108)

A. Then I'd expect in that column it would be worded as an A. I don't accept that, because at the moment we are having 2 2 apology. I believe the Guardian does this, exactly to fight cases which cost us in excess of £500,000, in 3 3 this, puts its corrections and -which ultimately as little as £5,000 damages are 4 4 Q. It may or may not do, but at the moment I'm asking awarded. I don't know enough about the Morrissey case. 5 questions of the Mail's editor and not the Guardian's 5 I think he was inclined to accept our original offer of 6 editor. It might be said that it's all been buried 6 amends and I think this, because this is a no win fee, 7 7 his lawyers wanted him to ask for much, much more to here. Is that fair? 8 8 A. What, on page 2? cover their disproportionate fees and their success fees 9 Q. Under a column at the bottom which says, "Clarifications 9 and their after-the-event insurance arrangements. 10 10 and corrections". Is that really prominent enough? Q. I think they would have got those anyway, Mr Dacre, but 11 11 A. I can't win here. We now start putting our corrections let's move on. 12 12 on page 2, which everybody's welcomed as a major step If I can just deal with the issue of CFAs as 13 forward. Before, we would have carried on the apology 13 a separate matter, was there -- indeed it's clear there 14 on the page of the article where it was carried. I'm 14 was -- there was a meeting involving you, Rebekah Wade, 15 15 Murdoch MacLennan and Jack Straw over CFAs, or maybe it damned if I do and damned if I don't, it seems to me. 16 Q. But, ultimately, there was a statement in an open court? 16 was a dinner. It's referred to in our tab 9. It's 17 A speech you gave. The fourth page of that speech. If 17 A. Yes. Which Mr Morrissey said he felt fully vindicated. 18 Q. Yes, and I think there was a further apology; is that 18 I can just lock it in in terms of time, it's a speech 19 19 correct? you gave to the Society of Editors. I'm not clear 20 A. I don't know. 20 entirely when this was. I think it was probably before 21 21 mid-2008, when the 2008 Act came into force in relation Q. But this case was carried out under a conditional fee 22 agreement, which you, of course, are very hostile 22 to Section 55 of the Data Protection Act, but we can see 23 23 towards, aren't you? from page 4 you say this: 24 "Thirdly, there's to be action on the 'scandalous' 24 A. No, I think it's an admirably well-intended bill, piece 25 25 greed of CFA lawyers. That adjective is not mine, by of legislation designed to help people, but I think it's Page 109 Page 111 1 been hijacked by predatory lawyers charging exorbitant 1 the way, but Justice Minister's Jack Straw's in a recent 2 2 speech on the subject. For following Number 10's 3 3 Q. But without a conditional fee arrangement in this intervention all those months ago, there have been many 4 particular case, I think it's fairly clear that 4 constructive meetings between the industry and the 5 Mr Morrissey would not have been able to bring that 5 Ministry of Justice on what to do about CFA. 6 action against your paper? 6 "A few weeks ago, I, Rebekah Wade and Murdoch A. I don't know. I would have thought Mr Morrissey was 7 7 MacLennan saw Jack Straw who assured us that, in the 8 wealthy enough to bring that action. 8 next few months, he is set to unveil proposals to reform 9 Q. He says in paragraph 5 of his statement he was in an IVA 9 CFA, including capping lawyers' fees." 10 10 at the time -- he's put that in his statement, so Can you tell us the circumstances in which you met 11 there's no reason why I shouldn't make reference to 11 the then Lord Chancellor? 12 it -- from which you might make reference that without 12 A. Yes, I'm very happy to tell you the circumstances. 13 a CFA he wouldn't have been able to take you on. Do you 13 I think you'll find about a year or so earlier, I, 14 see that? 14 Mr MacLennan and Mr Hinton, the senior members of the 15 A. I don't know. I need to look into it and get back to 15 newspaper industry, had become increasingly concerned 16 16 about potential threats to press freedom, and had asked 17 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: He says so in terms in paragraph 39, 17 for a meeting with the then Prime Minister, 18 18 Gordon Brown. We outlined what our worries were. There but we've got the point. 19 MR JAY: I think there may be a wider point here, that the 19 were threats to the coroner's reports -- reporting of 20 curbing of CFAs -- which may happen anyway, regardless 20 coroner's courts, there were threats to freedom of 21 of what this Inquiry does or does not do --21 information, this he were going to charge for it. We 22 22 A. I understand that. were deeply worried, for reasons you well know, about 23 23 Q. -- will or might leave organisations such as yours in CFAs and we were very worried about the proposal to 24 a more powerful position than they're even in now. 24 amend the Data Protection Act so that journalists should 25 25 Would you accept that? be jailed, which we felt would provide a huge chilling Page 110 Page 112

- 1 effect on journalism and would mean that Britain is the
- 2 only country in the world which would jail journalists.
- 3 He was sympathetic to that, said he would arrange
- 4 a meeting for us with Jack Straw and that was the
- 5 context of that.
- 6 Q. Yes. Thank you. Was it over a meal or was it in his
- 7 offices?
- 8 A. Jack Straw? I think it was in his office over a cup of
- 9 coffee. I don't recall. I've had meals with Jack Straw
- 10 over the years. I've known him -- we were at university
- 11 together.
- 12 Q. Yes. Or was it because of your long association with
- 13 Jack Straw -- as you said, you knew him from university,
- obviously some years before -- that you had access to
- him coupled with the fact that you're one of the most
- powerful editors in Fleet Street?
- 17 A. Every industry sees politicians to put their case and
- their worries. I don't think it's anything to do with
- my relationship with Jack Straw. It's very senior
- 20 members of the newspaper industry were very worried
- 21 about these developments and he was kind enough to see
- us, to hear our concerns.
- 23 Q. Were you, generally speaking, on good terms with
- 24 Mr Straw or not?
- 25 A. There have been times I've been on good terms, there Page 113

