

Opening statement

Before addressing the important questions asked by the Inquiry, I would like to take this opportunity to set out, briefly, some overarching thoughts.

First, this inquiry was and is essential; most of all for the victims of phone hacking and other illegal practices. Clearly some politicians were targeted but it is those who never sought to be public figures or to be in the limelight, including families like the Dowlers, who have suffered the most, and who most need some measure of justice from this Inquiry.

Second, for some time it was apparent that power was being exercised irresponsibly by some sections of the press.

The failure to get to grips with this earlier was a failure on the part of the police who failed adequately to investigate it, and politicians who, with a few exceptions, failed to challenge early enough what was happening.

Third, when politicians finally did speak out, it had a liberating effect on our ability to represent the public interest. The sense of immunity which News International felt, even on the day of the Milly Dowler revelations, has disappeared. This is good for our democracy.

Fourth, I have said, along with other politicians and with the benefit of hindsight, that I should have spoken out earlier. I first called for an independent inquiry in April 2011. Following the revelations about Milly Dowler I was immediately clear that that inquiry needed to be judged.

I believe that this Inquiry offers a unique opportunity to minimise the risk that these sort of abuses will recur, to establish a better relationship between the press and politics, and to restore the reputation of the press.

1. Who you are and a brief summary of your career history.

Ed Miliband. I have been Leader of Her Majesty's Opposition and Leader of the Labour Party since September 2010. I became an MP, representing Doncaster North, in May 2005 and held successive Ministerial portfolios in the Labour Government from May 2006 to May 2010 as follows:

May 2006 – June 2007: Parliamentary Under-Secretary with responsibility for the Third Sector

June 2007 – October 2008: Minister for the Cabinet Office and Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster

October 2008 – May 2010: Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change

May 2010 – September 2010: Shadow Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change

Questions about the relationship between politicians and the media

2. In your view, what are the specific benefits to the public to be secured from a relationship between senior politicians at a national level and the media? What are the risks to the public interest inherent in such a relationship? In your view, how should the former be maximised, and the latter minimised and managed? Please give examples.

There are three primary benefits to the public from relationships between the media and senior politicians: transparency, accountability, and the providing of information about policies and political process.

A free press plays a vital role in our democracy. The public needs to be properly informed about the workings of our democratic system and that means knowing about national politicians and their ideas. It also means knowing about what national politicians do as well as what they say, especially if they hold public office. None of that can happen without the media. The public benefits from there being a relationship between the media and the politicians which allows the media properly to scrutinize the politician and his or her policies, and which allows the politician better to communicate with the public.

Politicians must respect, protect and promote proper press freedom. Proprietors and editors of media organisations have a responsibility to ensure that their employees act with propriety and within the law. When these boundaries are observed, the media plays a critical role in the democratic process: holding those with political power to account, and keeping their readers and viewers informed. I think the public interest is best served if there is respect on both sides and fair play in our dealings with each other.

The risk inherent in such relationships is that they could lead to an inappropriate degree of closeness which affects the decisions of politicians in relation to sensitive issues such as media ownership. There should be absolutely no question of support by the media in return for favours from politicians. That is why I have expressed concern about the evidence revealed by this Inquiry in relation to the recent handling of the BSkyB bid by the Government.

Greater transparency in the relationship between the media and politicians is part of ensuring relationships are put on the right footing. The solution also lies in a change in culture brought on by this transparency and the events surrounding phone-hacking.

The effect of the events of last summer, which led to the setting up of this Inquiry have already led to some change, including the departure of senior executives at News International. The extent to which the changes are sustained depends in significant part on what is revealed by this Inquiry, and what policy changes follow in its wake.

3. Would you distinguish between the position of a senior politician in government and a senior politician in opposition for these purposes? If so, please explain how, and why.

As a general principle, I wouldn't distinguish between politicians in government and politicians in opposition. Most of the same generic issues apply. All of us who aspire to public office should be held to the same standards of truthfulness and probity.

