

Tom Watson MP



House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA

The Rt Hon David Cameron MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA

4 October 2010

Dear Mr Cameron,

NEWS OF THE WORLD PHONE HACKING SCANDAL

You will be aware of the Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee's Press Standards, Privacy and Libel report of February 2010 in which Mr Andy Coulson, your Communications Director, told MPs that he had no recollection of incidences where phone hacking took place whilst he was Editor of the News of the World.

New allegations made today to Channel 4's Dispatches programme, by a former senior executive of News International, however, claim that Mr Coulson did in fact know about hacking, and that he listened to tapes of intercepted voicemail messages. These allegations are new, far reaching and warrant investigation.

The report to be broadcast on the Dispatches programme casts doubt on the accuracy of the oral evidence provided to the Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee on 21 July 2009 by Mr Coulson in which he said: "I was, as you know, Editor of the *News of the World* for four years from January 2003 until January 2007. During that time I never condoned the use of 'phone hacking and nor do I have any recollection of incidences where 'phone hacking took place".

Accordingly, I think it is necessary for you to make a statement in Parliament on this matter next week. If a government minister were to be the subject of similar allegations, they would be forced to stand down immediately while an investigation is carried out. We are now at the point where I firmly believe you should consider a similar course of action with regards to Mr Coulson's conduct.

I am sure you would agree misleading a parliamentary committee of the House of Commons is a very serious matter, and therefore these allegations need to be investigated. Parliament and the public would expect nothing less from you.

I look forward to hearing from you, at the earliest opportunity, in response to the points that I have raised.

Yours sincerely

Tom Watson
Member of Parliament for West Bromwich East