- 1 MR JAY: Yes.
- 2 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I'm sure, Mr Dacre, you want to deal
- 3 with this so that you don't have to come back.
- 4 A. That's the understatement of the year, your Honour.
- 5 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Oh, I can do better than that.
- 6 A. I'm sure you can.
- 7 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Does it cause anybody inconvenience
- 8 if we carry on?
- 9 MR JAY: Not every point that I might put is going to be
- 10 put
- 11 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Mr Jay, we are going to have another
- short break to give the shorthand writer, who is working
- extremely hard, the opportunity to have a rest, but
- we'll just have a couple of minutes. Thank you.
- 15 (5.11 pm)
- 16 (A short break)
- 17 (5.15 pm)
- 18 MR JAY: Mr Dacre, I've edited down my questions and I can
- 19 I move to a miscellary of different topics, if you don't
- 20 mind. First of all, you tell us in your statement that
- you turned down editorships of the Times and the Daily
- 22 Telegraph because you felt you would not be guaranteed
- editorial independence. What, if anything, is your
- 25 canorial independence. What, if anything, is yo
- evidence base for that statement?
- 25 A. Well, my evidence is I've worked as an editor for the Page 115
- 1 have been times when I've criticised him in the paper
- and not I'm sure those terms were so good. I don't
- 3 quite know where this is leading.
- 4 Q. I think all that's being -- might be suggested is that
- 5 you were close to Mr Straw, you'd been to university
- 6 with him --
- 7 A. I then had --
- 8 Q. You had his ear, you were able to try and persuade
- 9 him -
- 10 A. I think that's a --
- 11 Q. -- to bring in legislation to abolish --
- 12 A. -- terrible insult to Mr Straw. He's a very independent
- minded man, a very robust man. I'm sure he has many
- legal friends, by the way.
- Q. Out of interest, did he say that he would take steps to
 abolish CFAs? I think that's what you're suggest --
- 17 A. No, I think that's probably shorthand in the speech.
- I can't recall what he said. I think he was sympathetic
- and conversations went on as to what could be done about
- this. We weren't involved in them, necessarily.
- 21 MR JAY: Okay. I probably have another quarter of an hour.
- I don't know how you feel we might proceed. I was
- 23 hoping to finish in three hours, but I'm --
- 24 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: We started late and had rather
- a longer break.

- 1 Rothermere family for 22 years, I've worked for the
- 2 present Lord Rothermere and his father. There's not
- a day I don't feel very privileged and grateful for
- 4 having done so, because they allow--
- 5 Q. I'm sure --

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- 6 A. Excuse me, please let me finish! Because they allow me
 - total freedom to edit my paper. It is not my experience
- 8 that editors of other papers are allowed that freedom.
- 9 Q. It's really that point I wanted to explore. I'm sure
- that you are given editorial independence at the Mail
- and I wasn't questioning that. I was questioning --
- 12 A. Well, you can't -- no one can be sure of that. It's
- 13 quite rare in Fleet Street.
- 14 Q. I was taking it as a given, but I was --
- 15 A. Well, I don't --
- 16 Q. -- trying to explore with you the evidence base for your
- statement that you don't think you would have been
- guaranteed such independence elsewhere, do you follow
- me, and I just wanted to know what your evidence base
- 20 was.
- 21 A. Rupert Murdoch has been a very great proprietor in his
- time, but I don't think he would have given me the
- 23 freedom I wished to have as an editor.
- 24 Q. Are you prepared to elaborate on that or not?
- 25 A. Well, as I say, I think he's been a very great Page 116

29 (Pages 113 to 116)

- 1 proprietor who obviously has deep problems now, but in
- 2 the past, not so much now, I don't think there's any
- 3 doubt that he had strong views which he communicated to 3
- 4 his editors and expected them to be followed. The
- 5 classic case is the Iraq War. I'm not sure that the
- 6 Blair government -- or Tony Blair would have been able
- 7 to take the British people to war if it hadn't been for
- 8 the implacable support provided by the Murdoch papers.
- 9 There's no doubt that came from Mr Murdoch himself.
- 10 Q. In relation to Section 55 of the Data Protection Act,
- 11 I think you cover this in an article in the Guardian,
- 12 10 November 2008, which was under our tab 33. You say 12
- 13 this, it's on the first page just under the lower
- 14 holepunch:
- 15 "About 18 months ago, I, Les Hinton of
- 16 News International and Murdoch MacLennan of the
- 17 Telegraph [seems to be the same people all the time, but
- 18 not Rebekah Wade on this occasion] had dinner with
- 19 Gordon Brown and raised these concerns."
- 20 A. I've already told you about that, yes.
- 21 Q. Well: "

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- 22 "We had a meeting with Jack Straw."
 - This is a separate one with Gordon Brown?
- 24 A. That's what set it in train. It was he who asked Jack
- 25 Straw to look into our worries.

