

I am driven to write to you, as little or nothing has happened after all the press misbehaviour and the promises of politicians to tackle the situation. I fear that the press owners are hoping that the public will forget the terrible injustices carried out by journalists and their employers. The government seems unnaturally quiet on the matter and again I suspect it hopes everything will be swept under the carpet.

If we are to have a free and honest press in this country then it must be regulated and told to behave in a way that is beneficial to the citizens, not the business interests behind the papers. Phone hacking, payments, 'bungs', to police, made-up stories simply to sell papers must stop.

So I write to you with these pleas:--

1. Parliament should be reminded by the PRP 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."
2. In the meantime, regardless of whether IMPRESS is recognised by the PRP, the PRP should 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.

Yours,

Paul Reddish