That said holding public office clearly brings with it specific responsibilities for which politicians - and others - in those positions should be held accountable. Government ministers have to be held to account for example for their use of public funds, for policy and other decisions they make, for acting in a quasi-judicial capacity when they are required to do so, and for maintaining the proper confidentiality of government secrets or sensitive documents.

Opposition politicians do not generally have access to this kind of information. They don't act in any quasi-judicial capacity. However, they do have to decide on policy issues affecting the media. And they aspire to hold office. The system is severely damaged if the inappropriate degree of closeness I have described in answer to question 2 arises between the media and opposition politicians.

Where a minister has particular responsibility either for relations with the media (for example the re-negotiation of the BBC Charter), for legislation affecting the media or for issues related to the ownership or regulation of the media, very clear boundaries have to be observed. In these circumstances government ministers must observe absolute impartiality, even handedness and an arms-length approach. This may well involve, in some cases, no contact whatever with the relevant media interests, to prevent any accusation of partiality or corruption. The Ministerial Code in part exists to ensure this kind of probity.

4. What are the specific benefits and risks to the public interest of interaction between the media and politicians in the run up to general elections and other national polls? Do you have any concerns about the nature and effect of such interactions, or the legal, regulatory or transparency framework within which they currently take place? Do you have any views that the Inquiry should take into account when considering recommendations for the future in this regard?

Election campaigns are periods of heightened media coverage of politics, with the sense of there being a great deal at stake. The benefits of interaction between the media and the politicians in the run up to general elections and other national polls are, in principle, the same as I have described in answer to question 2 - transparency, accountability and the provision of information about policies and the political process. And the risks are, in principle, the same too.

5. What lessons do you think can be learned from the recent history of relations between the politicians and the media, from the perspective of the public interest? What issues should the Inquiry consider when making recommendations for the future, in relation to the conduct and governance of relationships between politicians and the media in order that the public interest should be best served?

There are many lessons to learn from the recent history of relations between the media and politicians. I pick out the following.

First, politicians were too slow in condemning or scrutinising the conduct of the media, in particular the phone hacking abuses. There were a number of reasons for this.

Clearly, a factor was the impact that it might have on the prospects of particular political parties. In addition, politicians were wary, in some ways rightly, of being seen to be curtailing the freedom of the press.

Second, the regulatory framework applying to the print media was ineffective either in preventing or providing remedy for abuses such as phone hacking. There was also insufficient enforcement by the police of the criminal law for there to be an adequate check on the conduct of some elements of the print media, in particular some of the Murdoch newspapers.

Third, the concentration of media ownership in a small number of hands, particularly across different forms of media, increased the importance of those proprietors in the eyes of some politicians. It increased the conflict between the politician's duty to act in the public interest, and his or her interest in remaining on good terms with the powerful media proprietor.

Fourth, the revelation of the relationships between some representatives of the media and some politicians has further undermined trust in both the media and politicians.

In the light of these lessons I believe that the Inquiry, in considering recommendations for the future should focus on the following issues:

1. There needs to be effective regulation of the print media to prevent misconduct such as the hacking of Milly Dowler's phone, the gross intrusions of private space and grief, and the illegitimate use of confidential material. The sense there was no body which had the power to hold the print media to account greatly increased the imbalance in the relationship between the media and the public. The PCC has proved to be entirely inadequate in dealing with the scandal of phone hacking and was seen by many as ineffective even before that. It lacked sufficient teeth and was probably too close to one side – the press rather than the public. There is clearly a question for the Inquiry about what sort of regulatory body should replace the PCC.

A new body should have: a) clear independence from those it regulates and freedom from political interference; b) proper investigative powers; c) an ability to enforce corrections; d) a system that is focused on the needs of the public which is accessible for all and not available only to the rich; e) a system that applies to all newspapers.

2. the response to the hacking scandal must include a fresh look at media ownership issues, including cross-media ownership rules.

