

<p>1 Tuesday, 10 January 2012                  2 (10.00 am)                  3 MS PATRY HOSKINS: Good morning, sir. We have four                  4 witnesses this morning, and the first witness will be                  5 Mr Barber of the Financial Times.                  6 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Very good.                  7 MR FRANKLIN LIONEL BARBER (affirmed)                  8 Questions by MS PATRY HOSKINS                  9 MS PATRY HOSKINS: Thank you very much indeed. If you would                  10 just sit down and make yourself comfortable. You should                  11 find in front of you a bundle of tabbed documents and                  12 behind tab 3, you should find your witness statement.                  13 Could you please confirm your full name to the Inquiry?                  14 A. Franklin Lionel Barber.                  15 Q. You've provided us with this witness statement at tab 3.                  16 It's signed at the end, although redacted. Can you                  17 confirm that the contents of that statement are true to                  18 the best of your knowledge and belief?                  19 A. I can confirm that they are true to the best of my                  20 knowledge.                  21 Q. Thank you very much. I'm going to ask you first of all                  22 about your career history. I'm looking at paragraph 5                  23 of the statement. You explain that you've worked at the                  24 Financial Times for 26 years now, including serving for                  25 16 years as foreign correspondent in Brussels and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 1</p>	<p>1 fact that it has little interest in the private lives of                  2 celebrities, mean that it is altogether easier to be an                  3 ethical title?                  4 A. First, let me say that I'm extremely grateful to the                  5 Inquiry for calling me to contribute to this discussion,                  6 and on behalf of the Financial Times. It is true that                  7 we are a niche publication, albeit a global news                  8 organisation in print and online. It is also true that                  9 we focus on business and financial journalism, but we                  10 also write a lot about politics. We write about how                  11 politics, economics, finance connect in the global                  12 economy. But that doesn't mean to say that we're not                  13 interested in what one might describe as private lives.                  14 Just a couple of months ago, for example, we reported                  15 first that the chief executive of Lloyds Banking Group                  16 had stress problems and he had to step back and seek                  17 medical treatment. We thought that that was                  18 a legitimate story to pursue. We sourced it -- not one                  19 source but two sources minimum -- and we also thought                  20 that, given the bank's difficulties and the fact that                  21 this was of enormous interest to shareholders, that this                  22 deserved to be published, and we did publish and the                  23 story was true.                  24 Q. Let's move on then to pick up some of the things you've                  25 just referred to. Let's start with paragraph 8 of your</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 3</p>
<p>1 Washington. You're now obviously the editor of the                  2 Financial Times.                  3 Prior to your appointment as editor, you held the                  4 position of managing editor for the United States, based                  5 in New York. You also held executive positions as news                  6 editor and European editor in London. Prior to joining                  7 the FT, you worked on the Scotsman and on the                  8 Sunday Times.                  9 Then you detail at paragraph 5 a number of                  10 accolades. You were named young journalist of the year.                  11 You were the Laurence Stern fellow at the Washington                  12 Post, and you have lectured widely on economics,                  13 politician, national security and the media in the US                  14 and Europe. You served, between 2002 and 2005, on the                  15 advisory committee of Columbia University's School of                  16 Journalism and you're currently a member of the board of                  17 the New York-based International Centre for Journalism,                  18 which promotes quality journalism worldwide. That's all                  19 correct?                  20 A. That's correct.                  21 Q. I'm going to ask you about some of the policies in place                  22 at the Financial Times, the Financial Times code and so                  23 on, but before I do that, can I ask you this general                  24 question, Mr Barber: to what extent in your opinion, does                  25 the Financial Times' focus on financial journalism, the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 2</p>	<p>1 statement, which focuses on the Financial Times' code of                  2 practice. You explain that the Financial Times                  3 newspaper has its own editorial code of practice.                  4 Sorry, I'll wait until you have paragraph 8.                  5 A. Yes.                  6 Q. You exhibit a copy, and we'll look at it in a moment,                  7 but you explain that it incorporates by reference the                  8 PCC Editors' Code of Practice, and in fact goes beyond                  9 what's required by the PCC code on issues such as                  10 transparency and disclosure in the context of financial                  11 journalism.                  12 Can we look at the code itself? You'll find it in                  13 your exhibits. Your exhibits should be in the next tab,                  14 tab 4. You should find it LB1, the very first exhibit.                  15 Do you see that?                  16 A. Tab 4. Yes.                  17 Q. Can you explain, please, to the Inquiry why you say that                  18 it in fact goes beyond what is required by this PCC code                  19 and why the decision has been made to have a code of                  20 practice that does go beyond the PCC code?                  21 A. I think the first paragraph of the Financial Times code                  22 of practice speaks for itself, and if I may read it --                  23 it's short:                  24 "It is fundamental to the integrity and success of                  25 the Financial Times that it upholds the highest possible</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 4</p>

<p>1 professional and ethical standards of journalism -- and 2 is seen to do so." 3 And the reason we set such a high bar is that our 4 relationship with our readers -- and they are largely in 5 business and finance, but not exclusively, and diplomacy 6 and academia -- is one of trust. People have to be able 7 to rely on the Financial Times for accurate information 8 which is set in context, multiple sourced and that they 9 can rely on it because they're making decisions, 10 important decisions in their respective professions. 11 I think it was Sir Gordon Newton, who was probably 12 the finest editor of the Financial Times -- he served 13 for 23 years in the immediate post-war period. He said 14 that the Financial Times appeals to decision-makers in 15 business, finance and public affairs all around the 16 world. That's our audience. They need to be able to 17 trust the information that we provide, and that is why 18 we have a very stiff code of conduct, which goes beyond 19 the PCC. 20 Q. All right. That answers my question as to why you have 21 one. In what respects does it go further than the PCC 22 code? 23 A. Well, if I could be more specific. 24 Q. Yes? 25 A. We obviously do have specific clauses which relate to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 5</p>	<p>1 in an honest, transparent fashion. That is why 2 journalists pursuing stories on the Financial Times do 3 not misrepresent themselves. They represent themselves 4 as Financial Times journalists. 5 Q. All right. I think the question -- if I can rephrase it 6 in this way: yes, there is a Data Protection Act. 7 There's a requirement to comply with it. Why do the 8 Financial Times feel it necessary to include relevant 9 guidance on it within its code as opposed to just saying 10 to journalists: "You must obey the law"? 11 A. Well, the Act was passed in 1998. Clearly, we have seen 12 a number of stories which have come out in the public 13 domain regarding phone hacking, and that would be one 14 reason why we've included that particular section in our 15 code of conduct. 16 Q. I understand. The code then goes on to set out the 17 provisions of the PCC code. Do you see that? The 18 question I have for you is this: it's true to say that 19 your code of practice does go further than just the PCC 20 code. It has some specific provisions relating to 21 financial journalism. It has the data protection 22 provisions. In your view, does the PCC code as it 23 currently exists need amending to include this kind of 24 provision or is it fit for purpose? 25 A. Well, I think that would be a matter for discussion</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 7</p>
<p>1 financial holdings, shareholdings by journalists. First 2 of all, they are obliged, under the Financial Times code 3 of conduct, to disclose those holdings to a share 4 register, the contents of which are known to the -- 5 certainly the managing editor and editor. It's 6 restricted, but they are obliged to disclose those 7 shareholdings, and certainly they are not in any way 8 able to trade in those shares if they're -- when they 9 are covering sectors which -- related sectors. 10 So in other words, we are making sure that we are 11 not in any way conflicted or behaving unethically, and 12 to trade in shares when you're actually covering 13 a sector would be unethical conduct, and actually would 14 be grounds for dismissal. 15 Q. Those are aspects of the code which deal with the 16 particular area of journalism that the Financial Times 17 is concerned with, but can we look, please, at the 18 second page of the code of conduct, under the heading 19 "Data Protection Act 1998 requirements". There also 20 seems to be a section on data protection. Can you 21 assist us with why the Financial Times considered it 22 necessary to introduce this section into the code? 23 A. Well, first of all, there was a law called the Data 24 Protection Act and Financial Times journalists do not 25 break the law. We also feel it is important to behave</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 6</p>	<p>1 between editors. My personal view is that the code 2 needs to be enforced, the current code, before its 3 substantially amended, and in the case of phone hacking 4 it clearly wasn't enforced. 5 Q. All right. 6 A. And one of the parties did not represent themselves in 7 an honest way when dealing with the PCC. 8 Q. So I understand your answer to be then that you're more 9 worried about issues of enforcement than issues of 10 amendment to the existing code? 11 A. I think the code is pretty robust but it needs to be 12 enforced and it needs to be credible. 13 Q. I'll come on to ask you more about regulation in 14 a moment. Sticking, though, with the code for the 15 moment, you explain in your -- back to your witness 16 statement, please, in the previous tab. You explain at 17 paragraph 11 that you send reminders to your staff of 18 the code at appropriate opportunities or appropriate 19 times. You explain in paragraph 11 that, for example, 20 in October 2010 a member of staff employed by Thomson 21 Reuters resigned following alleged breaches of their 22 code of conduct and you give the gist of what happened. 23 But as a result, you say, you sent an email to FT 24 editorial staff worldwide reminding them of their 25 obligations under the FT code as financial journalists,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 8</p>

<p>1 for example, you say, to ensure that they do not make 2 editorial decisions about shares in which they have an 3 interest. 4 You then attach a copy of the email at exhibit 5. 5 Can we just look at that briefly. It's behind tab 4. 6 A. Where is this? Sorry, I'm having trouble -- oh yes, 7 I've got it. 8 Q. If you look at the bottom right-hand corner, there'll be 9 a number and it's 734. 10 A. Yes, I have it. 11 Q. Do you see that? 12 A. Yes. 13 Q. It may appear on the screen? 14 A. Yes, no, I have it now. 15 Q. To paraphrase that, you explain what's just happened at 16 Thomson Reuters and say: 17 "To ensure that there can be no room for doubt over 18 our conduct, we are now taking the step of requiring all 19 members of staff to sign a form affirming that they have 20 read and understood the code and have made or updated 21 their entry in the Investment Register as laid out in 22 the code and will continue to update the register as 23 soon as their investment position changes." 24 You attach a copy of the code, a compliance form and 25 a link to the Investment Register and you say if there</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 9</p>	<p>1 should be the gold standard in journalism, and that 2 means that we need to uphold the highest practices, the 3 highest standards of integrity, and that is why we have 4 the Investment Register and why we want to have full 5 compliance from our journalists. 6 Q. The question is really whether self-certification by 7 journalists is sufficient to uphold those standards? 8 A. Yes. 9 Q. Why? 10 A. It is, because the penalty of not upholding those 11 standards and damaging the reputation of the FT is 12 dismissal, and people who do not uphold the highest 13 standards put in jeopardy the reputation of the 14 Financial Times, are at risk of dismissal. 15 Q. Have you ever dismissed anyone on that basis? 16 A. I have not personally dismissed -- there is one instance 17 which is not related to this particular matter regarding 18 Investment Registers -- the Investment Register. 19 Q. That's the editorial code of conduct. There's also -- 20 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I suppose you mean, in answer to the 21 question that Ms Patry Hoskins was asking: 22 self-certification is sufficient because your 23 journalists wouldn't try and mislead you in any way 24 because the risk of being caught out was just too great? 25 A. That is correct, sir.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 11</p>
<p>1 are any questions, please come back. 2 Did you receive back to that email or any similar 3 email any response from journalists saying, "No, 4 I haven't complied with the code", or any expression of 5 concern as a result of that email? 6 A. Nobody sent me an email saying they had not complied 7 with the code. 8 Q. Or that there was any problem? 9 A. No. We needed a little bit of time to make sure that 10 everybody did fill out the register and update their 11 entry in the Investment Register, and I can now say that 12 since that statement was issued to you, that we have -- 13 and we have more than 600 journalists at the FT -- it's 14 pretty well 99.9 per cent compliant. 15 May I make a broader point? 16 Q. Of course. 17 A. The reason for sending out this email was that I felt 18 very strongly that it was important that we uphold the 19 highest standards and that we needed to make sure that 20 we were doing so because in general the profession has 21 to be a lot more open and transparent about how it's 22 doing its business and also be seen to be accountable to 23 ourselves and to standards. 24 So if we are going -- and I feel this -- and I have 25 worked now almost 27 years for the FT. I think the FT</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 10</p>	<p>1 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: So I think the question was not so 2 much "is your certification system sufficient" but "is 3 it sufficiently robust", and that really requires you to 4 know your staff, I suppose. 5 A. Yes, sir. I would argue that the Financial Times code 6 of conduct is a model for self-regulation. 7 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Well, that's a slightly different 8 question, which I think we'll probably come on to 9 discuss. 10 A. Yes, because the penalties of not getting it right are 11 severe, potentially. 12 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Yes, but they're imposed by the 13 editor, and therefore what might work within a newspaper 14 setting which has the power to dismiss is rather 15 different from what might work in a wider setting. 16 I don't think we'll leave this topic alone before you're 17 finished. 18 MS PATRY HOSKINS: No, we certainly won't. 19 Just finishing on the code of conduct, you were 20 telling us about the editorial code of conduct. There's 21 also a Pearson company-wide code of conduct which I'm 22 sure you're aware of. It's referred to in the statement 23 of Mr Ridding, which is at tab 1. 24 If we look at his witness statement, please, behind 25 tab 1 in the bundle, we find within that paragraph 12.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 12</p>

<p>1 Yes?</p> <p>2 A. 12, yes.</p> <p>3 Q. He says this:</p> <p>4 "Pearson plc publishes a code of conduct."</p> <p>5 I'm assuming you're aware of this code of conduct?</p> <p>6 A. I hope so.</p> <p>7 Q. He attaches a copy and he says this:</p> <p>8 "It requires all Pearson employees, including</p> <p>9 therefore Financial Times employees, to conduct</p> <p>10 themselves not only in accordance with the law but in</p> <p>11 accordance with the ethical principles set out in the</p> <p>12 code. The code is made available on the FT's intranet</p> <p>13 and is referred to in all new starter packs for</p> <p>14 Financial Times employees."</p> <p>15 He goes on to say:</p> <p>16 "Pearson circulates an email annually to all Pearson</p> <p>17 employees, reminding them of their obligations under the</p> <p>18 code and asking them to confirm either compliance with</p> <p>19 it or to notify incidences of noncompliance which</p> <p>20 they're aware of."</p> <p>21 Pausing there, does the Pearson code add anything,</p> <p>22 in your view, to the editorial code?</p> <p>23 A. Well, it does.</p> <p>24 Q. Tell us about that.</p> <p>25 A. For the last half of the sentence which you just cited,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 13</p>	<p>1 Now, is there any similar whistle-blowing hotline</p> <p>2 for breaches of the editorial code?</p> <p>3 A. No, we don't operate the whistle-blowing principle. If</p> <p>4 there are problems at the Financial Times, my experience</p> <p>5 is that they are brought to senior employees, if not to</p> <p>6 me personally.</p> <p>7 Q. What if the complaint was about you or involved you in</p> <p>8 some way?</p> <p>9 A. Then it would go to my deputy.</p> <p>10 Q. Can a person who's concerned about breaches of editorial</p> <p>11 code phone the whistle-blowing hotline? Is that an</p> <p>12 avenue open to them or is it just a hotline for the</p> <p>13 Pearson-wide code?</p> <p>14 A. No, we are employees of the Financial Times and we're</p> <p>15 owned by Pearson, therefore if a Financial Times</p> <p>16 journalist or an employee in general wished to use the</p> <p>17 Pearson hotline, they could. But I think it's important</p> <p>18 again to understand something -- an intangible quality</p> <p>19 called culture, and I don't wish to sound too</p> <p>20 high-minded here but we think we have a pretty good</p> <p>21 culture, and if there are problems, they're shared at</p> <p>22 all levels. We also have a union at the Financial</p> <p>23 Times, and if individuals have problems or grievances,</p> <p>24 they can go to the union. They can also go, crucially,</p> <p>25 to the managing editor. We haven't talked about that</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 15</p>
<p>1 counsel, which is that it not only reminds Pearson</p> <p>2 employees of their obligations under that code, asking</p> <p>3 them to "confirm either compliance", but crucially "to</p> <p>4 notify incidences of non-compliance they're aware of".</p> <p>5 We don't have that.</p> <p>6 Q. I see. When I said "does it add anything", I guess the</p> <p>7 second half to that question is: is it necessary to have</p> <p>8 an editorial code and a company-wide code of conduct for</p> <p>9 just that reason or could there simply be one code of</p> <p>10 conduct and achieve the same aim?</p> <p>11 A. Well, that would be an interesting intellectual</p> <p>12 question --</p> <p>13 Q. That's why I'm asking you.</p> <p>14 A. -- which I'm going to try to answer. The Financial</p> <p>15 Times is a discrete entity within the Pearson group.</p> <p>16 The editor is independent. Pearson, however, own the</p> <p>17 Financial Times, so should they wish to have a separate</p> <p>18 code of conduct, that's a matter for them, and we think</p> <p>19 that the two can happily live alongside each other.</p> <p>20 Q. In the same paragraph, Mr Ridding goes on to say this:</p> <p>21 "Pearson also operates a whistle-blowing hotline</p> <p>22 called Ethicspoint, which allows employees to report</p> <p>23 breaches of the code on an anonymous basis. Employees</p> <p>24 can also report breaches of the code locally, for</p> <p>25 example to their line manager or in-house legal team."</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 14</p>	<p>1 role but that is the person who deals with human -- HR</p> <p>2 problems or budget problems and that is an open door</p> <p>3 too. And then finally they can go to me.</p> <p>4 So we don't think -- we don't want to be complacent</p> <p>5 but we don't think we need to have a whistle-blowing</p> <p>6 function in the newsroom at the Financial Times.</p> <p>7 Q. Can I come on then to ask you, please, about sources and</p> <p>8 sourcing. In paragraph 17 onwards of your statement,</p> <p>9 you say this. It's in response to our question, which</p> <p>10 was this:</p> <p>11 "To what extent is an editor aware/should be aware</p> <p>12 of the sources of the information which make out the</p> <p>13 central stories featured in your newspaper each day,</p> <p>14 including the method by which information was obtained?"</p> <p>15 You say this:</p> <p>16 "In terms of sourcing, we follow a minimum two</p> <p>17 source policy at the FT as evidenced by the sourcing</p> <p>18 policy [which we can look at if necessary] ... this</p> <p>19 means that as a general rule every story should be</p> <p>20 dual-sourced irrespective of whether our sources are on</p> <p>21 or off the record."</p> <p>22 I can see why you've taken that decision. In</p> <p>23 practice, does that happen?</p> <p>24 A. You bet it happens.</p> <p>25 Q. Okay. How can you be so sure?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 16</p>