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Q. Those concerns you're referring to there are concerns 1 Q. But surely it was your hope, if not your expectation,

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- 2 with conditional fee agreements but we're off that
- 3 issue, we're onto Section 55. Then you say:
- 4 "[We also raised] a truly frightening amendment to
- 5 the Data Protection Act, winding its way through
- 6 Parliament, under which journalists face being jailed
 - for two years [et cetera]. This legislation would have
- 8 made Britain the only country in the free world to jail
 - journalists and could have had a considerable chilling
- 10 effect on good journalism.

"The Prime Minister -- I don't think it's breaking confidence to reveal -- was hugely sympathetic to the industry's case and promised to do what he could to

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"Over the coming months and battles ahead, Mr Brown

- 16 was totally true to his word. Whatever our individual
- 17 newspapers' views are of the Prime Minister -- and the 18 Mail is pretty tough on him -- we should, as an
- 19 industry, acknowledge that, to date, he has been a great
- 20 friend of press freedom."
- 21 A. This was my speech to the Society of Editors, it was
- 22 intended for consumption by editors. You say it was an
- 23 article in the Guardian; it was my speech to the Society
- 24 of Editors.
- Q. Yes, I think they had just reprinted it verbatim. So Page 118

- 1 you're making it clear there that you had access to
- 2 Mr Brown, you were lobbying him and he was on-side; is
- that right?
- 4 A. I am saying that like many people in different
- 5 industries we have problems and ours was a fairly major
 - industry, the press industry employs thousands of
- 7 people. We asked to see the Prime Minister about it, he
- 8 agreed to see us and he was sympathetic to some the
- 9 cases we made.
- 10 Q. We heard from Mr Thomas that it was Mr Brown to spoke to
- 11 Mr Thomas and ended up with the position that the
- amendment to Section 55 would not be brought in as
- 13 intended, but instead there would be a statutory
- 14 instrument, which in due course might permit it to be
- 15 brought in. You will recall --
- 16 A. I don't know about Mr Brown's role in it, but that's
- a description of what happened eventually. 17
- 18 Q. You were intending, of course, to achieve that will very
- 19 consequence, that Mr Brown would have a role in it and
- 20 speak up --
- 21 A. It didn't intend that at all. We had a dinner with him
- 22 to outline our concerns, he was kind enough to hand the
 - matter over to the Justice Department. Mr Straw and his
- 24 officials were -- listened to our case and that was the
- 25 outcome.

Page 119

- 2 that you would be able to bring Mr Brown on-side and
- 3 once he was on-side, he would use his influence as
- 4 Prime Minister to them help the press out. That must
- 5 have been your state of mind, mustn't it?
- A. We wanted to make a Prime Minister aware of our
- 7 concerns, just as I suspect Rolls Royce meets with him
- 8 in order to make him concerned about the worries to the
- 9 engineering industry.
- 10 Q. Why were you opposing the amendment of Section 55, the
- 11 possibility of a prison sentence, if it was your
- 12 position that breaches of the Data Protection Act were
- 13 no longer occurring at, for example, your titles?
- 14 A. Well, in the public interest they could, couldn't they?
- O. I didn't catch that.
- A. In the public interest they still can, can't they, or 16
- 17 could.
- Q. But if you were confident that a public interest defence 18
- 19 would be made out, there would be no question of any
- 20 sentence, let alone a custodial sentence, would there?
- 21 A. Yes, but there's a great difference between what
- 22 a reporter believes when he's starting out in an 23 inquiry, he can believe at that stage that he was acting
- 24 in the public interest and at the conclusion of his
- 25 inquiry, finds he wasn't. We thought this would put Page 120

30 (Pages 117 to 120)