To address the problem of too great a concentration of ownership, my view is that there must be several changes: 1) action by regulators cannot be confined just to an event such as a takeover – there must be a test which applies at all times; 2) there must be lower thresholds for concentration; 3) there must be a strong Ofcom, which must be powerful in practice as well as on paper, including having the power to enforce its decisions, for example through divestiture.

3. Consideration should also be given to the way that decisions are made about competition and plurality issues affecting the media.

There is a public interest which means politicians must, in my view, continue to be able to take a view on issues of media ownership. But they should be guided by the informed and independent advice of the appropriate regulatory body in ensuring that the public interest is upheld.

The Inquiry may want to recommend a higher bar before a politician wishes to depart from the advice of a regulator.

4. As I have already said, one obvious way to improve the relationship between politicians and the media and serve the legitimate public interest in that relationship is for politicians to be much more open and transparent about their dealings with the press and vice versa.

6. Would you distinguish between the press and other media for these purposes? If so, please explain how, and why.

Broadly the principles outlined above are relevant to all relationships between politicians and the media. Key relationships between politicians and senior players in the media should be subject to greater transparency. That's true for newspaper proprietors and editors and its true for broadcast editors, senior executives and proprietors.

And there is a well-established requirement for effective regulation of both broadcast and print media. However, there is a different regulatory approach to broadcast news which I do not believe is appropriate for the press. This partly reflects the need both for an impartial source of information for the public from television news, and at the same time, the need for a plurality of voices in print which can, and do, represent different points of view.

7. Please explain the approach you personally have taken to engaging with media proprietors and senior editorial, executive staff and political editors within the media. Your answer should cover at least the following, in relation to your tenure of the leadership of the Labour Party - indicating as appropriate whether the information relates to that capacity or a private capacity: (a) the nature and frequency of contacts of this nature, whether formal or informal. Please provide all available records of meetings and conversations, indicating where possible who initiated them and the purpose and content of these occasions. The Inquiry is aware of the document released by the Labour Party setting out your meetings with proprietors, editors and senior media executives from 27 May 2010 – 22 July 2011 and would be grateful if you could expand on this information as part of your response to this question; (b) details of any relevant hospitality you have given, received or participated in; (c) the value of these interactions to you; (d) the extent to which political support by the media for any individual, party or policy is discussed at such interactions; (e) the extent to which the existence and nature of such interactions are or are not placed within the public domain and the reasons for that.

- a. As Leader of the Opposition I have a range of contacts with members of the media, both formal and informal. These are a necessary part of my role allowing me to explain to journalists, editors and others my party's values and policies and giving them the opportunity to question or scrutinise me. The range of these contacts includes formal press conferences, interviews, meetings, social events, and informal conversations including, for example, occasional encounters around the Palace of Westminster where many political journalists work. Interactions recorded in the diary and significant phone calls are recorded in Annex A.
- b. Most meetings with members of the media take place in my office. They may also occur at the invitation of a media organisation either in their offices or in a restaurant. Usually in the latter case and if I am the invited guest any hospitality is paid for by representatives of the media attending. I invite members of the parliamentary lobby to drinks in my office once a year.
- c. Interacting with the journalists and commentators who write and broadcast, as well as the editors who shape news and editorial comment allows me and my party (and other political parties) to communicate our messages and to explain our policies. They also help journalists to learn a little more about who I am and what motivates me as Leader of the Labour Party.
- d. Until recently most interactions with proprietors, editors and senior media executives were regarded as private. However, it is right to provide greater transparency about such contacts. It is particularly important when some media organisations have significant commercial interests which can be affected by political decisions. That is what we now do in the list of meetings we publish.

8. In your experience, what influence do the media have on the content or timing of the formulation of a party's media policies? Please describe, with examples, your party's approach to consultation with, and the handling of representations by, media interests in the formulation of policies directly affecting the media.

When in government I never occupied a position related to media policy so I should be clear that I do not have direct experience of these matters.

However, I do believe politicians were sometimes too reluctant to speak out on issues like the way the Press Complaints Commission worked. The likely reaction of the press to any such proposals must have played a role. In part also there would have been caution about politicians interfering, or appearing to curtail, the freedoms of the press.