4 (Pages 13 to 16)

<p>1 A. Because it's standard practice at the FT and it has been 2 for some time, and it was reaffirmed in the strongest 3 terms when I took over as editor just over six years 4 ago. If I may explain just a little bit? 5 Q. Of course. 6 A. If you rely on a single source for a story, you are 7 leaving yourself open to manipulation, you leave 8 yourself open to being misled and not understanding 9 fully context. There's always another side to a story. 10 I sometimes think about this in terms of an image of 11 walking up a mountain. If you go on a single source, 12 you get up to the top of the mountain and you have the 13 most glorious view. You have the idea of a wonderful 14 scoop the next morning. But then look down on the other 15 side of the mountain. That's the risk. So you need to 16 go for a second story. No story, however good it seems, 17 if it comes from one source, is going to enter the pages 18 or on the online of the Financial Times. You need to 19 have two sources, and even if the Prime Minister were to 20 speak off the record to a journalist and give that 21 journalist at the FT a big story, we would still check 22 it, we'd still talk to other people to verify, to also 23 put the story in its broader context. 24 So -- and when you say, "Is it followed at the FT?" 25 every other week something comes up. A news editor on</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 17</p>	<p>1 news editor, the other ones, sit around the common desk. 2 They share how stories are obtained and in terms of 3 sourcing, if the story is especially sensitive, then 4 again it's a matter of course. It comes down to 5 culture. If it's a sensitive story, the news editor 6 will come to me and discuss it, or to my deputy when I'm 7 travelling, and that way we have a system of checks and 8 balances in the Financial Times. We have 9 a transparent -- an overused word. We have an open way 10 of working. 11 So I'm very confident that we do not -- that first 12 of all, two sources works, and second, that we're not 13 using questionable, if not illegal, methods to obtain 14 our stories. And there's a reason for that. We have 15 a reputation to defend. We have a bond of trust with 16 our readers, and if we're seen to be engaging in illegal 17 activity or questionable activity, then that bond of 18 trust with our readers risks being broken. 19 Q. I understand that and I accept what you say about the 20 fact that your staff doesn't engage in illegal 21 practices, it doesn't use unethical means to obtain 22 stories. My question was about sources. A two-source 23 policy may be a very worthy one, but how do you know, 24 how can you check whether sources have not used 25 unethical methods? Is that possible?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 19</p>
<p>1 the desk says, "We have a very interesting story here, 2 but we need a second source." It's ingrained. 3 Q. You say it's helpful in terms of verification. It may 4 be very good in terms of -- 5 A. It's not helpful; it's essential. 6 Q. Okay. It may be essential in terms of verification, it 7 may be very good in terms of the reliability of the 8 information that you then obtain, but how would you know 9 about methods? How would you know, for example, if one 10 of the sources was a hacked phone message or a hacked 11 email or a blagged medical record? How does your 12 sourcing policy affect that? 13 A. First of all, to the best of my knowledge -- and I've 14 spent some time ahead of this Inquiry talking to 15 colleagues -- I know of no instance of phone hacking or 16 so-called blagging for information at the FT. We don't 17 engage in that sort of business. We do obtain sensitive 18 information but we don't do it using those methods. 19 Now, how do I know? Because the appointment of the 20 news editor at the Financial Times is one of the most 21 critical appointments that I can make as editor. The 22 news editor at the FT has a great deal of power. Direct 23 reports and the key jobs, like political editor, 24 economics editor. He or she deals with journalists on 25 a regular basis. The news editors who report to that</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 18</p>	<p>1 A. Not sources. You mean journalists using unethical -- 2 Q. I mean sources. 3 A. Ah. Well, that presumes that we are relying, for 4 example, on private detectives or other people engaging 5 in illicit methods, so-called -- what I would call 6 secondary sources. We like to deal with primary 7 sources. 8 Q. Right. 9 A. Again, counsel, you are using the word "helpful", and 10 I'm insisting it's essential for us. I don't wish to be 11 prescriptive for the whole industry, but I'm just 12 talking about the Financial Times' practice. And 13 I repeat, you know, two sources is essential for the way 14 we do our business. We make mistakes. We've made 15 mistakes in the past. We correct them and we learn from 16 them. But the basis, the foundation for how we go about 17 our business is to, one, obtain information by 18 representing ourselves as Financial Times journalists, 19 and second, obtaining -- and by the way, it's not -- 20 that's a minimum two sources. Preferably we'd like 21 three and there have been instances where we have not 22 published stories, sometimes to my chagrin. 23 We had a story which -- in New York, I had one -- 24 a person I'd known for ten years told me that Shell was 25 going to revise its policy on oil reserves and the story</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 20</p>

<p>1 was absolutely correct. We could not stand it up. We                  2 spent a day, and yes, the next day Shell announced that                  3 they were revising their policy. It had a big impact on                  4 the share price. We didn't run the story. And there                  5 are other examples of that.                  6 But in the end -- and again, I'm quoted to the point                  7 of being boring at the Financial Times -- I'd rather be                  8 right than first. In fact, not "rather"; that's the way                  9 we operate. We don't want to be first and get it wrong.                  10 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: When you're talking about sources,                  11 you're talking about primary sources, not second-hand                  12 sources? That's the point that I think --                  13 A. Yes, sir. Again, you've phrased that much better than                  14 I have been able to in several sentences, but that's the                  15 point. You can't rely, if you're in the business that                  16 we're in, on hearsay. We deal with primary sources,                  17 people who are making the decisions and others outside.                  18 MS PATRY HOSKINS: I understand. Can we look at your                  19 sourcing and attribution policy very briefly. It's                  20 exhibit 3 to your statement. If you look in the bottom                  21 right-hand corner, you should find the number of 729.                  22 A. Yes.                  23 Q. First of all, in your view, how important is it to                  24 actually have a sourcing and attribution policy as                  25 opposed to just giving guidance on an as and when basis?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 21</p>	<p>1 systems and make sure that they're absolutely                  2 watertight, and that's why you sent the email to which                  3 you earlier referred to. It's not that you're                  4 concerned; it's just that you're constantly checking?                  5 A. Yes, sir, and I think there is an element at which                  6 pre-emption helps. It's become a dirty word in national                  7 security, but actually in the editorial conference room,                  8 that's important, that you do respond. And for me --                  9 and I've worked for 10 years in the United States --                  10 I was shocked at what had happened. Howell Raines, at                  11 the New York Times, the editor, the executive editor of                  12 the New York Times, just the previous year had walked                  13 away with five, seven Pulitzer prizes for his                  14 award-winning coverage of the events of 9/11 and their                  15 impact on New York City. Fantastic journalism. And                  16 then a few months later, this happened in his own                  17 newsroom.                  18 It's interesting. I read his account of that.                  19 I also -- when I was at the Washington Post in 1985 in                  20 the summer, one of the best pieces of advice that was                  21 given to me was: read the five days of page-long account                  22 of how Janet Cooke -- again, working in the Washington                  23 Post newsroom, just a couple of years after the                  24 Washington Post had done a wonderful job on the                  25 Watergate scandal, again, Janet Cooke had actually,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 23</p>
<p>1 A. Well, the reason that this was written down -- and                  2 I remember the discussion because I was in New York at                  3 the time -- is that the New York Times, which I think is                  4 widely recognised as one of the best newspapers and news                  5 organisations in the world, suffered a terrible                  6 embarrassment when one of its reporters, a staff                  7 reporter, was revealed to have literally invented                  8 stories and was guilty of plagiarism. We took a view at                  9 the top of the FT that if such a thing could happen at                  10 the New York Times, then we needed to review our own                  11 internal procedures, and if we were going to be, to use                  12 this phrase, the gold standard, then we should be                  13 clearer about some of the ways in which we obtained our                  14 stories and information.                  15 So after the Jayson Blair scandal at the New York                  16 Times, which, it should be remembered, cost the editor                  17 of the New York Times and his deputy, the managing                  18 editor, Howell Raines and Gerry Boyd, their jobs -- they                  19 had to resign, so the New York Times was literally                  20 decapitated, the newsroom -- we decided to write down in                  21 more detail the sourcing policy which you've alluded to.                  22 I'm happy to go into that a little bit more, but that's                  23 why we did that at the time.                  24 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: It's a very good example of where                  25 something's gone wrong, then you just check your own</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 22</p>	<p>1 a reporter in the Metropolitan newsroom, invented the                  2 story of a crack addict in DC and had to give back                  3 a Pulitzer prize.                  4 I think, again, sir, without wishing to make a meal                  5 of this, the point is: if you see the best in class                  6 suffering a scandal like that, you need to react.                  7 MS PATRY HOSKINS: So you did.                  8 A. We did.                  9 Q. And one of the reactions was to create this policy. Can                  10 I look, very briefly, at just some of the paragraphs                  11 within it. First of all, under the heading "Sourcing",                  12 obviously you refer to your two, ideally three                  13 independent sources for each story point. But can we                  14 look at paragraph 6:                  15 "Always give people or companies the chance to                  16 answer the charges being levelled at them. Remember                  17 that cross-checking builds respect with sources."                  18 Now, is that a kind of prior notification policy?                  19 A. No, it's not.                  20 Q. Right. I didn't think so. Can you just explain?                  21 A. No, we don't give heads-up to people we're writing                  22 stories about. At least that is absolutely not the                  23 policy. It may happen occasionally, but it's not --                  24 definitely not meant to happen, because you pursue your                  25 story and then you go to the source. Sometimes,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 24</p>

<p>1 frankly, it can be a pain because people don't come back 2 to you in time for deadlines. They want more time and 3 sometimes we do give them more time, and if it's 4 especially sensitive and there is the risk of libel, 5 which we haven't talked about, then we want to make sure 6 that we've given people the right opportunity to answer 7 questions and put the other side of the story. Again, 8 you can be surprised. You may think you have something 9 which is watertight, but actually is less so when 10 somebody comes back.</p> <p>11 Q. I was going to come on to prior notification but if you 12 think this is a convenient moment, perhaps you could 13 tell us why you certainly don't have a prior 14 notification policy in place at the FT.</p> <p>15 A. I think it's important that we do our business in 16 a dispassionate way. Obviously journalists cultivate 17 sources. They're important, whether they're in the 18 political, financial or any other arena. That's how you 19 get information. But you never want to get so close to 20 a source that you're offering prior notification or 21 sharing everything. It's a dangerous business. That's 22 a dangerous path to go along.</p> <p>23 So we are in an odd half-world where we need to be 24 both close, but then to move away, to engage in building 25 a relationship of trust with sources but never to get so</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 25</p>	<p>1 then go to the company and ask for a response. Because, 2 as I say, it may alter both the timing of publication 3 and the substance of what you're writing about.</p> <p>4 MS PATRY HOSKINS: I understand.</p> <p>5 A. And it's also a question of balance and fairness and 6 context, which we haven't talked about much, but that's 7 the reason for sourcing. You need to think about 8 context. Has it happened before? How significant is it 9 really? That's not just -- that's a question of what 10 prominence you're going to give to the story but also 11 whether you're actually going to publish it.</p> <p>12 Q. Can you envisage a situation where you would publish 13 a story about a company without telling them in advance 14 that you were going to publish it?</p> <p>15 A. No, I can't -- I think it would be very difficult. 16 I think there are some instances where -- and there was 17 an instance about this in the last 12 months, where 18 a subject of a Financial Times story who was well 19 endowed, a very rich person, had taken out a series of 20 injunctions, not just in Britain but elsewhere, because 21 of a very messy divorce, which severely limited what one 22 could publish about that person or anything related. We 23 had a story about what was going on at the company and 24 about surveillance methods used by that person and 25 because we were concerned about an injunction being</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 27</p>
<p>1 close that you're offering prior notification. You need 2 to do business.</p> <p>3 Q. Why is it a dangerous path? I think it would be helpful 4 for the Inquiry to understand why, in financial 5 journalism in particular, prior notification, you think, 6 would be a dangerous path?</p> <p>7 A. I speak as a journalist, not just a financial 8 journalist. Obviously there may be instances -- if you 9 were to tell a company that you were about to write 10 a story, this could get out into the market, it could -- 11 it could be passed on, it could move the share price. 12 You know, you want to be able to do your work first, 13 before necessarily going to the company. I wouldn't 14 want to take that too far. I just think in general you 15 don't go to, if you like, the subject of a story. If 16 you'd been offered some information which may be 17 damaging, may be positive, you don't want to go to that 18 source straight away.</p> <p>19 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I don't think the question is whether 20 it's straight away. The question is whether, before you 21 actually publish the story, you say, "Right, we have 22 this. Do you have a comment to make upon it?"</p> <p>23 A. No, we always -- that's exactly what we do. I'm just 24 saying in terms of the process of working on the story, 25 when it's cooked, you then -- or when it's finished, you</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 26</p>	<p>1 taken out, although we had had some contact, we did not 2 go and ask for a full response because we were fearful 3 of an injunction. But we had had prior contact and 4 there was some knowledge about this, but this was a very 5 unusual case because of the number of injunctions that 6 had been taken out which were restrictive of reporting.</p> <p>7 Q. But wouldn't an injunction only be granted if it was 8 appropriate for it to be granted?</p> <p>9 A. Well, we took the view in this particular instance that 10 an injunction wouldn't have been warranted, and in fact 11 the story was published, we received a very hostile 12 letter from a well-known law firm in this city that 13 specialises in reputation management, and a week later 14 said subject came to see me in my office and addressed 15 me on first name terms and wanted to be friendly and 16 co-operative.</p> <p>17 So I think when there are that number of injunctions 18 taken out, one needs to be quite careful about what how 19 one is proceeding, but if -- we judged in this 20 particular instance that the story should be published, 21 we did, and that's what we did.</p> <p>22 Q. Can I come back to the sourcing policy very briefly. 23 Paragraph 9, under the heading "Sourcing": 24 "We should be able to justify to readers how we came 25 by a story [and we've touched on that already]. When we</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 28</p>

7 (Pages 25 to 28)