1	ioumalists in a yeary difficult position and we are	1	Mail
$\begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 2 \end{bmatrix}$	journalists in a very difficult position and we are, I think, eventually there was a clause put in that it	$\begin{vmatrix} 1 \\ 2 \end{vmatrix}$	Mail
3	would be in the reasonable expectation that a journalist	$\begin{vmatrix} 2 \\ 3 \end{vmatrix}$	A. I'm very proud of the Daily Mail.Q and you've been there for probably well, we know,
4	would be in the reasonable expectation that a journalist was	4	very nearly 20 years. Are you equally as proud of the
5	LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: There was a heightened defence that		Mail's online operation?
6	there's a justification that is both subjective and	6	A. I'm very proud of the Mail Online, which last week
7	objective, so it wouldn't just be what the court thought		became the world's biggest internal newspaper site.
		7	
8	was in the public interest but that what the journalist	8	Q. The but are you equally as proud of it, particularly the
9	reasonably thought was in the public interest would be	9	standards which they exemplify
10	sufficient. Doesn't that cope with your concern?	10	A. It's only been going for couple of years so it's
11	A. Yes, but yes, it did, and that was as a result of our	11	evolving and clearly everything can improve, but I think
12	conversations with the (inaudible). It was put in at	12 13	to come from a cold start to being the world's number
13	that stage, I believe.		newspaper internet site is an achievement that British
14	MR JAY: I may be wrong, but I think the introduction of	14	journalism should be proud of.
15	this part-subjective element was going to be part of the	15	MR JAY: There may be or may not some further questions, but
16	defence to Section 55 even with the custodial sentence	16	thank you very much.
17	in any event.	17	A. Could I just say one thing? You have painted a very
18	A. I'm not sure it was. I need to look into it and get	18	bleak picture of the Daily Mail by highlighting what are
19	back to you.	19	rather rare things. Cases like Mr Morrissey's are rare.
20	Q. Wasn't this the case, though, of you, with respect,	20	They're not everyday. We produce hundreds and hundreds
21	overstating or unreasonably overstating your position	21	of stories every month, thousands if not millions of
22	and, what's more, influencing government to come to	22	story on the Mail Online and Daily Mail every year.
23	a conclusion which was palatable to you?	23	Most of those go down very well with our readers and
24	A. I think that's a preposterous suggestion, with great respect. It was a principled position that the industry	24	provoke no complaints from the people concerned.
25	Page 121	25	MR JAY: That you very much Page 123
	1 agt 121		1 agc 123
		١.	
1	adopted. I don't really want to live in a country where	1	A. So you've presented a somewhat one-sided picture of the
1 2	adopted. I don't really want to live in a country where journalists are jailed when they're trying to make	1 2	 A. So you've presented a somewhat one-sided picture of the Mail.
2	journalists are jailed when they're trying to make	2 3	Mail.
2 3	journalists are jailed when they're trying to make legitimate enquiries, and	2 3	Mail. MR JAY: Thank you, Mr Dacre. Discussion
2 3 4	journalists are jailed when they're trying to make legitimate enquiries, and LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I don't want them to be prosecuted	2 3 4	Mail. MR JAY: Thank you, Mr Dacre.
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1	because it's actually worse than that. There are	1	would need to be dealt with.
2	a number of matters that I need to deal with as a result	2	LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: But I've not as yet given any core
3	of Mr Dacre having gone to some lengths, understandably,	3	participant the right to cross-examine anybody for quite
4	to introduce into his evidence his latest witness	4	as long as that. I've allowed certain questions. Let's
5	statement, which, sir, you indicated you would want to	5	see what Mr Caplan has to say.
6	hear submissions about before these matters were dealt	6	MR CAPLAN: Sir, I would suggest that these questions do not
7	with today.	7	and should not be put by Mr Sherborne. You'll remember,
8	That latest supplemental statement, of course, was	8	sir, when Mr Grant gave evidence I did not cross-examine
9	received by Mr Jay personally, I think, at 9.30 pm on	9	him. I said evidence would be filed. I think if I had
10	Friday. Mr Grant's witness statement, which has not	10	applied to cross-examine him, it would have been given
11	been read into the record, was actually sent to the	11	very short shrift.
12	Inquiry's solicitors at 4.30 pm on Friday, within,	12	Sir, the procedure to which we have all been working
13	I would submit, reasonable time for it to be dealt with.	13	is that core participants put questions which are
14	LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: 4.30 pm on Friday?	14	relevant to the Inquiry's terms of reference through
15	MR SHERBORNE: Mr Grant wasn't, of course, giving evidence.	15	Inquiry counsel, and on very, very rare exceptions have
16	LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: No, I know, but anyway. Carry on.	16	you given leave for core participants to cross-examine
17	MR SHERBORNE: I can go through the history of it	17	a witness. The Information Commissioner was one.
18	LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: No, no, don't go through the history,		Sir, the three issues that Mr Sherborne has
19	Mr Sherborne.	19	highlighted are all to do with Mr Grant. The
20	MR SHERBORNE: There's no objection, of course, to that	20	"mendacious smear" is a matter which has been covered by
21	statement, but those are matters that I need to deal	21	Mr Jay already. The issues concerning the birth of
22	with Mr Dacre, and I do fear that that's going to take	22	Mr Grant's daughter and the issues concerning the
23	some time. It obviously depends on the answers, but it	23	plummy-voiced executive are issues which satisfactorily,
24	will take some time, and you'll recall that this is a	24	insofar as they are relevant, can be dealt with by
25	matter which really goes all the way back to the morning	25	evidence on paper.
	Page 125		Page 127
1	of 22 November, when I raised serious concerns, as did	1	Sir, you have said many times that you're concerned
2	Mr Garnham on behalf of the Metropolitan Police, as to	2	with the general issues and the important issues here of
3	the article that appeared, the press statement that	3	culture and practices of the media, and with respect,
4	appeared online, which was put out by	4	these are issues in respect of which no finding of fact
5	Associated Newspapers, in which it referred to all of	5	is in fact required.
6	those matters, and then concluded with the "mendacious	6	LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I agree, but