As regards my party's approach to media policy formulation now, we would take the view that all interested parties should be consulted as policy is developed. There are good reasons for politicians to speak to proprietors, journalists, and editors in considering this kind of policy development.

For example, my frontbench has had discussions with national newspaper editors in the wake of last year's phone hacking scandal as we considered what the failure of the PCC might mean for a future regulatory environment.

It is essential that the nature of such consultations does not lead to the perception of politicians attempting to skew the playing field towards one set of interests or another. This is complex territory where, once again, greater transparency, especially on the part of the government, is the best and perhaps the only way to minimise this risk.

There is an important difference between proper consultation, essential for effective and robust policy, and allowing any media organisation undue influence. Publication of all party leaders' meetings with proprietors and editors, as I argued last year, helps.

9. In your experience, what influence have the media had on the content and timing of governments' decision-making on policy or operational issues directly affecting the media? Please provide some examples.

When it comes to specific decisions being taken, there is a particular need to avoid either the reality or the perception of undue influence being exercised by interested parties. That is one reason we have consistently supported roles for independent regulators and competition watchdogs in key decisions such as acquisitions of media outlets.

I have said that Labour did at times become too close to News International. As Tony Blair has said it was also because: "We paid inordinate attention in the early days of New Labour to courting, assuaging, and persuading the media."

But I have seen no evidence that this affected any decision which was taken in applying the regulatory framework to media ownership. In 2007 Alistair Darling referred BSkyB to Ofcom, the Office for Fair Trading and the Competition Commission over its stake in ITV, and further back, in 1998, Stephen Byers blocked an attempt by BSkyB to take over Manchester United.

10. In your opinion, what is the risk that any measure introduced into parliament to give effect to government policy on press regulation would in itself provide an unwarranted opportunity to parliamentarians to restrict the freedom of the press, contrary to the public interest? What measures would you take as a party leader to manage any such risk?

There is cross party consensus on the crucial role in our public life played by a free press. It is one of Britain's proudest traditions and fundamental to our democracy. The Labour Party is totally committed to ensuring that the public interest benefits of a free press are protected and the handling of any bill would reflect that.

11. From your various perspectives, what influence have the media had on the formulation and delivery of government policy more generally? Your answer should cover at least the following, with examples as appropriate: a. the nature of this influence, in particular whether exerted through editorial content, by direct contact with politicians, or in other ways; b. the extent to which this influence is represented as, or is regarded as, representative of public opinion more generally or of the

interests of the media themselves; c. the extent to which that influence has in your view advanced or inhibited the public interest.

The media as a whole has a significant impact on political debate. Broadcast, print and web material provide diversity of opinion vastly wider than could be generated by politicians. That diversity is a good thing. The influence of the media is primarily exerted through editorial content.

In addition, in Government and now in opposition, I also see journalists and editors. They will express views which may influence my thinking. But I approach it on the basis that they should have no greater influence than the quality of their argument.

Media outlets will, frequently, claim to be expressing the views held by the vast majority of the public or some sector of the public. The reality is that political reporting both shapes public opinion and is shaped by it.

At its most healthy, this influence can be about revelations which change public opinion, as for example, around phone hacking. Politicians then have to respond. There is a long list of areas, where revelations by the British press have led to positive change.

12. In your experience, what influence have the media had on public and political appointments, including the tenure and termination of those appointments? Please give examples, including of cases in which in your view the public interest was, and was not, well served by such influence.

Public appointments

The public appointments I was involved in as a minister included:

- Committee on Climate Change – Adair Turner appointed Chair in December 2008
- Civil Nuclear Police Authority – Sir Chris Fox appointed Chairman 23rd March 2009
- Coal Authority – Helen Mounsley was appointed Chairman on 1 October 2007, and was reappointed on 1st April 2010
- Nuclear Liabilities Financing Assurance Board – Lady Janet Balfour was appointed Chairwoman in November 2008
- UK Chemical Weapons Convention National Authority Advisory Committee – Dr Tony Bastock was reappointed as chairman on 12th May 2009 (was initially appointed as chairman of the NAAC on 18 May 2005 for an initial term of four years)

My experience of these uncontroversial appointments was that the media exercised no influence. More generally I would say that the potential for media scrutiny of these kind of appointments helps to ensure that due process and a high level of probity is observed and that the public interest is properly served.