<p>1 talk to people, we should be honest about being FT 2 reporters. The PCC code states that subterfuge can be 3 justified only in the public interest and only when 4 material cannot be obtained by other means. If FT 5 reporters want to go undercover, they must first talk to 6 an editor." 7 Can you tell us a little more about how often, if at 8 all, reporters do wish to go undercover? 9 A. Yes, I saw that. In the six years since I've been an 10 editor, I don't know of any instance in which an FT 11 reporter went undercover. I'm not quite sure what that 12 means. Actually -- well, I just -- 13 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: It means that they don't declare who 14 they are and they pretend to be somebody slightly 15 different. 16 A. Yes. Actually, I'm now -- we had an instance of one of 17 our top journalists went into Burma to interview Aung 18 San Suu Kyi, and he did not misrepresent himself when he 19 was inside the country but I'd have to check whether 20 he -- my memory is -- I need to go back, but -- 21 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I don't think we're talking about 22 that sort of example. 23 A. All right. 24 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: We're talking about an example where 25 pursuing a story, the journalist knows that if he says,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 29</p>	<p>1 close to the Prime Minister". 2 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Yes. I wasn't actually thinking 3 about the Prime Minister. Yes. 4 A. I do think -- the important point you're making is that 5 you need to be as clear as possible with the reader 6 where this information is coming from. And also, if you 7 can identify as closely as possible, then you give the 8 reader some guide as to motivation, as to why this 9 information is being put out there. 10 I think the Americans, frankly, take it too far, "a 11 source whose name cannot be disclosed because of ..." da 12 da da, and two paragraphs later, the reader has either 13 fallen asleep or is more enlightened. I think we are a 14 bit tighter than that. Phrases like "it is understood" 15 have also been removed. So one needs to be tough on 16 this, vigilant. 17 I think the other point, which isn't here, which is 18 important -- and frankly, again, you need to be really 19 quite tough on this -- is anonymous sourcing, 20 particularly in business and financial stories, where 21 the source is offering a negative comment about 22 a company or a person, is problematic. Now, it's quite 23 difficult because analysts like to talk about companies 24 and offer -- and they're certainly spicy and juicy, 25 those comments, but they can be quite damaging and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 31</p>
<p>1 "I'm from the Financial Times", nobody will talk to him, 2 but if he says, "I'm a middle eastern potentate ..." 3 A. Yes, yes. I'm not sure whether very many FT journalists 4 could represent themselves -- 5 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: No, I wasn't necessarily -- 6 A. But, sir, I think the point that I made at the beginning 7 is very important. We do not misrepresent ourselves. 8 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: You don't do it. Right. 9 A. We say we're from the Financial Times. That's 10 important. 11 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: All right. 12 MS PATRY HOSKINS: One last aspect of this sourcing and 13 attribution policy, please. Under the heading 14 "Attribution", paragraph 7 says this: 15 "If we must cite an anonymous source, supply as much 16 information as you can. 'An aide to Mr Cheney said' is 17 preferable to 'an administration official said'. The 18 stock phrase 'sources said' means almost nothing at all 19 and is banned." 20 I think I can guess the answer to this question. Is 21 that a practice that is adhered to at the FT? 22 A. It is. We don't publish "sources said". That's as very 23 loose attribution. We need to be always vigilant. 24 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: "Sources close to"? 25 A. Ah, yes, that's a little bit less tenuous. "Sources</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 30</p>	<p>1 there's no -- if they're anonymous, you have to question 2 motivation sometimes. So that's something that may -- 3 it does happen at the FT, but we need to keep a very 4 close eye on it. 5 MS PATRY HOSKINS: That's probably paragraph 8: 6 "Be especially careful of relying on anonymous 7 criticism. Too much of that, and you have written 8 gossip, not news." 9 A. Yes. 10 Q. That's the point you're making? 11 A. That's the point. 12 Q. Is there any other aspect of this policy that you would 13 like to draw to the Inquiry's attention before I move 14 on? 15 A. I think that's fine, counsel. 16 Q. Right. Turning back, please, to your statement, coming 17 back to a subject we've just been looking at, 18 subterfuge, at paragraph 21 of your statement you deal 19 with this. You say, I think we've already said, that 20 you can't really see circumstances in which subterfuge 21 would be justified at the Financial Times, the nature of 22 the issues you report on do not generally require the 23 use of such methods, and so on. 24 A. Mm. 25 Q. You explain right at the end of paragraph 21 that</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 32</p>



<p>1 there's a difference between robust journalism and 2 lawful practices: 3 "Certain news organisations have not necessarily 4 acted professionally or responsibly and certainly not 5 ethically -- that is why I felt I had to make the 6 remarks I did in my Cudlipp lecture. I took the view 7 that certain organisations had crossed the line and they 8 needed to be called to account for their conduct." 9 You've exhibited the Cudlipp lecture to your 10 statement. It's not paginated and it's quite hard to 11 find references in it, so perhaps you can tell us in 12 your own words what you meant by "certain news 13 organisations have not necessarily acted professionally 14 or responsibly and certainly not ethically" -- 15 A. Well -- 16 Q. -- and why you took the view that they'd crossed the 17 line and needed to be calling to account for their 18 conduct. 19 A. I was primarily referring, clearly, to 20 News International and specifically the 21 News of the World in the light of the phone hacking 22 scandal, the details of which now everybody is aware of. 23 Q. Okay. 24 A. I did make reference to the Daily Telegraph and the 25 story in which two reporters misrepresented themselves</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 33</p>	<p>1 Second -- and this is important -- I have the 2 highest respect for the Daily Telegraph. I think that 3 the story that that they did on the Westminster expenses 4 scandal was a terrific piece of journalism. It's 5 outstanding. Yes, they paid for the disk, but the 6 journalism and the series of articles that they produced 7 plainly met the public interest test. The laws had been 8 broken by MPs and it was important that the wider public 9 was aware of this and the flaws therein, and there was 10 nothing -- there's absolutely nothing but praise for 11 that particular story. 12 In the instance of -- this is a personal view, and 13 editors should make their own decisions about what they 14 consider to be right, so I was expressing a personal 15 opinion that I felt that it was wrong for journalists to 16 go to an MP, an elected member of Parliament, and 17 misrepresent themselves as constituents because I think 18 there is a bond of trust between an elected 19 representative and constituents and that is important to 20 protect. That was a personal view. Certainly the 21 Telegraph took a different view and perhaps others in my 22 profession would do so, and I respect their views. 23 I just happen to think in this particular instance that 24 it was wrong. 25 Q. What if using this kind of method is the only way of</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 35</p>
<p>1 as constituents to Vince Cable, the business secretary. 2 I should add and make very clear -- 3 Q. Can we pause there and just find the reference. I think 4 it's more helpful if we do. If we look within your 5 exhibits, the number in the bottom right-hand corner 6 will be 750. 7 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Yes. 8 MS PATRY HOSKINS: Sorry, it's all behind tab 4, 750, fourth 9 paragraph down on that page. 10 A. Yes. 11 Q. You say this: 12 "In this respect, the Daily Telegraph's decision to 13 dispatch two journalists posing as constituents to 14 interview the business secretary Vince Cable falls into 15 a very different category than its earlier scoop on MPs' 16 expenses. The latter story, although acquired for money 17 and deeply damaging to the standing of the Westminster 18 class, clearly met the public interest test. The first 19 did not. It was nothing more than entrapment 20 journalism." 21 A. Well, first of all I'd like just to make clear that I'm 22 talking about the kind of methods and practices employed 23 by the Financial Times and what we expect of our 24 journalists in that we do not engage in 25 misrepresentation.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 34</p>	<p>1 obtaining the information and that the information 2 itself is valuable? 3 A. Then we have to look at the quality of the story 4 produced in that particular case, and I always -- so 5 I think that the question is: what is the story that 6 you've produced as a result of this? 7 There may be cases for others to pursue in which 8 they may seek to engage in these practices but they 9 would have to justify by passing a very high bar. 10 I would refer, again, to an editor, a former editor of 11 the Sunday Times and the Times, who I greatly respect, 12 one of the finest editors in the post-war era, Harold 13 Evans, who said just last year that: 14 "Deception may ultimately be justified in the 15 pursuit of the public interest but it must only be used 16 in the most exceptional circumstances. The reason is 17 that it can be deeply corrosive, not just to the 18 newspaper's bond with its readers but also to the body 19 politic." 20 That is my view. 21 Q. I'm going to ask you about just a few more things that 22 you said in the Cudlipp lecture, if I can. It starts on 23 page 741 and continuing. First of all, can I ask you to 24 turn to the third page of that, which should be 743. 25 About two-thirds of the way town, you'll see</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 36</p>

<p>1 a paragraph starting:                  2 "Today, many members of the political elite in                  3 Britain have all worked in or with the media industry.                  4 David Cameron worked in a commercial TV company. Jeremy                  5 Hunt ran a publishing business."                  6 And so on. Now, can you tell us a little more about                  7 why that's relevant, in your view?                  8 A. Well, it's first quite striking, the number of people                  9 who have worked in the media business. It would                  10 certainly encourage me to believe that they understand                  11 the media business very well, but also it can lead to                  12 too cosy relationships, and we can talk about that.                  13 I'm not just talking about the fact that Ed Balls was an                  14 editorial writer for the FT. He certainly doesn't agree                  15 with our editorial line at the moment on the economy.                  16 I think the problem is that -- again, this is                  17 a personal view. I'm not necessarily offering you                  18 empirical evidence for my case, other than what I've                  19 just described, but it did seem to me that in the last                  20 ten years or 15 years, in the Blair/Brown years, perhaps                  21 a bit -- latterly -- perhaps a little less so in the                  22 present government, and I'll come to that in a minute --                  23 that there was a very close relationship between the                  24 government and sections of the press, particularly                  25 News International.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 37</p>	<p>1 journalists having a very clear view of their                  2 responsibilities and how they conduct their                  3 relationships with politicians.                  4 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: And vice versa.                  5 A. Very much vice versa, sir. Again, it was taken as                  6 conventional wisdom that in order to govern, in effect,                  7 with today's -- what is known as the 24/7 media                  8 environment, where you have to, if you like, feed the                  9 press, feed the media with stories, and you need to be                  10 particularly sensitive to the demands of the popular                  11 press, that you needed to have somebody very close to                  12 you, as Prime Minister, or as indeed Chancellor, who                  13 understood the tabloid press, and these people assumed                  14 the role of almost policy-makers.                  15 This, I would suggest, is a little bit dangerous.                  16 Politicians -- again, this is very much a personal view,                  17 so I don't wish to -- I think I'm probably treading way                  18 beyond my remit as such anyway, but I think -- I just                  19 feel that if you have a 179-seat majority, that's quite                  20 a mandate. It's pretty good in the second time around                  21 as well.                  22 MS PATRY HOSKINS: I'm going to come on to ask you about                  23 press regulation, if I can. I'm going to deal first                  24 with one of the judge's favourite questions about online                  25 content. At pages 4 onwards of the lecture, you discuss</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 39</p>
<p>1 Now, you could explain that because of the                  2 preponderance of power that the Murdoch press had in                  3 this country. You could also explain it, perhaps, by                  4 some wonderful PR marketing by the likes of Kelvin                  5 McKenzie, who proclaimed in essence that the Sun had won                  6 the election in 1992 for the Conservative government.                  7 But it always struck me as very strange. Why would                  8 a Prime Minister who had a 179-seat majority care so                  9 much about what the popular press, and particularly the                  10 Sun, was writing about the government and policies, day                  11 in, day out?                  12 Again, if you read Piers Morgan's memoir -- it's                  13 actually one of the first books that was given to me                  14 when I took over as editor, because I'd spent some time                  15 in the country, to understand or reacquaint myself with                  16 the British political culture -- it was quite                  17 extraordinary how much time Tony Blair seemed to have                  18 spent with Piers Morgan. You'd have thought he had                  19 a bit of time running the country, but maybe not.                  20 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I'm interested to know -- and                  21 I accept you're expressing an entirely personal view,                  22 and it really is touching upon a later bit of this                  23 Inquiry -- what you would do about that.                  24 A. Well, you certainly can't -- you certainly would not                  25 wish to regulate it or pass a law. This is about</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 38</p>	<p>1 the changes relating to online content in some detail.                  2 You discuss Wikileaks and other examples.                  3 Perhaps I can ask the question in this way: what's                  4 the purpose of close and careful press regulation if                  5 Wikileaks or other bloggers can publish what they want                  6 with utter impunity? Can online bloggers be regulated                  7 as well in your view?                  8 A. No, I don't believe they can and I wouldn't seek in any                  9 way to regulate the Internet. This is a very difficult                  10 area. There are the questions of a two-tier media                  11 market, in effect, where you have a press which is                  12 subject to certainly self-regulation to be discussed,                  13 but these people are within the media ecosystem but                  14 clearly unregulated. Of course, if they break the law                  15 and if they libel someone, or if they were to engage in                  16 contempt of court, they could be brought to the law --                  17 could be brought before the courts, but I would look at                  18 this -- it's a very complicated question, but I think if                  19 you're talking about the overall picture for how the                  20 press should be regulated or regulate themselves in this                  21 country, you need to think about two principles.                  22 The first is that we shouldn't think just about the                  23 press, because the press have significant -- and in many                  24 ways, thinking of the Guardian, certainly the Daily Mail                  25 and Telegraph and others -- have successful online</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 40</p>

<p>1 operations. So they are news organisations. That's                  2 what I call the Financial Times. It's a news                  3 organisation. Don't think just about the press. If                  4 I may say, sir, without, again, wishing to stray beyond                  5 my remit, it would be a huge mistake for the Inquiry to                  6 focus just on the press. You need to think about the                  7 news in general and the general ecosystem.                  8 Second principle is that -- so we have news, so we                  9 do have online operations, those should be subject to                  10 the law. We need to establish a code of conduct. We                  11 need to establish practices which are so good, so                  12 credible, so robust, that others would wish to join such                  13 a body of, say, independent regulation. We can discuss                  14 the details.                  15 You will not, I believe, I suspect, have individual                  16 bloggers out there in the stratosphere joining, but I'm                  17 talking about media aggregators, people like, say, the                  18 Huffington Post, that are drawing on what is loosely                  19 described as mainstream media content, that they would                  20 feel that -- not necessarily an obligation but be                  21 encouraged to be part of a quality system of independent                  22 regulation in this country.                  23 Q. All right. So the answer is not everyone can be                  24 regulated, but you could have a system of encouragement                  25 which meant that some people would choose to be</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 41</p>	<p>1 between the simple presentation of information and the                  2 provision of information in context mediated by opinion,                  3 reflective and all those words that you might                  4 describe --                  5 A. Yes.                  6 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: -- as the high point of journalism --                  7 and not just reflective pieces such as you might produce                  8 in the Financial Times but if I take the example from                  9 yesterday that Mr Mohan spoke about: descriptive                  10 analyses of complex issues in comparatively                  11 straightforward language, readily accessible by those                  12 who wouldn't necessarily want to read the Financial                  13 Times. You understand, the different expertise that all                  14 goes into making the press, but which isn't there on the                  15 Internet. Is that the distinction?                  16 A. Well, again, sir, I think you've cut to the heart of the                  17 matter because if you think about --                  18 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: You don't need to be polite.                  19 A. Probably flattering rather than polite, but there we                  20 are. But this is the case. This is the issue. Because                  21 if you talk -- and again, having spent a lot of time in                  22 the States, for those who do their journalism on the                  23 Internet and bloggers, they think they can publish                  24 anything and they believe that it can be -- it will be                  25 corrected by peers on the Internet. So they don't feel</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 43</p>
<p>1 regulated. For those who chose not to be regulated, do                  2 they not place the press at a competitive disadvantage?                  3 A. Indeed they do.                  4 Q. And is there any way of resolving that issue?                  5 A. I've wrestled with this and I haven't come up with an                  6 answer. I think it's -- there is a real problem when,                  7 for example, some people in the -- on the Internet,                  8 web-based news organisations outside this jurisdiction                  9 can publish details, for example, of a famous footballer                  10 and his affair and -- or affairs, and the popular press                  11 in this country can't. That clearly puts them at                  12 a competitive disadvantage.                  13 Now, one would have to go and ask the question about                  14 how legitimate is it to write that story, what is the                  15 public interest, et cetera. That's a separate matter.                  16 But if we are saying -- now, this is not the first case                  17 this has happened. I do refer in the lecture to the                  18 1930s when the New York Times, that august publication,                  19 had a field day with King Edward VIII's affair with an                  20 American, Wallis Simpson. They were happily publishing                  21 juicy and raunchy details of the affair while the                  22 British press, and not just the tabloid press, couldn't                  23 print a word, or actually had an arrangement with                  24 Buckingham Palace that they would not cover the story.                  25 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Is there a distinction to be made</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 42</p>	<p>1 an obligation, in other words, to go through the kind of                  2 processes which not only the Financial Times but also                  3 the tabloids do. That is what I would regard or                  4 describe as a crafted piece of journalism. And that                  5 craft means sourcing, multiple, but also in terms of --                  6 again, I believe this is the case, it certainly is in                  7 other news organisations I've worked for, that -- there                  8 is a revise function. You don't just publish the story                  9 immediately and wait for it to be corrected by an angry                  10 reader. You actually check it out, talk to the news                  11 editor, and then it goes through a process known as                  12 subediting, which again is the revise function. In that                  13 way, it's as very different commodity from                  14 Internet-based journalism.                  15 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: That might be an area which actually                  16 identifies the difference and encourages those that want                  17 to be considered journalists and mainstream to join that                  18 particular club.                  19 A. That would presume, sir, that they feel they want to be                  20 part --                  21 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: If they want to be.                  22 A. It should be obviously up to them. I believe that is                  23 the way forward because this is a fast-moving train                  24 here, but I suspect from numerous conversations that                  25 there is -- that web-based journalists, bloggers, they</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 44</p>

