

# Trinity Mirror plc

21 July 2011

John Whittingdale Esq, MP  
Chairman  
Commons Select Committee on Culture, Media and Sport  
House of Commons  
London SW1A 0AA

Dear Mr Whittingdale

I write with reference to the two sessions of your Committee held on Tuesday afternoon. I was unsure whether it was most appropriate to write to The Speaker or to you but have decided that, as my concern is over something that happened in your Committee, I should in the first instance address my concerns to you.

I set out below two passages drawn from the uncorrected transcripts of Tuesday's hearings. They are both consistent with what I remember hearing as I watched the live broadcasts.

On two occasions Mrs Mensch made uncaveated statements purporting to be facts. On both occasions she made allegations that are wholly untrue. Absent proof to the contrary, we are of course prepared to accept that this was not out of malice but was a mistake due to poor briefing. Nevertheless, if her comments remain uncorrected, they could cause The Mirror serious reputational damage and are likely to be repeated elsewhere.

She said:

In questioning James Murdoch,

**Q404 Louise Mensch:**

*Thank you. Two final questions. The first is, you touched earlier, Mr James Murdoch, very briefly on the general culture of phone hacking, blagging and illegal practices that have in the past happened in the country. If I could put a couple of things to you. You do not appear to have asked Piers Morgan, who is now a celebrity anchor at CNN, any questions at all about phone hacking. As a former editor of the Daily Mirror, he said in his book The Insider recently that that "little trick" of entering a "Standard four digit code" will allow "anyone" to call a number and "hear all your messages". In that book, he boasted that using that "little trick" enabled him to win scoop of the year on a story about Sven-Goran Eriksson. That is a former editor of the Daily Mirror being very open about his personal use of phone hacking.*

In questioning Rebekah Brooks,

**Q478 Louise Mensch:**

*I would like to draw you out on the question that I put to Mr James Murdoch at the end of our last session. On the wider culture of hacking, blagging and private detectives in Fleet Street, to what extent did the News of the World feel justified, in its internal culture, in using those practices because everybody was doing it?*

Sly Bailey  
Chief Executive

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*I put to him that Piers Morgan – now a celebrity anchor on CNN – said openly in his book, which, clearly, was published before this controversy broke, that he had hacked phones. He said that he won scoop of the year for a story about Ulrika Jonsson and Sven-Goran Eriksson. He actually gave a tutorial in how one accesses voicemail by punching in a set default code. Clearly, from the account that he gives, he did it routinely as editor of the Daily Mirror. It was something that happened at the Daily Mirror, he was, of course, also an ex-employee of News International.*

Whereas the actual passage in Mr Morgans book reads:

**Friday 26 January**

*I've been called to another interview with the DTI next month. Rather worryingly, this development leads to a flurry of calls from journalists asking about it. Given that the DTI has not to my knowledge leaked anything about this case to anyone, I am mystified. But someone suggested today that people might be listening to my mobile phone messages. Apparently if you don't change the standard security code that every phone comes with, then anyone can call your number and, if you don't answer, tap in the standard four digit code to hear all your messages. I'll change mine just in case, but it makes me wonder how many public figures and celebrities are aware of this little trick.*

This, as you can see, puts a completely different light on the matter.

Furthermore, nowhere in the book does Mr Morgan boast "that using that little trick enabled him win Scoop of the Year". Again that claim is simply wrong.

I understand that on Tuesday afternoon Mr Morgan himself, in his capacity as a presenter for CNN, attempted to get Mrs Mensch to explain her allegation but she refused to do so citing Parliamentary privilege.

We hold no brief for Mr Morgan and have had little contact with him since he left our employment but it is wholly wrong that a Member of Parliament can use their position to make statements of "fact" that are wholly wrong. If a witness before your Committee did the same you would at best subject them to severe criticism and at worst would seek to have them held in contempt of Parliament.

We are writing to you to ask that you ensure that Mrs Mensch immediately corrects her statements.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sly Bailey', written in a cursive style.

**Sly Bailey**