In my role as Leader of Her Majesty's Opposition involvement in public appointments is more limited. One recent example was my nomination of Baroness Sherlock OBE to the Riots, Communities and Victims Panel that was established in the wake of last summer's riots. This was a more public role than many, and was linked to an issue of significant public concern. While there was no very direct media interest in that nomination I think the general

point holds: there might have been. If I had chosen to nominate someone without the stature and experience of Baroness Sherlock there probably would have been comment.

Political appointments

The media is always interested in appointments to the Government or Opposition frontbenches. But that does not mean that the media exerts a decisive influence on those appointments and in my experience - both inside Government and in opposition – it does not.

On the question of tenure and termination of political appointments it is certainly true that the nature of media coverage can be an influence, in the sense that the media will often, quite legitimately, demand the resignation of a Minister, or, more rarely, a shadow front bench spokesman. Media pressure can reflect public opinion on the extent to which the relevant conduct merits resignation.

As far as I am concerned, in relation to political appointments which are in my discretion, the termination of political appointments has always been determined on the merits of the performance and conduct of the individual.

Specific Questions

13. In December 2010, you hired Tom Baldwin as the Director of Communications for the Labour Party. Please give a full account, together with all relevant documentation, of the recruitment process involved. Your account should cover at least the following: a. the criteria you applied when searching for a Director of Communications; b. the extent to which, and how, you took into account Mr Baldwin's connections with News International; c. whose recommendations, and what other advice whether or not expressly sought by you, you took into account; d. what, if any, investigations you made into Mr Baldwin's journalistic practices and ethics when assessing his suitability for the role; e. the extent to which, if any, you were aware of allegations linking Mr Baldwin to the unlawful or unethical acquisition of information, and what steps you took as a result.

In December 2010 my office recruited two communications advisers of whom Tom Baldwin was one. He has worked for me since that time. When we began the recruitment process we were open minded about the final outcome in terms of roles and the appropriate structure of the communications function. In the course of the recruitment it became evident that we needed to appoint more than one person.

The recruitment process was coordinated by my then Acting Chief of Staff Lucy Powell, and consisted of soundings of well informed and trusted contacts with whom we discussed our communications requirements and a number of individuals who might be suitable for the roles which emerged from those discussions. A number of candidates were considered.

In respect of the role which Tom was appointed to fill we were looking for someone with significant experience as a journalist, with an outstanding understanding of the world of politics, and, crucially as far as I was concerned, with a genuine commitment to the values of the Labour Party.

My then Acting Chief of Staff, Lucy Powell, and I spoke to a number of colleagues, associates and others in whose judgement we had confidence – including fellow politicians and media experts – in connection to Tom, and other candidates', suitability for the role(s) prior to appointing him. At no point did anyone raise concerns about Tom's journalistic integrity. Indeed the opposite was the case.

Tom Baldwin was a respected political journalist of many years standing. He had been political editor of the Sunday Telegraph (1997-99) before moving to the Times. There he was first deputy political editor, then Assistant Editor. During his assistant editorship he was also Washington Bureau Chief and then Chief Reporter. He worked at the Times from 1999 to 2010.

Tom Baldwin's connection to News International was as an employee of Times Newspapers Limited in which News international has a controlling interest. He was not someone who had close or privileged relationships with the senior executives at News International. His connections with News International played no role in, and had no significance for, his recruitment. He was employed for his skills and his commitment to the Labour party. Neither I nor my Chief of Staff had any conversations about Tom's recruitment with executives of News International.