<p>1 look at the mainstream media, not just in this country 2 but also in the United States, and say, "That's the 3 past. That's in decline. We don't want to be part of 4 that. We're part of a new bright future of journalism 5 on the Internet and it's new and it's different." 6 Now, having said there's a little bit of naivety and 7 a little bit of idealism in that approach, but certainly 8 for those web-based news organisations who are 9 aggregators -- I'm thinking about the Huffington Post, 10 for example -- that are drawing on mainstream media 11 content, they should think hard about becoming part of 12 what we hope to put forward in this country in terms of 13 a new body of independent regulation which is robust, 14 credible and worthy of joining. 15 MS PATRY HOSKINS: It sounds like you're suggesting a system 16 of sticks and carrots. Do you have a formulated view as 17 to what that system would look like? 18 A. I think that I'm more interested in carrots than sticks. 19 I think that if you're looking at the current set-up in 20 this country -- because I wish we did have a First 21 Amendment in this country -- we can come back to that in 22 a minute, but we don't. So we have a body called the 23 PCC, which practices self-regulation. Now, in my view, 24 and I've said this, the PCC does some very important, 25 valuable work. This is easily forgotten in all the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 45</p>	<p>1 I was just about to explain why I think we need to have 2 a little bit more of the regulatory aspect and not just 3 the mediation. 4 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Yes, please. 5 A. So I think we need a new body, we need a new 6 composition, and we need -- of that body, and we need 7 new powers. I'm happy to elaborate. 8 MS PATRY HOSKINS: Yes, please. 9 A. First of all -- and other editors or others have alluded 10 to this, and others will elaborate on this, but I think 11 first of all, in the event of serious breaches of the 12 code, fines should be applicable. I also think that 13 forcing or obliging newspapers to publish very 14 prominently, according to the seriousness of the 15 mistake, where they have erred or where they have got 16 matters seriously wrong, and the PCC or the new body 17 rules against it, then that should be prominently 18 featured. And believe me, editors do -- they hate, 19 I personally really -- you don't want to devote a large 20 portion of your newspaper to explaining why you got 21 something wrong. That's a deterrent. Don't 22 underestimate the significance of that. 23 I also think that there should be a high bar -- I've 24 alluded to this in the Fulbright lecture that I gave -- 25 there should be a high bar but there should be powers of</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 47</p>
<p>1 criticism that was levelled against the PCC. 2 But in my experience what they do in terms of 3 mediation, picking up readers' complaints, dealing with 4 editors, they do it very well. They're timely, it's 5 free, they're thorough and they have good people, and 6 they've had an unfair rap in that respect. And they do 7 reach out to the public and interest groups and they're 8 involving them in the process. 9 However, they fail -- they misstepped badly in the 10 phone hacking scandal. Now, it is true again -- one 11 qualification here -- they were lied to. 12 News International lied to them. So in that case, it's 13 pretty difficult because you have a major news 14 organisation that is part of your independent, 15 self-regulatory set-up, and it's not telling you the 16 truth, and you also -- you don't have the powers to 17 pursue that. The misstep was to -- and it was a serious 18 misstep -- was to criticise the Guardian for its 19 reporting and to minimise the significance thereof. And 20 that was a serious misstep, and as a result of that 21 I believe that the body has lost credibility. 22 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: But it's not just that, is it, 23 Mr Barber? Is it really a regulator at all? It's 24 a complaints mechanism. 25 A. No, it is a complaints mechanism, and if I may say,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 46</p>	<p>1 investigation if the new body seriously believes that 2 there's been a serious breach of the code. One could 3 think of mechanisms within the body where a serious 4 panel, not just of insiders but also outsiders, lay 5 experts, could make a judgment that this required or 6 this should trigger an investigation. But that, for me, 7 would be part of the solution. 8 And then, finally -- not finally, but we should -- 9 we have to think about how we make sure that everybody 10 joins -- comes under the tent. We mentioned the 11 Internet, that that would be difficult, but certainly 12 for the press everybody should be. I would not -- 13 I would not pass a law or any statutory form of 14 compliance because I don't support that in any way. 15 I support creating the best possibly and most credible, 16 most robust form of self-regulation, which is so good 17 that everybody wants to -- 18 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I prefer your word "independent 19 regulation". 20 A. Yes. 21 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Because one of the arguments about 22 the system is that editors sit in judgment on each other 23 in respect of which they are and with whom they are 24 competitors. 25 A. It's not a tenable position. We need outsiders. There</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 48</p>

<p>1 have been some changes, but certainly for too long the                  2 PCC was dominated by insiders. You need to have some                  3 people who are -- if not serving editors, certainly                  4 people who have served as --                  5 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: With experience of the business?                  6 A. Experienced people in the business of journalism. Not                  7 just lawyers.                  8 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I shouldn't be considered to be in                  9 favour of giving everything to lawyers. I'm not.                  10 A. I'm relieved. But we need to have some outsiders, and                  11 I think that plays generally into the -- again, this is                  12 very much a personal view but, you know, journalists are                  13 not monks in cells. Journalists are members of the                  14 community. Journalists should be accountable in the                  15 court of public opinion. Journalists need to be more                  16 open about how they conduct their business.                  17 We should have nothing to fear from a robust body of                  18 independent regulators. We should have nothing to fear                  19 where some outsiders are brought into the process.                  20 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Of course, journalists look at all of                  21 the other institutions of the state and of the body                  22 politic. They look at politicians, they look at                  23 schools, they look at the judiciary. Who looks at                  24 journalists?                  25 A. Well, at the moment, there's plenty of people offering</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 49</p>	<p>1 industrial scale of phone hacking, but the pattern of                  2 lies and also the result, which was shocking. The                  3 closure of a national newspaper with a circulation of                  4 several million, and a newspaper actually that has done,                  5 in its own way over the years, some very good stories.                  6 I'm thinking of the price-fixing -- no, the cheating in                  7 the Test match. So this was a shocking episode. And                  8 all of us -- I speak for myself -- believe that as                  9 a result we need to change the way we do business. If                  10 this isn't a wake-up call, I'm not sure what is.                  11 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: You'll understand my concern that                  12 there have been wake-up calls in the past and                  13 everybody's woken up and then it all just appears to                  14 have drifted off again. Is that unfair?                  15 A. It's certainly a fair characterisation of what happened                  16 20 years ago, but I would make two points in response.                  17 First of all -- and I don't want to steal anybody's                  18 thunder, but I believe that Lord Hunt will be putting                  19 forward some interesting proposals on independent                  20 regulation shortly, probably before this Inquiry.                  21 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I certainly hope so, because I've                  22 encouraged everybody to be thinking about it                  23 and I expect them to be thinking about it. What I've                  24 said -- and I'm happy to make it clear publicly, if I've                  25 not done so -- is that I hope that the business of</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 51</p>
<p>1 opinions about the state of journalism.                  2 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: At the moment that is so, but we're                  3 in unusual times, Mr Barber.                  4 A. We are in certainly interesting times. My remedy, or                  5 the remedy that should be considered, is bringing in                  6 some outsiders so that it doesn't look like a cosy                  7 stitch-up at the PCC where sitting editors decide the                  8 rules and then enforce them.                  9 I also would say that the new body needs strong                  10 leadership. That's going to be a really important job,                  11 and my preference would be to see somebody with                  12 experience of journalism but also somebody who's done                  13 other -- worked in other areas, perhaps, but somebody                  14 with really strong leadership qualities to insist on the                  15 highest standards of integrity and to make sure that                  16 this new body works. Because, as I said just a few                  17 months ago, we are in the last-chance saloon, drinking                  18 our last pint.                  19 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I think that was 20 years ago.                  20 A. Well, not necessary -- well, I'm going to disagree with                  21 you, sir. I think that what has happened in -- and I'm                  22 basing my comments on conversations I've had with                  23 members of the profession outside the Financial Times.                  24 This has been a real shock, what happened at the                  25 News of the World, not just in terms of the extent, the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 50</p>	<p>1 journalists, journalism, is considering it on the basis                  2 that it has to work for them but it will also have to                  3 work for the public. It won't be good enough, in my                  4 present view -- and I'm obviously listening and will                  5 continue to listen with great care to everything that                  6 everybody is saying -- just to think that one can tinker                  7 around the edges.                  8 A. I agree with that, sir, and it is incumbent on the                  9 industry to produce new, credible proposals for                  10 independent regulation. That is the lesson of the phone                  11 hacking scandal, and to a degree it's the lesson of                  12 what's already come out in this Inquiry. I think                  13 I speak for fellow editors: we're serious about this.                  14 We want to produce something which is new.                  15 But my second point is everybody should read what                  16 Chief Justice judge said last year about the importance                  17 of the independence of the press and that we will make                  18 mistakes and reputations may be damaged, but the                  19 principle of free expression is really critical. So                  20 before anybody thinks about introducing new laws to                  21 regulate the press, let us at least look at the quality                  22 of proposals which are going to be put on the table.                  23 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Yes, the Lord Judge wasn't actually                  24 saying that there shouldn't be a framework. Lord Judge                  25 was emphasising the importance of free speech and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 52</p>

<p>1 freedom of expression, views which I think I have 2 repeated more than once over the last six months, but he 3 was identifying the importance of having a system that 4 actually worked and wasn't one that was entirely 5 optional.</p> <p>6 A. Again, I subscribe to that view. It can't be optional. 7 Everybody needs to buy in to the new arrangements. 8 Otherwise they won't be credible. But I think if they 9 are good enough, robust enough -- there is, by the 10 way -- the matter which we haven't touched on, which is 11 rather important, is the cost. Credibility may come 12 with a high cost, and the press in this country -- and 13 I'm thinking not just in London, but elsewhere -- is not 14 exactly flushed with cash at the moment. So this will 15 be the price. If it means paying more money -- I'd 16 better be careful here, because I don't control the 17 budgets. But this is important.</p> <p>18 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I understand the problem of cost. 19 A. Yes.</p> <p>20 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: And there are all sorts of potential 21 issues that arise in relation to that, which may 22 actually be tied into the sort of model that one 23 eventually alights upon. So I understand the problem. 24 A. Sir, if I may add that one of the tests of the new body 25 will be: could the events of 2008, 2009, 2010 and the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 53</p>	<p>1 journalism to be robust, but following certain 2 standards.</p> <p>3 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Somebody will bring it to account 4 and also, of course, I just need to make the point: it's 5 not just phone hacking. Nobody could have listened to 6 the evidence that I've been hearing since November and 7 think that this is a problem just restricted to phone 8 hacking. Would you agree?</p> <p>9 A. Phone hacking has been the trigger.</p> <p>10 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I agree. I understand that. But 11 would you agree with my proposition?</p> <p>12 A. Well, sir, you probably have to be a little more 13 specific about what you're referring to.</p> <p>14 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: The proposition that there is more 15 that needs to be addressed simply than phone hacking.</p> <p>16 A. Yes. Again, I would say it would depend on more 17 specifics. If you're referring to libel, if you're 18 referring to privacy matters -- as I said, I don't 19 consider myself a specialist in this area, it's fraught 20 with perils, but there are examples of where -- if there 21 is recklessness -- if recklessness has taken place in 22 the publishing of stories, that needs to be looked at, 23 but again -- you're correct, but let's just think about 24 specifics. It is beyond just phone hacking, yes, sir.</p> <p>25 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Right.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 55</p>
<p>1 phone hacking that went beforehand occur and not be 2 prevented or tackled with rigour and promptness by the 3 new body? If that new body fails that test, it's not 4 credible.</p> <p>5 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Is it very much an opportunity, which 6 is why I've encouraged you and your fellow editors to 7 think about sensible solutions, not just to see how near 8 to the present system they can persuade me to go but 9 actually be prepared to be forward-thinking, to address 10 all the issues, not merely those you have mentioned but 11 also the others that have been brought up over the last 12 six months.</p> <p>13 A. Well, we want to be careful, to coin a phrase, of 14 fighting the last war. We definitely need to think 15 ahead as well as draw lessons from the past, and this 16 sorry, appalling episode of phone hacking. So we do 17 need to think about the future. We need to think about 18 our processes. We need to be opened up. We need to be 19 able to show that our processes and our standards are 20 robust and accountable.</p> <p>21 I think this is a word I'd like to just emphasise. 22 The public needs to feel that the press, the media -- 23 talking about the media in this country -- I'm leaving 24 aside broadcasting because that's separate -- is 25 accountable and can say in public why it considers its</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 54</p>	<p>1 MS PATRY HOSKINS: Was there anything you wanted to add on 2 how you would encourage the various different parties to 3 sign up to this new system?</p> <p>4 A. Again, I think that it just has to be seen as a new 5 industry standard.</p> <p>6 Q. It just has to be a really good one and one that the 7 industry is proud to be part of?</p> <p>8 A. Well, credible. "Pride" is a loaded term. But it has 9 to be credible and it's not just got to be credible to 10 the people who are part of the system; it has to be 11 credible to the public at large. We'd hope that it 12 would receive the support of politicians but we're not 13 going to go begging in that direction. We will just 14 produce the ideas, the format, and hope that people feel 15 it's different. It has to be qualitatively different.</p> <p>16 Q. I have two final questions, if I can. The first is 17 picking you up on something you said about changes to 18 the PCC. You said one of the things that you fear as an 19 editor is having to publish apologies and taking up 20 space in your newspaper having to publish corrections or 21 apologies. Have you ever given consideration to the 22 possibility of having a readers' editor at the Financial 23 Times, and if not, why not?</p> <p>24 A. Well, when this idea first came up, I was very 25 sceptical, not least because I consider myself to be the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 56</p>

<p>1 readers' editor. If there are problems and they're 2 serious problems, I deal with them, my deputy deals with 3 them or the number three.</p> <p>4 I've slightly changed my mind now. I mean, 5 obviously in America there are readers' editors and 6 sometimes they can be quite tricky to handle, especially 7 when they want to write long articles. Obviously you 8 wouldn't interfere with that. But I now think that 9 perhaps, as part of this qualitative difference and as 10 part of being seen to operate -- then I might be open to 11 the idea. But I think again what I would emphasise is 12 that if you have the culture, a strong culture in a news 13 organisation which is committed to upholding the highest 14 standards, that should be your starting point. You're 15 not going to solve these things, these difficulties, 16 with just offering tokens like appointing of a readers' 17 editor. But I'd be more open than I was.</p> <p>18 Q. I think you wanted to say a few words about libel 19 reform. I say this because in your contribution to the 20 seminars, which took place in -- September? 21 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Yes, it was September. 22 MS PATRY HOSKINS: A long time ago. 23 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: No, maybe in October, early October. 24 MS PATRY HOSKINS: In your contributions to those seminars, 25 you mentioned this and I thought you might want to say</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 57</p>	<p>1 are dwarfed by the enormous costs that are incurred, but 2 the consequence of doing that and adding on to your 3 commission or council, whatever it's called, some sort 4 of mechanism may mean that you need a structure which 5 you can't simply do consensually, because you want to 6 bind in everybody who's going to be affected.</p> <p>7 A. Indeed. I don't wish to pre-judge what Alan Rusbridger, 8 the editor of the Guardian, may want to say on this, 9 because he's done a lot of serious thinking and from 10 what I've seen I think it's promising, to look at 11 whether this new body, the Media Standards Board, 12 whatever you want to call it -- by the way, it will have 13 to have a new name -- can offer an arbitration process 14 or some form of resolution where parties do not 15 immediately resort to the court, forcing news 16 organisations to employ highly expensive barristers, and 17 before you know where you are, you've seen £100,000 plus 18 disappear. We don't have that kind of money.</p> <p>19 Therefore -- and this is a real problem, because the 20 Financial Times is an independent news organisation with 21 plenty of resources. We have more than 600 journalists, 22 more than 100 foreign correspondents. We're happy to 23 write about the connection between oligarchs and the 24 Kremlin, we've written thousands of words in that 25 particular area and others, and every time we write</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 59</p>
<p>1 a word or two about this.</p> <p>2 A. Again, we don't probably have the time and neither do 3 I have necessarily the competence to offer a blueprint 4 for libel reform in this country. My principal concern 5 was just simply the costs of dealing with a libel claim 6 or where people --</p> <p>7 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: No, no, I'm quite keen to pick up 8 that point because it actually feeds into something 9 you've just said. You may have heard that a couple of 10 times -- more than a couple of times -- during the 11 course of these hearings I've floated the concept of 12 some sort of arbitral system for speedy resolution of 13 privacy claims, potentially small libel claims, not 14 necessarily the largest, because the cost is 15 prohibitive. There was a time when it was prohibitive 16 to claimants because there wasn't legal aid available 17 for it and therefore the powerful position was held 18 by the press. Now, because of CFAs, it's turned the 19 other ways, and that pendulum is moving. I understand 20 that.</p> <p>21 But if you want an arbitral system, which I actually 22 think has value, then it's going to be quite difficult 23 to do that without some sort of framework that requires 24 everybody at least to exhaust that possibility. Because 25 I think most claims needn't be settled where the damages</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 58</p>	<p>1 about the rich and famous, particularly people who have 2 really substantial sums of money, we get a letter -- 3 a very threatening, bullying letter from a law firm, and 4 I'm thinking one in particular -- that is simply 5 outrageous. And, you know: "If you do not capitulate 6 before noon on Saturday, you will be hung at dawn on 7 Sunday", and this is bound to have -- even if you think 8 that you're robust and the story is robust, it can have 9 a chilling effect because you are aware of the cost of 10 a libel action.</p> <p>11 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: But that's why it can't just be 12 consensual because your extremely wealthy person would 13 never go down that route. So to protect everybody from 14 that sort of tactic, there has to be some framework to 15 it which is not merely consensual, if that's one of the 16 things you want to achieve.</p> <p>17 I offer that to you not for you to provide me with 18 an instant response but to put into your deliberations.</p> <p>19 A. We'll certainly take that under consideration, but 20 I think my views on any form of statutory regulation are 21 fairly clear. But --</p> <p>22 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I'm not talking about statutory 23 regulation. I'm talking about a framework which then 24 has built onto it a mechanism for everything to be done 25 consensually, but without some background, then the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 60</p>