7	smears" accusation.	7	MR CAPLAN: I'd also mention one other thing, if I may, and
8	It was at that time, sir, you recall, that you asked	8	that is that the story in relation to the plummy-voiced
9	Mr Caplan to consider	9	executive in any event is a story which was published in
10	LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Yes, I remember how this has emerged	. 10	the Mail on Sunday, in respect of which Mr Wright was
11	MR SHERBORNE: And it was only as short a time ago as	11	the editor.
12	11 January when Ms Hartley gave evidence that at the	12	LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I understand that, but the response
13	end, as you'll recall, I laid down the marker that	13	to it, Ms Hartley said and indeed Mr Dacre has said,
14	I would need to deal with these matters with Mr Dacre,	14	involved him.
15	when he came to give evidence on 6 February, and it's	15	I understand the point. I am concerned with the
16	only right that he should do so.	16	culture, practice and ethics of the press generally, but
17	That's why I say we've reached a very unsatisfactory	17	there is no doubt that this particular dispute has
18	position that at 5.30 pm I'm about to begin questions,	18	achieved a significance maybe rather larger than it
19	with your permission, which will take us some time	19	merits but undeniably has achieved that significance,
			and indeed the additional statement that Mr Dacre has
20	beyond 6 o'clock.	20	and indeed the additional statement that ivii Buere has
20 21		20 21	signed deals extensively with the relationship between
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21	beyond 6 o'clock. LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: No, they won't, because I've not given anybody half an hour as yet. MR SHERBORNE: I understand that, but this is a matter, as	21	signed deals extensively with the relationship between
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1 much more briefly than he has suggested. He can put the 1 Questions by MR SHERBORNE 2 allegations. He can investigate them to some extent. 2 MR SHERBORNE: Can we deal with your latest supplemental 3 3 He can file evidence to some extent, but I am not going statement, Mr Dacre, and although Mr Grant will respond 4 4 to be making findings of fact on many of the broad to it by way of a further statement, can I deal with two 5 5 points. The latter half of your statement appears to be 6 On the other hand, I'm not prepared to allow 6 a further criticism of Mr Grant. Can I summarise it in 7 7 Mr Grant, who gave evidence of complaint, to have to this way, because of the time: that contrary to the face further complaints about him which he can't respond 8 8 impression he gave in his evidence about not wanting to 9 to, other than in the public domain in some other way. 9 be in the press or to have his picture taken, firstly in 10 10 MR CAPLAN: Could I just mention, if there are to be fact he is all too happy to be photographed, even in the 11 questions, as you have indicated there are -- briefly, 11 street, for example, which is what you say, and second, 12 as I understand it -- it is important, if I may say so, 12 he was keen to get himself into the media and promote 13 that the previous statements by Mr Grant to which 13 his commercial ventures as much as possible. Is that 14 Mr Dacre has referred in evidence, which are all matters 14 a fair summary of the latter half of your supplemental 15 of record, should clearly be published and he should be 15 statement? 16 allowed, if necessary, to refer to them in any answer he 16 A. Yes, that is reasonably fair, in the sense that 17 17 I believe Mr Grant has spent his life opening up his own 18 Those are the statements in July of last year, which 18 life to the public, invading his own privacy and 19 made allegations against the Daily Mail. 19 discussing the most intimate details of his life. 20 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I don't see reason why not. 20 Q. Can I start, then, with your accusation that Mr Grant is 21 21 Mr Sherborne? only too happy to be photographed in the street. 22 MR SHERBORNE: Far from it. I was going to ask also that 22 A. I don't think I say that. 23 the latest statement by Mr Grant should also be read 23 Q. You do. Paragraph 14. I took the wording from your 24 24 into the record. statement. LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I'll wait and see about that, because 25 A. Paragraph 14? Page 129 Page 131 I want to think about the second statement of Mr Dacre. 1 Q. 14 of your witness statement. 2 MR SHERBORNE: Mr Dacre's already given the evidence which A. No, I don't say it's happy. I say there are thousands 3 is contained in his statement in answer to Mr Jay. He 3 of published photographs of Mr Grant that can be 4 introduced a number of items he tried to read out from 4 classified as follows, and I denote the various 5 the schedule which was attached to it and he has 5 classifications. 6 concluded, as I say, in his answers the nub of the point 6 Q. You do use the words, don't you? Can I just look at 7 that is contained in the latter half of his supplemental 7 paragraph 14: 8 statement. 8 "He's happy being photographed in public places." LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Well, if --9 9 A. In paragraph 14? MR SHERBORNE: I'm not going to be able to ask him the 10 10 Q. Yes. 11 questions that I wish to ask him without, in fairness to 11 A. Yes. I'm sorry, you're right. You're right, yes. 12 him, putting to him what is in Mr Grant's supplemental 12 I presume, as he's smiling in the pictures. 13 statement. 13 Q. You see, that's the precise opposite, Mr Dacre, of what 14 MR CAPLAN: I was just going to say -- I don't want to 14 you've attacked him for in the past. Are you aware of 15 interrupt proceedings. I know if possible we want to 15 that? Can I quote you an article? 16 conclude Mr Dacre's evidence as quickly as possible, so 16 A. Excuse me, I don't think I've ever criticised Mr Grant. 17 I hear what you say and the sooner, if I may say so --17 Q. You say in your statement that he's only too happy to be 18 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Right. If it means that all these 18 photographed in the street. 19 statement goes in, then so be it. 19 A. I include that as one in four categories of photographs 20 Mr Dacre, I am prepared to carry on because I'm 20 that have appeared of Mr Grant, thousands of them in 21 conscious of your other responsibilities, but if you 21 British papers over 12 years. 22 feel you'd rather return at some other time, then 22 Q. Can I read to you what the Daily Mail wrote on 3 May 23 equally I'm prepared to adjourn now. 23 2007 in an article by Alison Boshoff which was about the 24 A. I'd rather deal with them now. 24 notorious incident, if you remember, when Mr Grant 25 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Right. 25 kicked a baked bean tin at a paparazzo who was waiting