Before offering Tom Baldwin the job he and I discussed whether there were any reasons why his appointment could be the cause of any embarrassment to either me or the Labour Party. This discussion included the references to Tom Baldwin in Lord Ashcroft's book "Dirty Times, Dirty Politics" which was first published in 2005. I should underline that the book contains no allegations "linking Mr Baldwin to the unlawful and unethical acquisition of information". Lord Ashcroft refers in his book to Tom Baldwin being given information about some of Lord Ashcroft's financial affairs some time after its acquisition by Times Newspapers in defence of a legal action against the paper by Lord Ashcroft.

The more serious allegation that Tom Baldwin had himself commissioned the blagging of this information was made only subsequently by Lord Ashcroft in a blog in summer last year when Tom Baldwin had already been working for me for six months. When this was raised with Tom Baldwin (including by me) he made it absolutely clear that it was entirely false. My Acting Chief of Staff followed up with the Editor of the Times at the time of the events Lord Ashcroft describes – Sir Peter Stothard. He made it clear that in his view Lord Ashcroft's allegation was false. He went out of his way to praise Tom Baldwin's professional integrity and journalistic acumen.

14. Please give a full chronological account, together with all relevant documentation, of your awareness of allegations of phone hacking and other improper conduct within News International, and steps you have taken in response.

Your account should cover at least the following:

- the extent to which you were briefed in relation to material not within the public domain - for example by Government, the police, any regulatory body, or sources within the industry;

- **all public statements, whether made by you personally or otherwise on behalf of the Labour party under your leadership, in relation to these issues;**
- **representations made by you or your representatives to the Government;**
- **discussions of these issues, and representations made by you or on your behalf about them, to anyone within News International.**

25 September 2010

I was elected Leader of the Labour Party.

19 April 2011

I gave an interview to Patrick Wintour of the Guardian, in which I called for an independent inquiry into press abuses.

The article which was published as a result can be found in Annex B1.

4 July 2011

I was made aware of the allegations that the News of the World hacked Milly Dowler's phone when it was reported in the press.

I gave a pooled broadcast interview to Chris Gibson of ITV. I said that Rebekah Brooks was in charge of the News of the World at the time of the phone-hacking and so she should consider her position. I also said that the scandal went beyond one individual and involved the broader culture and practices that were going on at the News of the World.

The transcript can be found in Annex B2.

6 July 2011

12:00pm-12:30pm – Prime Minister's Questions. I asked the Prime Minister a number of questions on the issue of phone-hacking and News Corp. I highlighted the importance of setting up a full and independent public inquiry as soon as possible to deal with the revelations. I also said that the News Corp bid for BSkyB should be referred to the Competition Commission as Ofcom had originally recommended. I reiterated the point that Rebekah Brooks should take responsibility as the Chief Executive of News International and consider her position. I also asked the Prime Minister to accept that he had made a mistake in bringing Andy Coulson into Downing Street with him.

The transcript can be found in Annex B3.

7 July 2011

10:30am-10:45am – I gave a pooled broadcast interview to Jo Coburn of the BBC. I reiterated the urgent need for a judge-led, public and independent inquiry, which would also need to look at the relationship between the police and the newspapers. I also said that it was not the time for the government to be waiving through the BSkyB takeover as it would not be acceptable to the public, and that the bid should be referred to the Competition Commission.

The transcript can be found in Annex B4.

4:30pm-4:40pm – I gave an interview to BBC Newsnight's Kirsty Wark to be broadcast later that evening. I said that in spite of the News of the World being shut down, it did not solve the problem as Rebekah Brooks had not yet taken responsibility and was still in her job as Chief Executive of News International, while other staff members at the News of the World were losing their jobs. I also said that the Prime Minister still had questions to answer about the judgement he made in relation to Andy Coulson, and that politicians including myself were learning Lessons from our past relationships with News International.

The transcript can be found in Annex B5.