<p>1 concern you've just expressed can't be addressed because 2 they won't come into the system. 3 A. I can see that. I think there is a real practical 4 problem here. I am concerned about it, as are other 5 editors. In terms of libel, this is the one area that 6 probably concerns me most, and so I'll give that careful 7 thought, sir. 8 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: If you have some other suggestion 9 then I'm here for some time and I'm very pleased to 10 think about any solutions that work for everybody. But 11 that's what really matters to me. 12 A. I'll take a rain check. 13 MS PATRY HOSKINS: Mr Barber, those are the questions that 14 I had. Is there anything that you wish to add? 15 A. No, I think I've -- thanks to the close questioning, 16 I've had a chance to really offer my thoughts on the 17 current state of the industry and the challenges we 18 face. I think I would just -- we haven't talked much 19 about the public interest but -- we don't have the time 20 to exhaust that particular subject, but all I would say 21 is that I strongly believe that there is a public 22 interest in freedom of expression itself, and with that 23 I put myself right alongside editors such as Paul Dacre 24 of the Daily Mail, and I think we need to be very 25 careful in this country about forgetting that principle.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 61</p>	<p>1 territory. 2 A. Thank you, sir. 3 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: We'll take seven minutes. 4 (11.40 am) 5 (A short break) 6 (11.49 am) 7 MS PATRY HOSKINS: Sir, we have three more witnesses this 8 morning. The first two are going to be rather short. 9 We have Mr Mullins, Mr Malhotra and Mr Blackhurst in 10 that order. 11 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Very good. 12 MS PATRY HOSKINS: If I could call Mr Mullins first of all, 13 please. 14 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: We're changing titles? 15 MS PATRY HOSKINS: We are. We're moving to the Independent 16 MR ANDREW OLIVER MULLINS (sworn) 17 Questions by MS PATRY HOSKINS 18 MS PATRY HOSKINS: Please make yourself comfortable. I was 19 going to ask you to move the previous folder, but you 20 have. 21 A. Yes. 22 Q. Can you please state your full name to the Inquiry? 23 A. Andrew Oliver Mullins. 24 Q. You've provided a witness statement in response to 25 a section 21 notice. Can you confirm that the contents</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 63</p>
<p>1 There are plenty of other countries, in which I have 2 direct experience, whether it be Hungary or 3 South Africa, that are looking at new media laws to curb 4 the freedom of the press and the media and we should not 5 go down that road in this country. 6 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Again, I've said many, many times my 7 strength of belief about freedom of expression and the 8 freedom of the press, which aren't quite the same thing. 9 But one just has to be careful, doesn't one, that one 10 doesn't seek to justify that which you, in uncoded 11 language, have condemned as unlawful and wrong, that one 12 doesn't, as it were, say, well, the price of freedom of 13 expression is that we just have to put up with that 14 stuff. 15 A. No, I do not believe that we should put up with that 16 stuff, as you say. 17 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: No, neither do I. 18 A. And I'm not condoning law-breaking. But I am defending, 19 and I will to the last breath, freedom of expression. 20 So I think we should leave it perhaps there on that high 21 note. Thank you. 22 MS PATRY HOSKINS: Thank you very much indeed. 23 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Thank you, Mr Barber. Thank you very 24 much. That's rather longer than I think you probably 25 anticipated but it covers a lot of very important</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 62</p>	<p>1 of that statement are true to the best of your knowledge 2 and belief? 3 A. Yes. 4 Q. You should find your witness statement behind tab 1 in 5 this bundle. If you look at paragraphs 10 and 11 of the 6 statement, you will find your career history. I will 7 just check with you that it's correct. You are the 8 managing director of IPL, Independent Print Limited? 9 A. Yes. 10 Q. You were appointed to that role following the purchase 11 of the Independent and the Independent on Sunday by IPL, 12 a company controlled by the Lebedev family, on 30 April 13 2010. Prior to taking that role, you were the managing 14 director of the Evening Standard from 2007 to 2009, and 15 prior to that you worked for News International as 16 general manager of Times newspapers and marketing 17 director of Times newspapers. 18 At the present time, you are also the managing 19 director of Evening Standard Limited, which is also 20 owned by the Lebedev family, although you say the 21 companies' operations are legally, editorially and 22 financially independent from each other. Have 23 I correctly summarised the situation? 24 A. Correct, apart from 24.9 per cent is also owned by DMGT 25 of Evening Standard Limited.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 64</p>



<p>1 Q. Before we just touch on the corporate structure at the                  2 Independent and your role within that corporate                  3 structure, I'd like to touch upon something that you say                  4 at paragraph 9 of your statement. Just turn back to                  5 where we were just reading from.                  6 A. Yes.                  7 Q. You draw a distinction between serious news and                  8 celebrity kiss-and-tells, and that distinction that you                  9 make there at paragraph 9 is stressed a lot in the                  10 evidence that you give. I have this question for you:                  11 should ethical standards or codes of conduct differ                  12 depending on the content of the newspaper in your view?                  13 A. No.                  14 Q. Also, does the fact that you may not seek this type of                  15 story, celebrity kiss-and-tells and so on, mean that it                  16 is altogether easier to be ethical?                  17 A. I think that's probably a better question for the                  18 editor.                  19 Q. We'll move on to corporate governance.                  20 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: But your view about the approach to                  21 editing or what should be in newspapers or shouldn't be                  22 in newspapers professionally appropriately hasn't                  23 differed whether you've been at the Times or the Mail or                  24 whenever?                  25 A. I've never been involved in the editorial sign-off</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 65</p>	<p>1 printing the newspaper. But as you've already                  2 mentioned, the philosophy of the titles is that                  3 editorial staff are not subject to proprietorial control                  4 or influence. You say this:                  5 "As such, whilst there is an editorial and legal                  6 clearance procedure, it is generally kept separate from                  7 the financial and commercial side of the business."                  8 So two questions, please. First of all, what do you                  9 mean by the word "generally"? In what situations would                  10 the editorial and legal procedure not be kept separate                  11 from the financial and commercial side of the business?                  12 A. Newspaper businesses tend to work on annual plans and                  13 budgets pre-agreed on an annual basis, and we separate                  14 commercial and editorial to create clear editorial                  15 independence. If the editorial team is delivering their                  16 costs to the pre-arranged budgets and the sales of the                  17 newspaper are going in line with expectation, there                  18 would be no reason to challenge editorial processes or                  19 procedures at all from a commercial side. However, if                  20 something did go wrong and the sales were affected                  21 dramatically or there was a huge change in the cost of                  22 the editorial structure, it could come up to a board                  23 level and it would be debated and discussed and the                  24 editor would talk through the issues, why they had                  25 occurred, and we'd work out whether the board needed to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 67</p>
<p>1 process of stories, but I think people believe that it's                  2 exactly the same in each newspaper group but some                  3 newspaper groups have a harder challenge because they                  4 have more stories of a certain type, so the pressure on                  5 the business may be greater, so they probably are going                  6 to get it wrong slightly more times than people that                  7 don't have such challenging stories.                  8 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: They have different challenges,                  9 because you may do a story that's nothing to do with                  10 celebrities but equally involves the same sort of                  11 questions you might ask if you were looking at                  12 a celebrity, but on a serious subject, a different                  13 subject.                  14 A. Yes.                  15 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: All right.                  16 MS PATRY HOSKINS: Can I take you to paragraph 12 onwards of                  17 this statement to go through the system of corporate                  18 governance at IPL. You explain that you have a board                  19 structure in place which consists of a chairman and                  20 various other directors. The board is supported by                  21 Mr Malhotra, who we'll hear from shortly, and he also                  22 attends board meetings and takes minutes and so on.                  23 You then explain that board governance covers                  24 a number of elements but is primarily about the                  25 financial management of the business of producing and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 66</p>	<p>1 be involved in any shape or form.                  2 Q. Okay. The second question: why is editorial                  3 independence considered so important at the Independent                  4 or the IPL titles?                  5 A. I think it is every newspaper. It's the traditional                  6 way. The editorial teams are very, very separated from                  7 the commercial teams. It's built up over history. We                  8 believe it's the right way, and there's a sort of phrase                  9 that goes on: if it ain't broke, don't fix it. At the                  10 Independent, we have few PCC complaints, we have very                  11 small costs in terms of legal fees, we deal with things                  12 very quickly and we don't think there is an issue that                  13 would suggest we should change that historical process.                  14 Obviously we've been looking at things considerably                  15 in the last year in the light of what's been going on,                  16 but history suggests that it's been working for us.                  17 Q. You go on to say at paragraph 14 that board governance                  18 can be summarised in a specific way: there's a company                  19 strategy and you're responsible for that.                  20 A. Yes.                  21 Q. That's then approved and endorsed by the board. You                  22 have annual financial planning and budgeting, you have                  23 monthly board meetings and so on, and you explain at the                  24 end of the paragraph that in terms of editorial staff,                  25 they have budgets that they have to meet, and you look</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 68</p>

<p>1 at reports relating to that on a weekly basis.                  2 A. Weekly and -- mainly on a monthly basis. It's reported                  3 on a weekly but we get into the detail on a monthly                  4 basis, yes.                  5 Q. All right. Then you're asked: does this system of                  6 corporate governance work in practice? You're answer                  7 appears to be: absolutely, it's all incredibly rigorous.                  8 You then refer back to the fact that something will only                  9 be referred up to the board if something happens that                  10 affects IPL's finances or a serious reputational issue,                  11 and then you would expect the board to become involved?                  12 A. Yes.                  13 Q. Is that correct? Thank you. You explain at 17 that                  14 there are documents with cover some of the relevant                  15 issues. For example, employment contracts, contributory                  16 agreements, terms for freelancers, the PCC code, the                  17 staff handbook, and you've just introduced a formal code                  18 of conduct as well which covers policy matters in one                  19 document. That, you say, was triggered by the advent of                  20 the Bribery Act. How much input did you have into that                  21 process, the code of conduct coming into being?                  22 A. A lot. The Evening Standard, which I also manage, has                  23 HR help and legal help from DMGT, its shareholder, but                  24 when IPL was sold, all of the corporate overstructure                  25 was removed and documentation needed to be updated. The                  Page 69</p>	<p>1 our business.                  2 Q. Could I ask you allow to look at the code of conduct,                  3 please. It's in the exhibits to Mr Malhotra's                  4 statement. If you look behind tab 4 in this bundle,                  5 you'll find exhibit 1 to Mr Malhotra's statement and                  6 you'll find an extract from the code of conduct. I'm                  7 going to ask some questions about this because it is                  8 referred to in your witness statement.                  9 A. Yes.                  10 Q. Are you happy with that?                  11 A. Yes, that's fine.                  12 Q. If you'd rather --                  13 A. No, that's fine.                  14 Q. If there's any question you feel is better addressed to                  15 Mr Blackhurst, then please tell me.                  16 A. Okay.                  17 Q. Just glancing through it, we can see there are sections                  18 on anti-bribery. There's also a section on data                  19 protection, much like the Financial Times code we were                  20 looking at. Then there's a section under "Editorial                  21 provisions" on the third page which is headed "Stage                  22 one, preparing for publication". Do you see that?                  23 A. Right, yes.                  24 Q. Without reading it all out, I'd like to look at the                  25 section headed "Putting the story to the subject", which                  Page 71</p>
<p>1 commercial teams have been merged between the two                  2 businesses, so as the head of both businesses, I was the                  3 only person who could actually be involved to a deep                  4 degree in terms of trying to pull together policies. So                  5 yes, I was very much involved in it.                  6 Q. Does the code of conduct apply across the titles or just                  7 to the Independent?                  8 A. Across the titles.                  9 Q. You go on to explain in paragraph 18 that you consider                  10 your role to be absolutely fundamental and critical to                  11 all of the business strategy, et cetera, and central to                  12 corporate governance, and I think I am pretty much aware                  13 of everything that happens in that respect."                  14 A. I certainly am now, yes.                  15 Q. Okay. What do you mean you certainly are now?                  16 A. Because the history of editorial separation and                  17 a business like ours, which has been losing a lot of                  18 money in threat of going out of business, there are                  19 different focuses and priorities. If the phone hacking                  20 hadn't gone on, I think we'd have probably taken                  21 a longer time to get our code of conduct out, but it was                  22 very necessary and important that we did it for both                  23 businesses because it pulled together and created                  24 clarity on a range of issues that were cropping up                  25 across the industry and a couple that were occurring in                  Page 70</p>	<p>1 is over the page on page 4.                  2 A. Yes.                  3 Q. "It is good journalistic practice that any potentially                  4 damaging story is put to the subject before                  5 publication."                  6 Is this a kind of prior notification policy?                  7 A. It's -- the code of conduct was put together around the                  8 time of the change of the editors, where Simon Kelner                  9 stood down and Chris Blackhurst took over, and it was                  10 created in conjunction with the legal department. We                  11 meant it to be not an absolute document. It would be                  12 one that would be improved in time. This is one thing                  13 we've looked at subsequently which I don't think we're                  14 all in agreement on. I know the editor has very clear                  15 views or has different views to what's stated here now                  16 that he's in the seat, so I think I might leave that to                  17 him to comment on.                  18 Q. I'll make a note to myself that I need to ask him.                  19 Could I ask you about stage 2, which is over on page 6,                  20 "Pre-publication". This is under the heading                  21 "Attribution".                  22 A. Yes.                  23 Q. Were you here during the evidence of Mr Barber just now?                  24 A. Yes.                  25 Q. You'll have heard what he said about attribution of                  Page 72</p>

<p>1 material. What's the position at the Independent?  2 Let's just focus on the Independent for the moment.  3 A. I'll give a comment. I think the editor will give  4 a more in-depth comment on this.  5 We started to highlight some these issues around the  6 Johann Hari case, which came up just before this  7 publication, and we have stressed certain issues that we  8 think are incredibly important that might not have been  9 clear before. This was the position we took when we put  10 the code of conduct together. I think we still hold it,  11 but I think the editor can probably enlarge on that.  12 Q. I think I might ask my other questions relating to the  13 code of conduct to Mr Blackhurst.  14 Can I pick you up on something you say at  15 paragraph 30 of your statement.  16 A. 30 or 13?  17 Q. 3-0.  18 A. Okay.  19 Q. You're dealing healer with a question about the use of  20 private investigators. Do you see that?  21 A. Yes.  22 Q. You're asked whether, to the best of your knowledge,  23 your newspapers have used, paid or had any connection  24 with private investigators.  25 A. Mm-hm.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 73</p>	<p>1 the case on the sister publication, the I, which is  2 very, very interactive with readers and the whole  3 dialogue is talking about reader comments and feedback  4 on a daily basis, online and within the paper. Less so  5 on the Independent for historical practice, I think, but  6 we're not looking to take on more people if we possibly  7 can, I think is the best way of replying to that.  8 Q. Is there anything you'd like to add?  9 A. No.  10 MS PATRY HOSKINS: Thank you very much then.  11 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Thank you very much indeed.  12 MS PATRY HOSKINS: Mr Malhotra next, please.  13 MR MANISH MALHOTRA (sworn)  14 Questions by MS PATRY HOSKINS  15 MS PATRY HOSKINS: Thank you very much. Could you give your  16 full name to the Inquiry, please?  17 A. Manish Malhotra.  18 Q. You've provided a witness statement to the Inquiry.  19 It's behind tab 3 in the bundle before you. Can you  20 please confirm that the contents of it are true to the  21 best of your knowledge and belief?  22 A. I can confirm that.  23 Q. Can we turn, please, to your career history starting at  24 paragraph 7 of this statement. You explain that you are  25 currently the finance director and company secretary of</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 75</p>
<p>1 Q. And you say to the best of your knowledge no, and then  2 at paragraph 30 you say this:  3 "If this question covers payments to freelancers,  4 then yes, IPL does make payments to freelancers.  5 However, to my knowledge, IPL would not use a freelancer  6 who paid for information from private investigators or  7 public officials. We do not run those kind of stories."  8 What does that mean, "run those kind of stories"?  9 A. I think that's about the secondary sources and primary  10 source argument. I think the editor will confirm that  11 we mainly run primary source-type stories and therefore  12 we know all the sources involved. I think that's mainly  13 the line that's taken there.  14 Q. I understand. Have you, in your time at IPL, ever  15 considered the possibility of appointing a readers'  16 editor?  17 A. I think we'd like to --  18 Q. You globally, rather than you personally.  19 A. No, I think we're in the game of trying to reduce our  20 costs and give more responsibilities to fewer people,  21 so -- we're very, very tight on people and costs, so  22 I don't think we're looking to expand our remit.  23 Q. Is it a question of cost rather than principle?  24 A. I think the argument about the editor being the readers'  25 editor is probably the best answer. That's certainly</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 74</p>	<p>1 IPL, positions that you have held since the 29th and  2 30 September 2010 respectively. You explain that you  3 are also finance director and company secretary of  4 Evening Standard Limited and prior to your current roles  5 you were a finance director of the Evening Standard  6 division of Daily Mail and General Trust plc, group  7 financial controller of Associated Newspapers Limited,  8 financial controller of investments of  9 Associated Newspapers Limited and finance manager, group  10 finance at Associated Newspapers Limited. And prior to  11 joining the media industry, you worked at Baker Tilley  12 as a business services manager and an audit senior.  13 That is a correct summary, is it?  14 A. That's correct.  15 Q. I want to ask you about two things, Mr Malhotra: first  16 of all, IPL's financial scrutiny of journalists'  17 practices and expenses, and secondly, briefly, matters  18 that you raised on the IPL code of conduct. Again, if  19 those are matters best addressed to Mr Blackhurst, just  20 tell me and I'll move on.  21 Let's start with financial controls, please. At  22 paragraph 11 of your statement, you explain that  23 financial governance is extremely important to IPL and  24 that you have strict procedures in place for authorising  25 payments, expenses and so on. Why is it, in your view,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 76</p>