Page 130

- 1 for him. Your article says this:
- 2 "Grant, as usual, was annoyed to be photographed in
- 3 the street."
- 4 A. What year was this?
- 5 Q. 2007, your newspaper. Do you accept that that is
- inconsistent with what you say in your statement now? 6
- 7 A. I really can't believe this Inquiry expects me to
- 8 remember something that happened five years ago in the
- 9 Daily Mail in a feature. The point I'm trying to make
- 10 is here is a man who has assiduously, throughout his
- 11 life, backed up by a huge celebrity PR industry, courted
- 12 the press.
- 13 Q. In the same article it says this:
- 14 "Despite the fact that they played such a big part
- 15 in making him both famous and wealthy, Mr Grant detests 15
- 16 the media."
- A. That's the original article, is it? 17
- 18 Q. Yes.
- 19 A. If you send it to me, I'll look at it and get back to
- 20 you in detail, but I can't possibly be expected to
- 21 answer something that occurred in an article five years
- 22
- 23 Q. You see, the same inconsistency applies to the promotion 23
- 24 of his films. In your latest statement, you say that he
- 25 "mercilessly promotes his films, commercially exploiting Page 133
- his life in the process", but in an article which 1
- 2 Mr Grant brought proceedings over, on 24 February 2007,
- 3 you said precisely the opposite. You said this,
- 4 Daily Mail, February 24, 2007:
- 5 "Much to her disappointment, it turned out that Hugh
- 6 didn't like socialising at all. In fact, he hated it.
- He even resented having to promote his films." 7
- 8 A. Well, in that case, he's a very good actor.
- 9 Q. But you see, you apologised to him for that article in
- 10 a statement in open court, which is exactly the same one
- 11 as we have in relation to the plummy-voiced executive.
- 12 Do you remember that?
- 13 A. Which one are we talking about now, sorry?
- 14 Q. A statement in open court that Associated Newspapers
- 15 consented to in 2007.
- 16 A. I don't remember it. I shall go back to the office,
- 17 I'll look into it and send this Inquiry a written
- 18 submission if you require it. This is years ago.
- 19 Q. What I'm putting to you, Mr Dacre, is this: that this
- 20 latest statement that was put together for you, as you
- 21 say, with examples, no doubt, provided by people within
- 22 your organisation is just another shooting-from-the-hip
- 23 attack on Mr Grant, instead of simply responding to
- 24 correct the record if there is an inaccuracy.
- A. I categorically deny it. That is certainly not shot Page 134

- 1 from the hip. It's a very considered argument. Over
- 2 the years -- and we give ample, ample examples --
- 3 Mr Grant has invaded his own privacy with great
- 4 proficiency.
- 5 Q. I'm not going to take you, given the time, to the number
- 6 of witnesses who have been attacked in
- 7 Associated Newspapers' publications who have given
- 8 evidence to this Inquiry --
- A. You're giving a very partial impression of the
- 10 Daily Mail and the Mail on Sunday.
- 11 Q. To be fair to you, Mr Dacre, it doesn't just relate to
- 12 Associated Newspapers. There are other newspapers which
- 13 have dealt with those who have given evidence here in
- 14 a way which we say has vilified them, but since we're
- dealing with Mr Grant, we've seen the article that was
- 16 written about him after the birth of his daughter by
- 17 Amanda Platell. Do you remember it?
- 18 A. I remember that, yes.
- 19 Q. In which he was described, would you accept, in
- 20 extremely nasty terms?
- 21 A. That was a strong column -- a columnist's strong views.
- 22 Ms Platell is a star columnist of the Daily Mail, a very
- talented lady. She was expressing her views, as --
- 24 I think it's labelled a comment page.
- 25 Q. Can I just read you very quickly some of the bits --Page 135
- A. Was this not submitted earlier to the Inquiry? Is it 1
- 2 necessary to read it out again?
- 3 Q. What it does, Mr Dacre, is it shows that the attacks
- 4 which have been launched on various individuals for 5 giving evidence are simply one way of just generating
- 6 more stories. Do you understand what I mean by that?
- 7 A. I'm afraid I don't, no.

20

21

25

- 8 Q. Look, Amanda Platell describes the birth of Mr Grant's
 - daughter on 3 November in these terms:
- 10 "Once a most loved actor, the truth is Grant has
- 11 become a lonely, bitter man, consumed with hatred of the
- 12 media who helped make him a star. One can only imagine
- 13 how scarred his abandoned daughter is going to feel. It
- 14 remains to be seen if the self-obsessed Mr Grant will be
- 15 able to give any long-term commitment apart from a
- 16 financial one, by dipping into his fortune."
- 17 That's written on 3 November, but Ms Hartley has
- 18 exhibited to her supplemental witness statement an email
- 19 from Mr Todd, one of the journalists who was trying to
 - cover the birth of Mr Grant's daughter. The email that
 - was sent to Mr Grant's assistant on 25 October, nine
- 22 days earlier, says this about the birth:
- 23 "Hi Sarah [that's, of course, Mr Grant's assistant].
- 24 Further to our conversation earlier, this is to inform
 - you we are intending to publish an article that Hugh Page 136

34 (Pages 133 to 136)