8 July 2011

8:00am-9:00am – I gave a speech at Thomson Reuters. The argument of my speech was that a strong, vital press is at the heart of our democracy and we must protect it and defend it, and politicians must be wary of tampering with the free press. But there are also moments when it is up to us to defend, not ourselves, but the public from parts of the press, such as the phone-hacking scandal. We must not only speak for the public, but also show we can act on their behalf.

My view was that for politicians to restore trust, four things should happen: 1) the right kind of public inquiry, accompanying the police inquiries; 2) proper decisions in respect of media ownership, in particular the BSkyB bid should be referred to the Competition Commission; 3) the taking of responsibility by those at News International; 4) reform of our system of press regulation.

The transcript can be found in Annex B6.

10 July 2011

9:00am-9:30am – I gave an interview on the Andrew Marr Show. I said that the BSkyB bid needed to be delayed until the criminal investigation was complete. I said that the Prime Minister should assure us that the judge-led inquiry would have a broad remit. I also said that the Prime Minister needed to offer full transparency over Andy Coulson.

The transcript can be found in Annex B7.

11 July 2011

11:00am-12:00pm – I answered questions at a press conference at the Royal Festival Hall with my Shadow Culture Secretary, Ivan Lewis. I mostly reiterated previous arguments.

The transcript can be found in Annex B8.

4:00pm-5:30pm – I responded to Jeremy Hunt's Statement to the House of Commons. I stressed the importance of starting an inquiry as soon as possible to ensure that all evidence is preserved. I also reiterated previous arguments.

The transcript can be found in Annex B9.

12 July 2011

I gave an interview to James Landale of the BBC. I discussed the motion we tabled in the House of Commons calling for Rupert Murdoch to drop the BSkyB bid, saying that it is the most effective way that public concern can be met.

The transcript can be found in Annex B10.

I gave an interview to Sophy Ridge of Sky News. I was asked about my meeting with Milly Dowler's parents. I said that it was important that the public inquiry does justice for them given their ordeal and the other victims of phone hacking. For this reason, I said that it was important that the public inquiry have as wide a remit as possible. I also said that John Yates should explain to the DCMS committee why the first police investigation was so inadequate.

The transcript can be found in Annex B11.

5:00pm-5:30pm – I gave an interview to the Spectator. I mostly reiterated previous arguments. I also discussed the past relationship between Labour and News International and said that we should have done more earlier on about phone hacking.

The article which was published a result can be found in Annex B12.

7:30pm-8:30pm – I met with the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister.

In this meeting we discussed the scope of public inquiry which was yet to be set up.

13 July 2011

12:00pm-12:30pm – Prime Minister's Questions. I said that it was wrong for Rebekah Brooks to still be in her post at News International. I also stressed that it was important for current and past politicians to give evidence under oath to the Inquiry as well as members of the press. I further asked the Prime Minister about the extent to which he was informed about Andy Coulson's relationship with Jonathan Rees when he was at the News of the World.

The transcript can be found in Annex B13.

12:30pm-1:30pm – I responded to the Prime Minister's Statement to the Commons. I stressed the importance of not just a wide-ranging public inquiry, but also one with maximum power at its disposal to compel witnesses, and an Inquiry which starts as soon as possible. I also asked the Prime Minister whether the Inquiry's recommendations on cross-media ownership could be legislated for in the forthcoming Communications Bill – which in turn should be brought forward from 2015.

The transcript can be found in Annex B14.

5:00pm-7:30pm – Debate on the BSkyB bid in the House of Commons. I mostly reiterated previous arguments.

The transcript can be found in Annex B15.

I gave a broadcast interview on the withdrawal of the BSkyB bid.

The transcript can be found in Annex B16.

14 July 2011

12:30pm-2:00pm – I had a lunch meeting with the Sunday Times

In this meeting, the issue of the phone-hacking scandal was raised. I reiterated my public position on the issue.

15 July 2011

I gave a short broadcast interview on the resignation of Rebekah Brooks. I reiterated my original point that the focus should not just be on one individual but on the culture of the organisation. I said that it was wrong for Rupert Murdoch to claim that News International had handled the allegations well. I said that he should also apologise to the victims of phone hacking when he appeared before the Select Committee.