<p>1 so important for the newspaper to have this financial 2 governance in place?</p> <p>3 A. I think as Andy's alluded to earlier, we have 4 a separation between editorial and commercial which has 5 been known as a sort of church and state almost, as 6 a separation, and so for that reason it's very important 7 that editorial payments are going through the overall 8 corporate and financial governance of the company so 9 that we have clear sight of what's being paid and who's 10 being paid.</p> <p>11 Q. You go on to say that the procedure you have in place 12 and the constant financial scrutiny would ensure it 13 would be very difficult for employees to use IPL fund to 14 pay bribes or to fund the gathering of information by 15 illegal methods. Do you see that? It's the end of 16 paragraph 11.</p> <p>17 You go on to set out the procedures, in a nutshell, 18 that are in operation over the IPL titles. We're not 19 going to go into them in any detail, but what I want to 20 understand is whether or not these controls would 21 prevent, in practice, payments such as to police 22 officers or cash payments to private investigators, and 23 whether financial controls can really ever stamp out 24 those types of practices. Do you understand?</p> <p>25 A. Clearly there is a risk that those payments might be</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 77</p>	<p>1 Q. I'm going to give you a theoretical example. I know you 2 say at Independent or IPL titles, you don't use private 3 investigators, but imagine you had a situation where you 4 were trying to obtain information from someone like 5 a private investigator, something that you believe to be 6 above board. He may well be paid in a way which is 7 completely in compliance with the systems you have in 8 place but nevertheless is obtaining information 9 illegally. How can a system of financial controls ever 10 stop that occurring?</p> <p>11 A. I would go back to the person who has to approve that 12 payment would be -- generally within editorial payments 13 is the managing editor's office, and they would always 14 ask the person who's putting in the claim what exactly 15 this money is for, and if they're not satisfied with 16 that answer, I don't think they would make a recompense 17 to that individual.</p> <p>18 Q. I understand. You then tell us that as far as you're 19 aware these practices are adhered to in practice. Is 20 that still the case?</p> <p>21 A. Yes, it is.</p> <p>22 Q. I'm going to ask you briefly about the code of conduct, 23 simply because you refer to it in the statement and in 24 your appendix to your witness statement. It's in 25 exhibit 1 to your statement. Do you see that? You</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 79</p>
<p>1 made but we have a system of internal controls in place, 2 which places great reliance on the managing editor and 3 his office, or her office, to ensure that the payments 4 that are made are proper, are substantiated and, if 5 appropriate, that there is a receipt to support them. 6 We don't have any cash in the system, so there's no 7 mechanism for journalists or any other member of staff 8 to make those sorts of payments.</p> <p>9 We also have a very robust series of monthly 10 meetings going through the numbers, and we break down 11 the editorial budgets into a series of departments, so 12 these are relatively small numbers.</p> <p>13 We've also, as a business -- as Andy alluded to 14 earlier, we've been sailing in some fairly choppy 15 waters. It's a very competitive environment, so we've 16 been managing our cost base very carefully, which means 17 we go into quite a lot of detail to ensure we know 18 exactly what these costs are. So from my point of view, 19 we also -- we only ever really delegate the 20 responsibility for approving these payments to very 21 hand-selected senior members of staff, so what we would 22 call officers of the company: the directors, the 23 managing editors and some desk eds. So from that sense, 24 I'm very comfortable that the controls we have in place 25 would pick up these kinds of payments.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 78</p>	<p>1 explain that it came into force in September 2011. What 2 input did you have into drafting the code, putting it in 3 place?</p> <p>4 A. I was involved in to a certain extent in the drafting 5 and the initial kick-off meetings around it. I think 6 the majority of the work was done by our in-house legal 7 team, and Andy as managing director took a great lead in 8 driving this forward as well. Once the code had been 9 pushed up to board level and approved, then the 10 distribution of it was down to the HR department and 11 I took a hand in that as well.</p> <p>12 Q. You explain at paragraph 35 that the code formed an 13 integral part of editorial practice at IPL and your 14 approach, you say, is:</p> <p>15 "Our journalists are required to work within the 16 criminal law and the PCC code."</p> <p>17 So what does the IPL code of conduct add to the PCC 18 code?</p> <p>19 A. I think it's a wider document because it covers both 20 commercial and editorial operations. It also goes into 21 the use of hospitality and guidance and policies around 22 that. So it's broadening out and bringing into one 23 document a whole series of policies.</p> <p>24 Q. I want to ask you about paragraphs 36 and 38 of your 25 statement now, the contributory agreements which</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 80</p>

20 (Pages 77 to 80)

<p>1 columnists who are self-employed have to sign and the 2 terms for freelance contributions. Can I just be clear: 3 are these two policies or agreements intended to apply 4 to two different groups of people, the former being 5 self-employed columnists and the latter being simply 6 freelance journalists who may make a contribution to the 7 titles? 8 A. Yes. 9 Q. I understand that contributories have to sign 10 a particular agreement and freelancers have to comply 11 with certain terms which you append to your statement, 12 but is there any oversight over the practices of 13 self-employed contributors and freelancers over and 14 above their agreement to those terms? 15 A. I think the relationship generally with freelancers will 16 be with the commissioning editors on the desks, so there 17 you have a very good working relationship between the 18 two individuals involved. So I think that is 19 generally -- the series of checks and balances will be 20 around that relationship. 21 Q. Finally, I need to ask you about paragraph 39. You 22 explain that one of the non-executive directors, 23 Mr Whittam Smith, has carried out an internal review of 24 IPL's practices which looked at some of the issues which 25 you refer to above:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 81</p>	<p>1 A. I'm not 100 per cent sure, if I'm honest, but my 2 understanding is that it was a series of verbal 3 interviews. Whether he then took it further, I don't 4 know. 5 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Thank you. 6 MS PATRY HOSKINS: Thank you very much indeed. Is there 7 anything you want to add? I apologise, I always ask 8 that question. 9 A. No. Thank you. 10 MS PATRY HOSKINS: Finally this morning, sir, we have 11 Mr Blackhurst, the editor of the Independent. 12 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Very good. 13 MR CHRISTOPHER CHARLES BLACKHURST (sworn) 14 Questions by MS PATRY HOSKINS 15 MS PATRY HOSKINS: Good afternoon, Mr Blackhurst. Your full 16 name, please? 17 A. Christopher Charles Blackhurst. 18 Q. Again, you've provided a statement to the Inquiry 19 following the provision of a section 21 notice. Can you 20 confirm that the contents of that statement are true to 21 the best of your knowledge and belief? 22 A. Yes. 23 Q. You'll find that statement behind tab 2 in the bundle 24 that you should have before you. 25 A. Yes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 83</p>
<p>1 "This was concluded recently and Mr Whittam Smith 2 was satisfied that the titles have not been involved in 3 telephone hacking, blagging, employing private 4 journalists or any other types of improper journalist 5 practices". 6 Can you tell me a little bit about this internal 7 review. Who did he speak to? How long did the process 8 take? 9 A. My understanding is that Andreas verbally interviewed 10 a whole series of journalists, some of whom had been 11 with the paper for some years -- so it was crossing over 12 into the previous ownership by Independent News and 13 Media -- mostly the senior desk heads and managing 14 editors, to get a sense from them as to what the 15 editorial practices were and to ensure that the systems 16 that had been put in place were being adhered to in 17 practice. 18 He then reported back to the board and gave us the 19 assurance that nothing untoward had been happening. 20 MS PATRY HOSKINS: Sir, unless you have any questions, I'm 21 going to -- yes, you do. 22 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Just so that I understand, thinking 23 about what Mr Whittam Smith did, he spoke to people, 24 looked at stories, looked at documents, looked at 25 background stories, or just spoke to people?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 82</p>	<p>1 Q. We know that you have been editor of the Independent 2 newspaper since 4 July 2011. 3 A. That's correct. 4 Q. Paragraph 6 of this statement contains your previous 5 career history. You explain that you've worked in the 6 media in total for 27 years. After reading law at 7 Cambridge, you entered journalism and you worked 8 initially at a legal magazine and at various business 9 magazines. You then moved to the national newspapers 10 and have worked at six national titles: first, the 11 Sunday Times, then you were city editor at the Sunday 12 Express. You moved to the post of deputy editor at the 13 Independent and then the Independent on Sunday. Then in 14 1998, you became deputy editor at the Daily Express and 15 Sunday Express, and for the last nine years you've been 16 the city editor of the Evening Standard and you were 17 recently named business journalist of the year. Then 18 you tell us that you started in your current position, 19 as we said, in July 2011. 20 So at the time of drafting your statement, you'd 21 only been in the role for ten weeks? 22 A. That's correct. 23 Q. Now it's been about six months? 24 A. That's right. 25 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: We'll do this rather generally. Is</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 84</p>

<p>1 there anything substantial that you want to alter as  2 a result of your additional experience?  3 A. No.  4 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Thank you.  5 MS PATRY HOSKINS: I'm not going to ask you about corporate  6 governance or financial governance, you'll be glad to  7 hear.  8 A. Good.  9 Q. But I am going to ask you about some of the matters that  10 you deal with in your statement. Can we start, please,  11 with paragraph 9. You say this -- and I have to pick  12 you up on this. You'll see why.  13 "I am aware, as editor of the Independent, that we  14 are expected to operate according to the highest ethical  15 standards. The Independent -- I would say out of all  16 the national newspapers -- prides itself on taking  17 a high ethical stance. It is at the core of the  18 newspaper's brand."  19 Why do you say "of all the national newspapers"?  20 A. I think it's a historic thing, really. I think when the  21 Independent was founded by Andreas and Steve Glover and  22 Matthew Simons back in 1986 that it did take a very  23 different stance and always has done. It certainly  24 likes to think it's free from proprietorial influence.  25 In those days, you had a heavy concentration of</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 85</p>	<p>1 organisation. I mean, the Independent -- I think we  2 need to put this slightly in context. The Independent  3 is fairly small. It's extremely collegiate. We have,  4 I think across three titles, just short of 200  5 journalists, whereas other places have 600. We do have  6 some foreign correspondents but generally we are a bit  7 smaller and it's possible for people to have a rough  8 idea of what people are doing.  9 Q. Before I forget, I am going to come straight to the code  10 of conduct, please, because you were passed that  11 particular baton. If you look at tab 4 within the  12 bundle you will find at the start of that extracts from  13 IPL's code of conduct.  14 A. Yes.  15 Q. I have some questions to ask you about it, if I can.  16 First of all, please, on page 4 of that internally,  17 under the heading "Stage 1 -- preparing for  18 publication", there is a section headed "Putting the  19 story to the subject". Do you see that?  20 A. Yes.  21 Q. "It is good journalistic practice that any potentially  22 damaging story is put to the subject before  23 publication."  24 Now, good journalistic practice and what actually  25 happens in practice may be different, so can you tell us</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 87</p>
<p>1 News International papers, you had union-restrictive  2 practices that were dominating industry and the  3 Independent at that time was seen as something different  4 and has certainly maintained that ever since.  5 Obviously I heard Lionel Barber this morning and he  6 says his paper's the gold standard, and we can argue  7 among ourselves which is higher but we've certainly put  8 ourselves up there.  9 Q. I understand. You've heard Mr Malhotra and Mr Mullins  10 tell us a bit about corporate governance, the separation  11 between commercial and editorial sides of the newspaper.  12 In your view, do procedures and policies and the  13 separation between editorial and commercial sides of  14 a newspaper actually make a difference to the culture of  15 a newspaper, or does it depend more on the types of  16 stories that a newspaper is particularly interested in?  17 A. I think it does depend more on the type of stories.  18 I think some papers have a different culture,  19 a different mindset. I think if you work in the Sunday  20 market, where I have worked, there's very much a need to  21 break exclusives on Sunday. We seem to have got  22 ourselves into a position as a society where we expect  23 Sunday newspapers to break stories, so that's quite  24 different.  25 Yes, I would say it's more the culture of the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 86</p>	<p>1 whether, at the Independent, that's something that does  2 happen?  3 A. It is good journalistic practice that it's put to the  4 other side.  5 Q. Yes?  6 A. I would say that there are instances -- and I've come  7 across them, I must admit, very rarely in my short stay  8 at the Independent but in my very long time as  9 a national newspaper journalist, there are some  10 organisations -- some types of organisation that play  11 games with the press, and you have to be very wary if  12 you put a story. If you're very confident of the  13 sources, very, very confident, and I mean two or three  14 times sourced, and if you're putting it to them, they're  15 quite likely -- and I don't mean they're going to seek  16 injunctions or anything like that -- they're quite  17 likely to be tipping off other journalists. We are in  18 a very competitive field and there are one or two  19 instances, types of organisations, where you have to be  20 quite careful. If you go to them with a story, it's  21 quite likely that somebody in that organisation might  22 tip off another journalist, so you do have to be a bit  23 wary. I really don't have much problem with that  24 particular clause. I just think it's a bit broad,  25 that's all.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 88</p>

<p>1 Q. What happens in practice? Would you notify the subject?  2 A. I would expect us to, yes.  3 Q. And the situations in which you wouldn't would be  4 dictated by the fact that in the past you'd had a bad  5 experience --  6 A. Not me personally or the paper. I think it's just  7 knowledge that one or two types of organisations,  8 particularly where there's constant press attention on  9 them -- or where you phone up with a story and you just  10 have to be a bit wary that it's going to leak and it's  11 going to be passed on to another journalist on another  12 paper, and it is -- as I say, it is an extremely  13 competitive environment in which we operate.  14 Q. If someone was to say to you: "Mr Blackhurst, we've  15 decided that actually prior notification in every case  16 is going to be compulsory", would you have a concern  17 about that?  18 A. Not really, no. No.  19 Q. I was going to ask you about attribution policies within  20 the code of conduct as well. Page 6 internally.  21 A. Yes.  22 Q. Do you see that under the heading "Stage 2,  23 pre-publication"?  24 A. Yes.  25 Q. "All substantial material and quotes must be attributed  Page 89</p>	<p>1 further down:  2 "If you receive a complaint about a story, you  3 should forward it to the managing editor and legal  4 department."  5 And so on. Now, I raised with one of your  6 colleagues the possibility of a readers' editor.  7 I think his answer was: "We're not going to pay for  8 that", although he said it much more politely than that.  9 What's your personal view on the merits of having  10 a readers' editor who is independent from the editor  11 himself?  12 A. Personally, in an ideal world with a large organisation,  13 lots of resources, it would be a nice thing to have. In  14 my time as editor of the Independent and actually prior  15 to that, when I was deputy editor for a many longer  16 period than I've currently been editor, I've always --  17 I've not felt the need for it. If somebody writes to  18 me, I will read their letter, I will read their email,  19 I will pass them to the managing editor, some I may  20 respond to personally, or they will respond. I have not  21 felt the need. On the other hand, I have no problem  22 with it. As was pointed out, it is a cost, and we are  23 not an overly rich organisation and we live in hard  24 times.  25 Q. Where do you publish in the Independent corrections and  Page 91</p>
<p>1 correctly [and so on] ... whatever the source of the  2 material."  3 Then it goes on over the page to discuss quotes:  4 "If quoting someone directly, you must use their  5 exact words. Take care if you want to quote someone  6 anonymously. Ask yourself what their motivation is, if  7 they are not prepared to go on the record ..."  8 And so on. Did you hear Mr Barber give evidence  9 earlier?  10 A. Yes.  11 Q. What's the Independent's policy on using words such as  12 "sources said" or "sources close to X said"?  13 A. We don't like them. I much prefer it that we actually  14 name somebody or as close as could, give some sort of --  15 not identification but make it plain that we were  16 talking to somebody on the inside. There are stock  17 phrases like "sources close to the Prime Minister",  18 which now is sort of ingrained in our brains, and we all  19 know that's somebody at Number 10 or close, one of his  20 advisers or whatever, but generally I think we try and  21 avoid it.  22 Q. The last thing I want to ask you about is stage 3, post  23 publication.  24 A. Yes.  25 Q. Complaints handling. This is on the same page, page 7,  Page 90</p>	<p>1 clarifications?  2 A. We have a column on the -- I can't give you the  3 page number but on the letters page there's a strip down  4 there which we do use for those.  5 Q. Is that a daily column, a weekly column?  6 A. Well, fortunately we don't have daily corrections and  7 clarifications. I mean, I'd say once a week, twice  8 a week. If somebody's -- obviously if we have got  9 something wrong and they are seeking a correction in the  10 place where it appeared, I think we go along with that.  11 I have no problem with that.  12 Q. I was about to ask you where you were on the prominence  13 of apologies debate.  14 A. I think we try and publish them as prominently as we  15 can. I mean, I -- I've not had cause to put one on the  16 front page yet. If I had to -- I wouldn't want to, but  17 if I had to, I would.  18 Q. So again, a theoretical example. If someone was to come  19 to you and say, "Actually, we've decided that the  20 industry-wide standard will be that all corrections and  21 apologies must be published on page 2" -- that's only  22 a theory -- would you have a problem with that?  23 A. None --  24 Q. Or do you think that each newspaper should be allowed to  25 publish corrections where it sees fit?  Page 92</p>

