

The Leveson Inquiry

Witness Statement for Part 1, Module 2

Third witness statement of Jane Winter

I, Jane Winter, Director of British Irish Rights Watch of

will say as follows:

1. I make this statement for Module 2 of the Inquiry. I have previously submitted two statements for Module 1. My second statement was held back to be considered in either Module 2 or Part 2.

2. I will not repeat the facts contained in my earlier statements in any detail. In brief:
 - I was informed by a client in around July 2011 that our email communications had been accessed through a Trojan virus in his computer and that the matter was being investigated by the Metropolitan Police.
 - I was not contacted by the Police and on 28 October 2011 my solicitor wrote to an officer in the Operation Tuleta team and indicated my willingness to make a statement. I met with two officers conducting the investigation and made a statement on 9 November 2011.
 - Shortly after this meeting, I was informed by another client who had been contacted by the same police officer and informed that his computer had been hacked at the same time (summer of 2006). I checked my records and discovered that we had exchanged emails at that time in respect of a highly confidential meeting. I had also been telephoned after the meeting by a journalist from the Sunday Times newspaper who asked about the meeting and a report of the meeting subsequently appeared in the Sunday Times newspaper in August 2006.

- My solicitor contacted the police officer again to ask about the investigation into this incident and to confirm that I was prepared to make a statement. I met with the officers in January 2012 and my statement dealing with both incidents was finalised.
3. I appreciate that the investigation is ongoing but I do have a number of concerns about how the matter has progressed to date. First, I have a general unease that it is the Metropolitan Police who are leading this investigation when my understanding is that other officers from the same force are being investigated for allegedly passing information to the press.
 4. Second, I am concerned that I only discovered my communications had been hacked because my clients told me and not from the police officers investigating the allegations and that I had to take steps to make contact with the police. I know that my clients had been in contact with the police for some considerable time before I discovered I was a victim, and yet the police made no attempt to inform me at all. Unfortunately, I no longer have the computer that was in use in 2006 but I would have thought that the police would have contacted me to establish whether I was also a direct victim of the hacking as well as a secondary victim.
 5. Finally, I am concerned about how long the police might have known or had reason to believe that such activities went on. It appears that they might have known about them since 2006 and yet nothing was done until 2011. As far as I can ascertain from the events surrounding my case, it appears that when the investigation finally commenced, it was largely prompted by action from the victims and that those victims have had to take the lead, for example, by notifying other affected parties.

6. I believe the facts contained in this statement are true.

Signed 

.....
Jane Winter

Dated: 21st February 2012