The transcript can be found in Annex B17.

18 July 2011

12:00pm-1:00pm – I gave a speech at KPMG. I argued that there was a risk that while the revelations of the last few weeks had been significant, there would be little change going forwards. I said that it was important to ensure that the last few weeks were not just a brief moment which people will look back upon, but that it brings about a far greater sense of responsibility for the most powerful people in Britain.

The transcript can be found in Annex B18.

I subsequently answered press questions.

The transcript can be found in Annex B19.

I gave a short broadcast interview on the resignation of John Yates.

The transcript can be found in Annex B20.

19 July 2011

8:40am-9:00am – I gave an interview to Lorraine Kelly on Daybreak.

The transcript can be found in Annex B21.

9:00am-9:15am – I gave a short broadcast interview on the DCMS select committee hearings announced earlier.

The transcript can be found in Annex B22.

20 July 2011

11:30am-4:00pm – Statement in the House of Commons on Public Confidence in the Media and the Police.

The transcript can be found in Annex B23.

22 July 2011

10:15am-11:00am – I gave an interview to the Times.

The subsequent article can be found in Annex B24.

I gave an interview to the New York Times.

The subsequent article can be found in Annex B25.

15. In early July 2011, you accepted in an interview to the BBC that you had been 'slow to speak out on hacking' and that you should have spoken to Rupert Murdoch when you met with him at the News International summer party a few weeks earlier. a. What did you discuss with Rupert Murdoch at the summer party in June 2011? Please describe that encounter. b. What other meetings did you have with Rupert Murdoch or James Murdoch in the period between September 2010 and July 2011? Please provide details of what was discussed and what you were seeking to achieve from such meetings; c. Why did you subsequently take the view that you should have raised the issue of phone hacking with him?

I recall a relatively short conversation with Rupert Murdoch of a few minutes at the summer party involving a few people, which I believe was about US politics and international affairs.

I have said I should have raised the evidence of phone hacking with Rupert Murdoch at the party, because it would have underlined the importance of the issue. I also spoke to Rupert Murdoch while I was waiting to speak at the Times CEO Summit on 21 June 2011. It was a very short conversation, which, as I recall, was about the Summit.

I have had no formal meetings with James Murdoch while being leader of the Labour Party. I believe I saw him briefly at the Labour Party Conference News International Reception in September 2010, and again at the News Corporation Summer party in June 2011. He rang me in March 2011 at his request to tell me about the publication of the undertakings in lieu for the BSkyB bid. It was a short conversation in which he briefed me on what News Corporation was proposing. These are the only conversations I can recall having as leader of the Labour Party with Rupert and James Murdoch.

16. On the Andrew Marr show on 10 July 2011, you said that the relationship between the press and Tony Blair and Gordon Brown was "too close". Please explain your thinking in full in making these remarks. How would you describe your, and the Labour Party's, relationship with Rupert Murdoch, James Murdoch, and News International now, and how has it changed since July 2011? What, in retrospect, do you perceive to have been the benefits and drawbacks of the previous relationship?

I have sought to answer the first part of the question in my answer to question 9.

I have not had a close or friendly relationship with the Murdochs and News International since I became Labour leader. Nor were its papers supportive of me, even before I spoke out on phone hacking.

I have described my encounters with Rupert and James Murdoch above.

As for Rebekah Brooks, I had brief discussions with her at both the Party Conference reception and the News Corporation reception. She also requested through my office that she speak to me on the evening that Vince Cable was stripped of responsibility for the BSkyB bid. We had a short conversation. I said we were in favour of a fair process. The following day the Labour Party took the position that Jeremy Hunt was not an appropriate person to be in charge of the bid given his past statements in support of News Corporation. This is the sum total of my contacts with Rebekah Brooks.

As is clear from this account, I have not had a close relationship with News International since being Labour leader. Clearly, when I spoke out in July 2011 over phone hacking, the relationship with News International as an organisation deteriorated further. They were not happy with the stance I took.