<p>1 A. No, if the industry-wide standard is page 2, then page 2 2 it is. I have no problem with that at all.</p> <p>3 Q. Can I ask you to turn back to your statement now, 4 please, and ask you about your section on page 5, 5 starting at paragraph 19. You were asked about where 6 the responsibility for checking sources of information 7 lies. You've told us a bit about attribution and so on, 8 but I want to ask you about the responsibility now for 9 checking sources. You say this at the start of this 10 section:</p> <p>11 "As a preliminary comment, I would say that, from my 12 experience, this is not an issue that arises very often 13 at the Independent. Most of the stories we publish are 14 relatively straightforward news reporting, comment and 15 analysis, rather than investigative or in-depth feature 16 pieces which might rely on a wider array of sources."</p> <p>17 Now, are you really intending to say that the 18 responsibility for checking sources, that issue, doesn't 19 arise very often? And if you are, can you just explain 20 that a bit further?</p> <p>21 A. I don't think -- I suppose what I'm trying to say there 22 is that I think in nine times out of ten, or 99 times 23 out of 100, the sources are obvious. We are quoting 24 from reports, we're quoting from press conferences, from 25 named interviews. Very rarely -- not very rarely, but Page 93</p>	<p>1 "Where's the story come from?" I'll ask them. I won't 2 wait for the deputy editor to speak to the news editor 3 to speak to the reporter. We haven't got all day. 4 I mean, just get on with it.</p> <p>5 Q. Fine. Let's move on to private investigators, please. 6 This is the section starting at paragraph 30 of your 7 statement. You were asked whether the newspaper has 8 ever used or paid or had any connection with private 9 investigators in order to source stories or information. 10 You say: to the best of the knowledge in the ten 11 weeks that you'd been editor, the newspaper had never 12 used, paid or had any connection with private 13 investigators, and you say this:</p> <p>14 "Generally speaking, the sorts of stories that we 15 publish in the Independent are not the sort that would 16 require a private investigator or payments to the types 17 of third parties referred to in the question. If 18 a journalist on the newspaper did intend to use 19 a private investigator, I would expect the journalist or 20 their desk head to clear that with me in advance."</p> <p>21 Does that mean that you don't rule out the 22 possibility of using private investigators?</p> <p>23 A. I don't rule them out, no, but I'd say if I felt that 24 a story was of such paramount importance in the public 25 interest and there was a piece of information that was Page 95</p>
<p>1 rarely do we have stories where the provenance of the 2 source is an issue. In that case, I would say -- if it 3 was a news story, I would be saying to the news editor: 4 "Where's this from?" I might speak to the reporter 5 directly. I've not had cause to do it yet.</p> <p>6 Actually, I have asked the news editor: "Where's the 7 story come from?" but I mean I've been happy with the 8 answer. But it happens quite rarely.</p> <p>9 Q. You explain at paragraph 21 how, if it was necessary to 10 check the source of information, it works. Each level?</p> <p>11 A. Yes.</p> <p>12 Q. The original reporter and then the editor or the foreign 13 editor, depending whether it was a news or a foreign 14 story. Then deputy editor and then to you, with legal 15 advice.</p> <p>16 A. Yes.</p> <p>17 Q. Is that a proper process? You're happy with that 18 process?</p> <p>19 A. Yes. I mean, I think we're giving slightly the wrong 20 impression there. I stand by the words but we're not 21 talking about a corridor of offices. We are -- we work 22 with each other. I'm with the news editor, the foreign 23 editor, the deputy editor pretty much all day long, and 24 they're around me, and it's not a case of formal up and 25 down the line requests. If I want to ask a reporter: Page 94</p>	<p>1 vital, be it a phone number or an address or something 2 that was in the public interest, that that information 3 was obtained and we could not obtain it another way, 4 then I might sanction it, but it hasn't happened.</p> <p>5 Q. Over the page, paragraph 41, you were asked about 6 whether or not you pay -- or whether there are protocols 7 or policies in place relating to payments to other 8 external sources and you say that the Independent has 9 a diary page which publishes out-and-about and social 10 event-type stories. It doesn't publish inherently 11 private stories such as exclusive celebrity 12 kiss-and-tells, but you say you sometimes pay for tips 13 for stories on the diary page.</p> <p>14 Can I ask you this: you can't have seen but did you 15 hear or read of the evidence of Mr Atkins to this 16 Inquiry? He's the gentleman who produced a film called 17 Starsuckers and who planted false stories in showbiz and 18 diary columns?</p> <p>19 A. No. You're going to tell me that the Independent --</p> <p>20 Q. No, I'm not going to tell you that he rang the 21 Independent, but I am going to ask you how you ensure 22 that tips for diary pieces don't encourage fictional 23 stories planted essentially for payment?</p> <p>24 A. I think we'd have to -- I'm very wary. I mean, 25 I have -- in my own experience, I've edited diaries and Page 96</p>

24 (Pages 93 to 96)



<p>1 I was always very wary of people just ringing up who we 2 didn't know. If it's from a named journalist who is 3 a freelancer, who we have a relationship with, that's 4 different. I'm very wary indeed of somebody phoning 5 with a tip just like that, and we would only pay -- 6 I would only pay, as a point of principle, if 7 subsequently the story checked out. You wouldn't be 8 agreeing and paying -- you know, no one can just ring up 9 and say, "Pay me 50 quid, here's a story and I want it 10 in my bank account now." That's not how it works. It 11 would be -- if the story checked out, they might get 12 50 quid.</p> <p>13 Q. Do you publish a phone number or an email address in 14 your diary column for the public to ring in with tips?</p> <p>15 A. No, we're not that -- I mean, we've got -- lots of 16 people know where we are. They can get us online. 17 There's email addresses published and phone numbers, but 18 we don't -- we're not seeking -- I mean, we're not 19 actively sort of putting signs up saying, "Please send 20 us your really nasty stories." That's not how we work.</p> <p>21 Q. There are two topics that I need to ask you about before 22 we break for lunch. The first is the Johann Hari 23 scandal, in inverted commas.</p> <p>24 A. Yes.</p> <p>25 Q. Then I'm going to ask about regulatory reform. Can we</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 97</p>	<p>1 the time an interviewer and columnist for the 2 Independent?</p> <p>3 A. Yes.</p> <p>4 Q. If I can summarise it in this way: he was accused first 5 of all of plagiarism in this sense, in that it was 6 pointed out that in relation to some of the interviews 7 that he had published quotes were attributed to the 8 person that he had interviewed that had not necessarily 9 been spoken by them during the course of the interview. 10 They were in fact quotes that had been taken from other 11 sources. So, for example, in one case it was alleged 12 that the subject had said what was attributed to him but 13 he hadn't said it to Johann Hari; he'd said it in 14 a book?</p> <p>15 A. Yes.</p> <p>16 Q. Is that a fair and accurate summary of the plagiarism 17 issue?</p> <p>18 A. That's correct.</p> <p>19 Q. Secondly, Mr Hari was accused of having used a false 20 identity to go into -- it's not a very technical term, 21 I know, but to access the Wikipedia pages of others.</p> <p>22 A. Yes.</p> <p>23 Q. And amend them in such a way as to insert derogatory 24 comments.</p> <p>25 A. That's correct.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 99</p>
<p>1 do it in that order?</p> <p>2 A. Sure.</p> <p>3 Q. Can I ask you about the Johann Hari issue first of all. 4 First of all, I understand that the Johann Hari scandal 5 broke very shortly before you became editor?</p> <p>6 A. Yes.</p> <p>7 Q. Can you tell us roughly how long that was?</p> <p>8 A. Gosh, I think the paper first became aware of the 9 plagiarism allegations against him -- I think it was two 10 days before I was publicly appointed. You have to sort 11 of remember that in the background, management knew 12 there was a change of editor taking place and I think 13 the previous editor knew there was a change of editor 14 taking place, so people were -- there was an element of 15 distraction, but the story, the allegations of the 16 plagiarism, I think, broke two days before.</p> <p>17 Q. In that context, I'm going to paraphrase and I'm going 18 to just summarise very briefly what happened. If I say 19 anything that you think is incorrect, please stop me and 20 correct me.</p> <p>21 A. Yes.</p> <p>22 Q. Johann Hari was and remains an interviewer and columnist 23 for the Independent?</p> <p>24 A. He doesn't remain an interviewer.</p> <p>25 Q. All right. We'll come on to what happened but he was at</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 98</p>	<p>1 Q. Would that be a fair assessment?</p> <p>2 A. Yes.</p> <p>3 Q. You became aware of this, I assume, on taking --</p> <p>4 A. It's hard not to be aware. I mean, there was a -- the 5 whole storm broke on the plagiarism --</p> <p>6 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: What a wonderful way to start.</p> <p>7 A. It was a great way.</p> <p>8 MS PATRY HOSKINS: The storm broke and you were aware, 9 weren't you, that this had generated considerable 10 feeling?</p> <p>11 A. Yes.</p> <p>12 Q. Some supporters of Mr Hari and the excellent work that 13 he had done up to that point, and others who were very 14 angered indeed by what had occurred, not least the 15 people whose Wikipedia's entries had been changed?</p> <p>16 A. I think I'd slightly pause you there. I think there was 17 a slight gap between the plagiarism and the Wikipedia 18 amendments. They didn't happen concurrently -- sorry 19 they didn't happen simultaneously. There was a gap. 20 I think what I would want to stress was the shock 21 this caused. Enormous shock to myself, as somebody who 22 prior to then had mainly been an observer and an admirer 23 of Johann's journalism, and a much deeper shock, 24 I think, to his colleagues at the Independent. It was 25 really profound and totally unexpected.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 100</p>

25 (Pages 97 to 100)

<p>1 My response -- I don't know if I'm heading off your                  2 questions or not, but if you want to keep asking me                  3 questions --                  4 Q. If I can, I want to ask you specific questions.                  5 A. Sure.                  6 Q. Because there are two fundamental points which have been                  7 put, which I must put to you.                  8 A. Yes.                  9 Q. You can deal with it in whatever form you would like.                  10 First of all, the allegation is that the Independent or                  11 editors at the Independent had known about this for some                  12 time and had done nothing about it, secondly that the                  13 sum consequence of all of this is that Mr Hari has not                  14 been sacked from the Independent. He remains at the                  15 Independent, although he's had a leave of absence, which                  16 I'm sure you'll tell us about it in a moment. The                  17 argument that's levelled against the Independent is that                  18 you have essentially protected your own, in much the                  19 same way as it has been suggested to News of the World                  20 that after the scandal involving Neville Thurlbeck and                  21 the comments made by a High Court judge, that they                  22 protected their own. He did not face the sack from                  23 News of the World despite having been heavily criticised                  24 for his actions.                  25 If we could just take those in stages, first of all,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 101</p>	<p>1 news to me. We had no inklings of the plagiarism at                  2 all. Indeed, one of the problems with the Johann affair                  3 was that nobody had ever complained. No journalist that                  4 he'd plagiarised, no person that he'd interviewed, no                  5 member of the public, no reader, no colleague, nobody                  6 had alerted us to the fact that he had drawn his                  7 information from somewhere else. If they had, it might                  8 have been nipped in the bud at a much earlier stage.                  9 The fact was it continued.                  10 What happened was that interview, 29 June -- and                  11 I took over literally -- that's the Wednesday. I took                  12 over on the Monday. One of my first acts was to ask                  13 Andreas Whittam Smith to investigate the allegations                  14 against Johann so -- and at that stage it was just the                  15 plagiarism. We did not know about the Wikipedia. That                  16 happened later when Nick Cohen wrote his article in the                  17 Spectator. Again, we had absolutely no knowledge.                  18 I certainly didn't. I don't believe any of my                  19 colleagues did. They had absolutely not knowledge that                  20 Johann Hari was messing about on the Internet under                  21 a false name amending people's Wikipedia entries.                  22 I mean, we just had no knowledge.                  23 Q. So you started an investigation into what happened --                  24 A. Andreas Whittam Smith started an investigation.                  25 Q. How did that conclude? What were the conclusions that</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 103</p>
<p>1 the issue of cover-up. I've seen there's an interview                  2 in the bundle with Mr Kelner in which he said that he                  3 would investigate which editors knew about this. If you                  4 look behind tab 10, it's probably easier than me reading                  5 it out. You'll see an article headed "Johann Hari row                  6 is political". It's the third article in to that tab.                  7 It's dated Wednesday, 29 June 2011. It's a Guardian                  8 article. Do you see that?                  9 A. Yes.                  10 Q. At the top of the second page, the interviewer quotes                  11 Mr Kelner as saying this:                  12 "Kelner confirmed that the paper is investigating                  13 which editors knew about Hari's interview technique and                  14 that they would review some of his past articles."                  15 First of all, can you tell us whether or not the                  16 issue was investigated and whether, as part of that                  17 investigation, there was an investigation into whether                  18 editors knew about Hari's interview technique?                  19 A. I think the word "investigating" there is probably quite                  20 strong. I think Simon -- I mean, I can't speak for                  21 Simon. Maybe you want to ask Simon to speak for                  22 himself. But I think that the -- as I stressed, the                  23 paper was in deep shock. The paper hadn't -- I'm                  24 surprised you say that there was cover-up in the sense                  25 that we'd had inklings before, because that is genuinely</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 102</p>	<p>1 you reached?                  2 A. What happened was -- and there's two issues. The two                  3 issues are the plagiarism and let's call it the                  4 Wikipedia. The plagiarism -- I know it's hard for the                  5 rest of the world to understand but I've read Andreas'                  6 report. We won't publish it, simply because it is an                  7 internal report into an employee. It is a disciplinary                  8 matter. No company -- even though we're the                  9 Independent, we can't set a precedent of publishing                  10 disciplinary reports about employees. That wouldn't be                  11 on.                  12 I know it's hard for -- I mean, on the plagiarism,                  13 Johann genuinely believed he was doing nothing wrong.                  14 He wasn't amending people's words. He did fabricate                  15 things like: "He took another sip of wine and said", and                  16 obviously he wasn't taking another sip of wine, and then                  17 the bit he said he'd borrowed from elsewhere, but the                  18 fact that nobody complained, the fact that nobody                  19 spotted it, Johann did not believe he was doing anything                  20 wrong, and there was an issue, which came back to the                  21 fact that Johann left university -- he left Cambridge in                  22 2001, I think I'm right in saying, and in 2002 he was as                  23 staff columnist on the Independent, and at no stage had                  24 he had any training.                  25 Q. Is that an excuse?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 104</p>

