

1. I support the need for the United Kingdom to retain a free press but I do not believe that this should be interpreted as the freedom to publish untruths and not comply with the law of the land. There can be little doubt that standards of integrity in our media have dropped significantly in recent years and unless action is taken it will continue to be discredited, and standards will further decline. We had a media which was respected in the United Kingdom and across the World. This is no longer the case. I am now retired and I had the advantage of watching a great deal of the Leveson Inquiry and I was astonished at the arrogance shown by many owners and editors. Clearly they believed that they were answerable to no one. Parliament should be reminded what the Leveson Report said should happen if the industry tried to veto his recommendations and refused to comply. The Leveson Report says: "if some or all of the industry are not willing to participate in effective independent regulation, my own concluded view is to reject the notion that they should escape regulation altogether. I cannot, and will not, recommend another last chance saloon for the press. With some measure of regret, therefore, I am driven to conclude that the Government should be ready to consider the need for a statutory backstop regulator being established, to ensure, at the least, that the press are subject to regulation that would require the fullest compliance with the criminal and civil law, if not also to ensure consequences equivalent to those that would flow from an independent self-regulatory system."

Graham Davies