- 1 Grant became a father for the first time on 26 September
- 2 to a baby daughter born at the Portland Clinic in
- 3 central London. The mother is Tinglan Hong. We think
- 4 this is wonderful news."
- 5 It's hardly consistent, is it?
- 6 A. Yes, but it's -- with great respect, it demonstrates
- 7 a failure to understand how a newspaper works. This was
- 8 a showbusiness reporter. He wants to get a story. He
- 9 approaches the public relations representative of
- 10 Mr Grant and says he'd like to write a story about it.
- 11 It would have been very helpful at that stage if that
- 12 public relations expert had told the truth and we could
- 13 have published a sensible story and it wouldn't have had
- 14 to wait for it to break on an American website.
- Q. Let's come to the way in which it broke, shall we? You 15
- 16 believe, don't you, in the importance of total
- 17 journalistic integrity? Do you accept that?
- 18 A. I believe that journalists should behave with integrity,
- 19
- 20 Q. You believe that throughout these events, your visits
- 21 demonstrated total journalistic integrity, don't you?
- 22 A. My managing editors have looked into this and I think
- 23 they're satisfied that we employed legitimate and
- 24 correct journalistic procedures.
- 25 Q. Can we explore that a little bit. Can we start with Page 137

- A. Well, my managing editor -- officers interviewed him and
- he insists he did. I'm sure he did. 2
- 3 Q. Here is a letter from Helen Ireland, who is the woman
- 4 that he spoke to, and she says this:
- 5 "At no point did he identify himself as a member of
- 6 the press. I've only recently been made aware of the
- 7 previous tenant's circumstances, so would have asked
- a reporter why he wanted details. Although I would 8
 - still have not been able to supply them with an address,
- 10 I would have refrained from telling him who the letting
- 11 agent was and where they were."
- 12 A. I don't know what you're wanting me to say. I've told
- 13 you: a reporter represented himself as coming from the
- 14 Daily Mail and I suspect this person in retrospect --
- 15 and I don't want to put words into her mouth and make
- 16 imputations -- probably regretted it and is saying that
- 17 she hadn't heard that he was from the Daily Mail.
- 18 MR CAPLAN: Sorry to interrupt, but we just haven't had
- 19 notice of these questions.
- 20 A. I know and it is -- I mean --
- 21 MR CAPLAN: Mr Dacre and I did not know these questions were
- 22 going to be asked, but Mr Dacre is obviously giving the
- 23 best answers we can to questions that are coming --
- 24 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Had you seen this statement?
- MR CAPLAN: The statement was served on us late on Friday Page 139
- 1 Ms Hong's mobile number and how Associated Newspapers 1
- 2
- 3 Ms Hartley says that a journalist somehow got an
- 4 address for Ms Hong, went to the flat and was provided
- 5 by the girlfriend of the current resident with at least
- 6 the lettings agency's identity and details. Is that
- 7 right?
- 8 A. If Ms Hartley has told this Inquiry that, yes, I'm sure
- 9 that's absolutely correct. Very honest woman.
- 10 Q. You've seen Mr Grant's supplemental statement, haven't
- 11
- 12 A. I haven't, no. You mean today's?
- 13 Q. The one served on Friday at 4.30.
- 14 A. No, I haven't seen it, no.
- O. Can I ask that you be given a copy of it? I'm surprised 15
- you haven't seen it. It was circulated, as I understand 16
- 17 it, to all the core participants at 4.30 last Friday.
- 18 Can I hand it up. (Handed)
- 19 You see, what Ms Hartley did not say, but we see
- 20 from Mr Grant's supplemental statement -- if I can ask
- 21 you to turn to the first exhibit, which is a letter from
- 22 the girlfriend of the current resident. What Ms Hartley
- 23 did not say is that the journalist who spoke to the
- 24 girlfriend of the current resident didn't say he was
- a reporter from the Daily Mail at all. 25
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- night. Mr Dacre has been busy, in fact, dealing with 2 matters for the Inquiry, and in fact he has not actually
- 3 seen this statement. He's been dealing with a lot of
- 4 other material, and had I known he was going to deal
- 5 with specific questions like this, obviously --
- LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I understand. 6
- 7 MR CAPLAN: He'll do the best he can, but this is not
- 8 a productive way, if I may say so, to deal with it.
- 9 I didn't know, and we had no notice, these questions
- 10 were going to be asked.
- LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I understand the point, and if 11
- 12 Mr Dacre hasn't seen the statement, it's rather
- 13 difficult for him to be able to deal with it.
- 14 I equally understand why you want to pursue them.
- 15 I am keen to ensure that you've had the opportunity to
- 16 ask Mr Dacre such questions as you feel are necessary
- 17 within the constraints that I have given you. To what
- 18 extent do you wish to go further into Mr Grant's further
- 19 statement on the basis that doubtless this evidence will
- 20 be served and be put into the Inquiry and people will be

unlikely that Mr Dacre is going to be able to unpick

- 21 able to make submissions upon it as they will. It's 22
- 23 precisely what the reporter said to this lady, however
- 24 much time he's given.
- 25 MR SHERBORNE: Sir, Mr Dacre in his supplemental statemen Page 140

