

Dear Press Regulation Panel,

I understand that you will be reporting to Parliament in the near future on the state of the press regulatory system, four years after the Leveson Report was published.

It seems pretty clear to me that the press has by and large decided to try and ignore Leveson's recommendations, and pursue regulatory avenues which will let them get on with doing what they have always done - blur the line between "public interest" and the public being interested, often pruriently, and use this as an excuse to ruin the lives of ordinary people caught up in extraordinary circumstances, without scruple and for their own profit.

At this stage I hope that your Panel will remind Parliament what the Leveson Report said should happen if the industry tried to veto his recommendations and refused to comply. I believe 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."*

Looks to me like it is time for the statutory backstop regulator to come into play, and for politicians to display some spine in the face of the press. If they are allowed to slink away from this, and break their commitments over Leveson, then this will simply undermine public trust in them further. Your committee can help them do this by making clear recommendations, based on the good work of Leveson and the subsequent behavior of the press. For example, if IMPRESS is recognized as the backstop regulator, then most of the press have rejected it. If it isn't, then there's no regulation of the form envisaged by Leveson. Either way, it is clear that the major newspapers have rejected Leveson's findings and seek to avoid being bound by them.

I also hope that regardless of whether IMPRESS is recognised by your Panel, you will strongly recommend to Parliament that the key 'guaranteed access to justice incentive'

(section 40 of the Crime and Courts Act) should be brought into effect as Parliament had intended.

Thank you for taking the time to listen to my views as a member of the public.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Crowne