<p>1 A. No, because there are plenty of journalists who have no 2 training who know the difference between right and 3 wrong, and I accept that, and he should have known what 4 he was doing was wrong, but nobody told him. I think in 5 terms of plagiarism, it wasn't as stark and as severe as 6 the Jayson Blair case. He wasn't fabricating hard news, 7 as far as I was aware.</p> <p>8 On the Wikipedia, he was able to produce evidence 9 that he acted in the way he did -- I mean, I don't want 10 to too much into this.</p> <p>11 Q. No, let's not go there.</p> <p>12 A. But he produced his medical history, which showed 13 that -- which, again, is another reason for not 14 publishing the report -- which showed he acted in the 15 way he did. Andreas took those into account. Andreas 16 produced a very tightly argued reasoning as to why, 17 while he had committed misdemeanours, he did not think 18 it sufficient for him to lose his job.</p> <p>19 Q. What sanctions were imposed?</p> <p>20 A. Johann's now had four months without pay. He's had 21 no -- his salary was stopped. That's four months 22 entirely without pay from the Independent. He's gone to 23 New York at his own cost to do ethics courses at 24 Columbia and NYU. He will be returning to the paper in 25 about four or five weeks' time as a columnist. He</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 105</p>	<p>1 we've not had a witness yet who is in favour of that. 2 Perhaps you could outline your views on this.</p> <p>3 A. I'm not in favour of state licensing. I think that 4 the -- as much as I regret saying it, I think the Press 5 Complaints Commission has become tarnished in the eyes 6 of the public. It is what the words say on the tin. 7 It's a receptacle for complaints, and it ought to be -- 8 I think the industry now recognises, and certainly when 9 the editors meet and we talk among ourselves, we now 10 recognise that there is need for substantial reform.</p> <p>11 What I'm profoundly against is state intervention, 12 state control of the media. I think if we can find 13 a formula so that all the newspapers are brought within 14 the new body -- I think much is made of this, but the 15 government has a way of defining newspapers for VAT 16 purposes, and so if they can be defined and brought in, 17 that might need a small statute. They are then in the 18 body, whatever this body is called. It is then 19 enshrined in every journalist's employment contract and 20 every condition of payment for a freelancer that they 21 abide by the code of this new body and failure to abide 22 by the code may lead to disciplinary measures, and in 23 the case of employed journalists, those employed by the 24 news organisations, as opposed to freelancers, it could 25 mean that they lose their job.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 107</p>
<p>1 understands he won't be interviewing people. He 2 understands -- I hope he understands that if anything 3 arises that damages the paper's reputation, then I'm 4 afraid that's it, and everything he writes will be 5 heavily looked at, as I'm sure it will be by the outside 6 world. There's a whole Twitter community who probably 7 can't wait for him to start writing again, but that's 8 what's going on happen. I think, as Roy Greenslade 9 wrote in the Guardian, he thought it was a proportionate 10 punishment.</p> <p>11 Q. So did you protect your own?</p> <p>12 A. No. I think if you're publicly suspending somebody for 13 four months without pay -- his reputation has been very, 14 very severely damaged. The reputation of the 15 Independent in relation to Johann Hari has been severely 16 damaged. He produced cogent reasons why he did what he 17 did. We are the Independent. We had to respect those. 18 I don't think we covered up at all.</p> <p>19 Q. I want to move on to ask you about press regulation and 20 reform, please. If you look at tab 9 in your bundle, 21 you will find an article which is headlined: 22 "Independent editor backs plan for bad journalists 23 to be struck off." 24 This sounds like you are in support of some kind of 25 licensing of journalists, which is interesting. I think</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 106</p>	<p>1 I certainly would advocate fining the newspapers and 2 I think this new body should be far more proactive. The 3 example I give -- I would have dearly loved in the 4 Johann Hari case to have passed the Johann Hari file to 5 the PCC and said, "There you are, you look at this, 6 I will respect this, because it won't damage --" I mean, 7 I wouldn't be sitting here -- it's not standing, you're 8 standing -- I wouldn't be sitting here being accused of 9 a cover-up if I'd passed the file to the PCC and they'd 10 come back with a verdict on Johann that I followed. 11 There's no means in the system for doing that.</p> <p>12 If you look at -- I mean, we all sort of in a way 13 poke fun at slightly anachronistic organisations like 14 the Jockey Club. The Jockey Club has a way of dealing 15 with jockeys. The Law Society has a way of dealing with 16 solicitors. The GMC -- if you're a hospital manager and 17 you suspect negligence, you go to the GMC and they look 18 into it and they might move against a doctor. There is 19 nothing in our industry for that.</p> <p>20 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: One of the problems with that -- and 21 I'm very interested in what you've just said and I'd 22 certainly like to take it up with you, but one of the 23 problems with your recent analogies is that the state is 24 entitled to say who could practice as a doctor, who can 25 practice as a lawyer or an optician or whatever, but</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 108</p>

<p>1 it's fundamental to freedom of expression that what you 2 are doing when you're writing something is doing no more 3 than exercising your right of free speech. 4 A. Um ... 5 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Whether that means you have to have 6 a job is different, and I take the point you make. 7 A. I think the way I would do it, and I have given some 8 thought to this, is that this new body, if they said -- 9 I mean, you know, let's use hypothetical -- I don't 10 really want to use Johann, it's not fair on him, but say 11 they came back to me and said, "We believe that Johann 12 Hari broke our code, broke the code, and in our view he 13 should not continue to be employed by the Independent." 14 Obviously we have our own HR. The contract is with us, 15 the employer, but in that contract, if there was 16 a clause saying that it would be a disciplinary matter, 17 that if you broke the code, we would then hold -- it 18 would be quite a brave organisation that then turned 19 around and said, "Actually, you know what, we hear what 20 you say but we're going to ignore it." 21 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: You can tweak that slightly and fit 22 in with employment law responsibilities by saying that 23 a disciplinary matter could be adjudged by a press 24 complaints authority, whatever it's called -- 25 A. Sure.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 109</p>	<p>1 are magazines that don't subscribe. 2 A. Yes. 3 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: It's not merely the Express. 4 A. I think if you're -- obviously it is the right of 5 everybody to go to a photocopying machine and start 6 writing and photocopying and handing out pamphlets in 7 the street. That's the sort of society we believe in 8 and the sort of society we want, and that's a principle 9 that we hold very dear, all of us in this room. Well, 10 I can't speak for everyone, but we do. 11 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Well, I'm going to agree with you. 12 A. Yes, good. But on the other hand we need to find a way 13 of defining newspapers and magazines, if they're taking 14 paid-for advertising. The government is able to find 15 a way. The HMRC defines it for the purposes of VAT. 16 Newspapers are exempt from VAT. I haven't looked at how 17 they define but they do define it. 18 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: It could be also the trade or 19 business of journalism. 20 A. Yes. 21 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: So, in other words, one analogy, if 22 I take a quite different example: if you sell your car 23 individually, then you're not within the trade 24 description legislation. 25 A. Sure.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 111</p>
<p>1 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: -- and passed back to the management 2 of the newspaper to deal with the particular journalist 3 as they felt right. 4 A. Yeah. 5 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I could see that, but I'd like to go 6 back on what you've just said, because what you did say 7 is that -- hang on: 8 "If we can find a formula so that all newspapers are 9 brought within the new body ..." 10 And you said that might require a small statute. 11 You probably heard my exchange with Mr Barber, that I'd 12 be very keen to ensure that whatever regulation there 13 was was independent. 14 A. Yes. 15 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I like that word, if you'll allow me 16 to use it. 17 A. It's a good word. 18 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: That it isn't in any sense 19 state-controlled or state-influenced. But to get some 20 of the bells and whistles in place, do I gather -- 21 A. We have a problem at the moment, as you know, with 22 Express Newspapers not wishing to be part of the PCC, 23 and therefore we don't have -- in terms of our national 24 title, we don't have an all-encompassing referee. 25 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: And there are lots more, too. There</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 110</p>	<p>1 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: If, however, every single week you're 2 advertising three different cars in a newspaper, then 3 it's an inference that you're in the trade or business 4 of selling cars and you are then -- 5 A. That's right. 6 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: -- so it's that sort of thing. 7 A. That's right, and I think that then spills over onto 8 other areas, because obviously one area of concern is 9 the Internet, but it strikes me that there's an enormous 10 amount of concern about people blogging and saying what 11 they like on the Internet, but how often does it 12 actually come back to the story not being true until 13 a recognisable, reputable news organisation has actually 14 reported it? And that happens all the time. 15 Yes, there's a blogosphere out there, but it's the 16 BBC -- until it's on the BBC reporting it, or until it's 17 in the Independent, the Guardian, the Times or the Sun 18 or whatever, it's not regarded as true. Therefore, some 19 type of badging, whether it's kite marks or standards or 20 whatever, could easily be applied. If you want that 21 standard, you have to play by these rules. I don't see 22 that as -- it wouldn't affect the way I go about my 23 business as a journalist, and would not affect the way 24 the Independent goes about its business. 25 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Sorry. I'll have a go after you.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 112</p>

1 MS PATRY HOSKINS: I'm very conscious of the time and the  
 2 fact that you may have questions for Mr Blackhurst.  
 3 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Yes. Let me just carry on a little  
 4 bit.  
 5 You also heard the exchange about libel and the  
 6 whole cost of litigation, and you've heard me speak  
 7 about some sort of arbitral system which allowed people  
 8 cheaply to resolve issues without incurring these vast  
 9 expenses, both sides.  
 10 A. Yeah. I think -- I heard Lionel Barber and I agree with  
 11 him and I think I know the law firm he was referring to,  
 12 and when you get one of their letters, you feel you're  
 13 going to be boiled in -- you know, they're pretty  
 14 horrific.  
 15 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I'm not going to get too involved in  
 16 what law firms or how they write letters. I'm more  
 17 concerned with the idea of providing a mechanism, but if  
 18 it's consensual, then the very, very wealthy will simply  
 19 say, "I'm not interested". If that's the only way they  
 20 can do it, then actually that has an advantage for the  
 21 vast majority of people, and indeed for the press as  
 22 well.  
 23 A. Yes. I'm intrigued as to -- in my time, and I've  
 24 worked, as has been said, on Sunday Times, Express,  
 25 Observer, Independent, Independent on Sunday -- I've not

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1 really come across these people who are libelled and  
 2 have no form of redress. I'm not entirely sure that --  
 3 but nevertheless, if this new body had --  
 4 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Mr Blackhurst, with respect, you  
 5 wouldn't, because if they have no money and have not  
 6 been able to go to libel lawyers, then they'll be told,  
 7 "I'm very sorry, unless you have £X thousand to invest  
 8 in it, you're wasting time."  
 9 A. Except now we operate in a different world of  
 10 conditional fee arrangements.  
 11 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: That's only comparatively recently.  
 12 A. Yeah. I -- it would not cause me a problem, and I don't  
 13 believe it would cause a Independent a problem, if this  
 14 new body had some sort of -- let's call it arbitration  
 15 division or complaints division that actually dealt with  
 16 these cases and both sides respected. It wouldn't  
 17 bother me at all. I am all for legal disputes being  
 18 settled in an afternoon by both parties in a room, and  
 19 that's it, and I've always thought that should be the  
 20 best way to operate. If it's left to lawyers, dare  
 21 I say it, it will be strung out because -- you know.  
 22 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: We're not that evil.  
 23 A. No, no, no, lots of my friends are lawyers.  
 24 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: That doesn't necessarily disagree  
 25 with what you just said.

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1 I'm interested in a system, however we devise it,  
 2 that works for everybody.  
 3 A. Obviously I've not made a study of this, but one that  
 4 does come to mind is in construction law. In  
 5 construction, they have very quick procedures where  
 6 money is agreed. You know, they have a very quick  
 7 arbitration procedure. You know, as I understand it,  
 8 they have an expert, who probably isn't a judge, an  
 9 expert who might be, in our case I guess it would be  
 10 a former editor or former -- somebody who would sit in,  
 11 both sides agree, and it's settled there and then.  
 12 I don't see why something like that from the world of  
 13 construction could not be applied to journalism.  
 14 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: All right.  
 15 MS PATRY HOSKINS: Sir, it's past 1 o'clock.  
 16 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Do you have any more?  
 17 MS PATRY HOSKINS: I don't have any more questions for  
 18 Mr Blackhurst. I've not afforded him the opportunity --  
 19 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I'll afford him the opportunity. Is  
 20 there anything you'd like to say that you don't feel  
 21 you've had the opportunity to say?  
 22 A. No. I think it's a matter of regret that the PCC has  
 23 been found to be wanting. I think we all recognise the  
 24 need for reform. My biggest worry is that the sort of  
 25 journalism that we do, and we do do investigations and

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1 we do think they're in the public interest, and I would  
 2 count some other newspapers in this -- but also I don't  
 3 think, you know, some the newspapers who've been  
 4 traduced in public in the last months, they do fantastic  
 5 work. Without the Daily Mail on Lawrence, we wouldn't  
 6 have got to where we got last week. Without the  
 7 News of the World, we'd still believe that Test cricket  
 8 was entirely clean. These are huge things.  
 9 I'm very worried that the outcome of this Inquiry,  
 10 and I hope not, that our ability as an industry to  
 11 investigate will be curtailed, because it's pretty hard,  
 12 investigating. We don't live in an open society,  
 13 whatever people might think, and finding out things  
 14 about people that they do not want you to find out --  
 15 I mean, one thing that's lost in all this is that when  
 16 you're doing investigations, and I've done an awful lot,  
 17 the key point is very often the person you're  
 18 investigating does not want you to find out.  
 19 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Somebody defined news as: something  
 20 that somebody else doesn't want you to hear.  
 21 A. Yeah.  
 22 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I understand that point and I am  
 23 absolutely at one with you that nothing should happen  
 24 which, in any sense, impacts adversely on appropriate  
 25 journalism.

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<p>1 A. Yeah.</p> <p>2 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: The problem and the trick is going to</p> <p>3 be to separate out all that is good, and there is</p> <p>4 a great deal that is good, as I've said several times.</p> <p>5 A. I would stress very heavily there's a lot more good than</p> <p>6 bad.</p> <p>7 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Yes, that's as may be, that's as may</p> <p>8 be; but, on the other hand, there certainly have been</p> <p>9 some practices which are not entirely laudable.</p> <p>10 A. Sure.</p> <p>11 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: And it's not just phone hacking.</p> <p>12 A. No, it's not just phone hacking, although I stress on</p> <p>13 phone hacking, if the police had not had such a cosy</p> <p>14 relationship with News International, as they possibly</p> <p>15 had, it may have been investigated a lot earlier and</p> <p>16 people dealt with.</p> <p>17 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Except, we have to be a little bit</p> <p>18 careful about that as well, Mr Blackhurst, because we</p> <p>19 don't have a society where a policeman can sit on</p> <p>20 everybody's shoulder, and I'm not making any finding</p> <p>21 about this at all.</p> <p>22 A. Sure.</p> <p>23 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: But I've read some of what has been</p> <p>24 said in Parliament, and it is at least plausible that if</p> <p>25 you're investigating or concerned about enormous crimes</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 117</p>	<p>1 A. Oh, gosh. We're not going there, are we?</p> <p>2 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: You look at everybody else. The</p> <p>3 extent to which you look at yourselves -- you are now,</p> <p>4 I recognise that.</p> <p>5 A. We do. There is a sort of -- you know, the phrase</p> <p>6 "people in glass houses" always springs to mind.</p> <p>7 Whenever we look at what another paper's done, we're</p> <p>8 very wary, and I think they're wary about having a go at</p> <p>9 us, and there is a sort of unwritten code between us</p> <p>10 that we don't do that sort of thing.</p> <p>11 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: And that's the problem. Because we</p> <p>12 look to you, the press, to guard all of us, and we</p> <p>13 therefore need to make sure we have robust systems that</p> <p>14 guard you.</p> <p>15 A. Sure.</p> <p>16 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: That takes me back to the early part</p> <p>17 of July, which is what I said when I was first</p> <p>18 appointed. Mr Blackhurst, thank you very much indeed.</p> <p>19 A. Thank you.</p> <p>20 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: We'll say 2.10 pm.</p> <p>21 (1.08 pm)</p> <p>22 (The luncheon adjournment)</p> <p>23</p> <p>24</p> <p>25</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 119</p>
<p>1 against the country, terrorism or the like, that how</p> <p>2 much you investigate every single allegation of data</p> <p>3 protection or hacking -- I'm not in any sense</p> <p>4 applauding, approving; I'm merely saying there's</p> <p>5 a balance even there.</p> <p>6 A. Yes.</p> <p>7 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: But one has to be a little bit</p> <p>8 careful about saying if the police had done their job --</p> <p>9 if it's to do with their relationship with</p> <p>10 News International, doubtless we'll find out.</p> <p>11 A. Sure.</p> <p>12 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: That's part of the Inquiry.</p> <p>13 A. Likewise, you could say if the PCC had done their job,</p> <p>14 we might not --</p> <p>15 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Yes.</p> <p>16 A. They're one of the guilty parties here.</p> <p>17 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: But my concern is it's a bit more</p> <p>18 fundamental than all that.</p> <p>19 A. Sure, sure.</p> <p>20 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: But I entirely endorse your view that</p> <p>21 there is much, the predominance, the real predominance</p> <p>22 of work that's done by the press in this country is to</p> <p>23 everybody's advantage.</p> <p>24 The extent to which the press investigate the press</p> <p>25 is perhaps another question.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 118</p>	

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