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1	relies on what Ms Hartley said in her supplemental.	1	to carry on. There is a limit to the time that I think
2	LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Yes.	2	is appropriate, given all the things that I have said
3	MR SHERBORNE: You will recall that when she finished giving	3	about the focus of this Inquiry, to descend into some of
4	evidence, I said that we'd not had sufficient notice,	4	the detail, but equally I understand that the issue, as
5	which you accepted, for me to deal with it with	5	I said to Mr Caplan, has become rather totemic and
6	Ms Hartley and I would have to deal with it with	6	therefore requires further thought.
7	Mr Dacre when he came to give evidence on 6 February.	7	What I think we ought to do is stop now, revisit how
8	It's clearly on the transcript.	8	we are going to address it, the extent to which it
9	LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Yes, I'm not challenging that for one		requires Mr Dacre or Ms Hartley, and think about it
10	moment. It may be that the better course is to find	10	again. I'm not saying that I'm going to how I'm
11	a vehicle through which these questions can be asked,	11	going to resolve it but I do think it's only fair to
12	but not necessarily now. I understand that you have	12	everybody that it's resolved rather more carefully than
13	responded. I understand equally that there must	13	is likely to be possible at 10 to 6 on Monday evening.
14	inevitably be limits on what Mr Dacre could have done	14	Right. Mr Dacre, I understand the position you
15	over the weekend in any event and it may be that we will	15	adopt. I am not prepared to allow you to be required to
16	have to come back to it.	16	answer questions which you haven't had the opportunity
17	MR SHERBORNE: I understand that, and as I said, in order to	17	to think about. I'm equally not prepared to shut out
18	be fair to Mr Dacre, I think it is only right that he	18	some of these lines in the light of the evidence and the
19	has an opportunity to read this statement, because there	19	allegations that have been made. Equally, I'm not
20	are matters in there which do relate to the evidence he	20	prepared to take a great deal of time over what may not
21	has given not only in relation to the birth of	21	constitute central features of the over-arching aspect
22	Mr Grant's daughter, but also the plummy-voiced	22	of the Inquiry.
23	exclusive story.	23	So I will review how best to deal with it at some
24	LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: But	24	later time. It may or may not require you to return
25	MR SHERBORNE: Then of course he's gone further, as you	25	shortly, but if you do have to return, it will be
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1	heard in his evidence, than simply to make the	1	shortly. I'm sorry about that, but I think that this is
2	"mendacious smear" accusation again, but rather to say	2	simply not a sensible way of proceeding. I take
3	this was a deliberate attempt by Mr Grant to hijack the	3	entirely the point that you've made; I equally
4	Inquiry and to cause damage to his newspaper.	4	understand what Mr Sherborne has said. This just,
5	LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I understand.	5	however, isn't sensible.
6	MR SHERBORNE: So there are points I need to put, and I do	6	In the meantime, I am very keen that those who are
7	stress that it is only fair to Mr Dacre that he has an	7	contemplating what the future should look like should
8	opportunity to read this latest statement that was put	8	take on board what you've said, which may or may not
9	in on Friday afternoon, and I am happy, as I said	9	provide an additional avenue of legitimate Inquiry, but
10	before, to deal with it in due course, but not at ten to	10	they should certainly look at it, and I'm grateful to
11	6.	11	you for continuing to think about these issues.
12	A. Would it be helpful if you put your questions to me in	12	You should not believe, as I think two or three
13	writing and I dealt with them in writing back to the	13	times you've said, that the Inquiry is taking a rather
14	Inquiry? I can assure this Inquiry I will give them	14	blinkered and only negative view of the press
15	every the most considered attention and respond in	15	A. I didn't say "blinkered".
16	the best way I can.	16	LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: No, you didn't. That's my word.
17	MR CAPLAN: That was the suggestion I was going to make to	17	A. I wouldn't have used that word. But I would ask your
18	you, in that this part of these questions and this	18	Honour to accept that perhaps inevitably the way the
19	line of inquiry should be dealt with in writing.	19	Inquiry has been conducted and televised, the British
20	LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I'm not so sure whether that's going	20	public are receiving a very bleak and one-sided view of
21	to be satisfactory but the answer is this: whatever way	21	the press which isn't fair or isn't true. A great
22	is satisfactory, this isn't.	22	industry that employs thousands of journalists
23	MR SHERBORNE: Indeed it isn't, sir.	23	LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I'm not sure that's entirely fair,
24	LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: And I will revisit tomorrow how we		because I think each of the editors who have given
25	address this particular set of issues. I'm not prepared	25	evidence have not only spoken of the very good work that
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1	they've done, but have been given the opportunity to	
2	elaborate, and	
3	A. I'm not sure that's got across to the public, your	
4	Honour.	
5	LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Well, all right.	
6	MR CAPLAN: Can I just ask that Mr Sherborne puts into	
7	writing the questions he wants to ask. I think it will	
8	then be much clearer as to the areas that need to be	
9	LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I think what we can do is ask him to	
10	identify the topics in a series of bullet points so that	
11	we can decide precisely how we're going to proceed	
12	without necessarily going to the precise questions.	
13	MR SHERBORNE: Sir, I already have done that. I sent Mr Jay	
14	that. As I understood it, they were passed on by Mr Jay	
15	to the other core participants but I'm happy to repeat	
16	the exercise if that's felt helpful.	
17	LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: It may just be a question of	
18	forwarding an email. Thank you very much indeed.	
19	10 o'clock tomorrow.	
20	(5.57 pm)	
21	(The hearing adjourned until 10 o'clock the following day)	
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