

G. Brown
First Statement
"GB1"
30 May 2012

**IN THE MATTER OF THE LEVESON INQUIRY INTO THE CULTURE,
PRACTICES AND ETHICS OF THE PRESS**

EXHIBIT "GB1"

**This is the exhibit marked "GB1" referred to in the witness
statement of Gordon Brown dated 30 May 2012.**

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 10 November 2009 21:21
To: [REDACTED]
Cc:
Subject: FW: E mail [UNCLASSIFIED] [Non-Record]

Please see attached e-mail from the Prime Minister for the attention of Mr Rupert Murdoch

Thanks

Dear Rupert,

Thank you for taking the time to talk to me. I want to emphasise to you the point I made about Afghanistan.

Because of the narrowness of the reporting, no one is explaining that the UK is the country who led with extra troops to deal with the upsurge in violence this summer. And I was the person who had to persuade a number of reluctant countries to send more troops.

Now today we are the only large country who have, in recent weeks, committed - even before the USA - new and additional troops for Afghanistan and I am now trying to persuade other countries to help replace the potential loss of Canada and Holland.

To my knowledge no essential equipment needs of the armed forces have been refused. Four years ago we spent hundreds of millions on Afghanistan. This has rightly risen by a large multiple to an estimated £3.5bn this year with more next year. And the defence budget continues to rise.

Taking criticism is part of my job. And I know the public's rightful concern about the loss of lives to IEDs.

But I have to say that it is the repeated assertion by 'the Sun' that

a) We have the worst equipment (when, while I want it to get ever better all the time, it is now the best ever)

And b) We have insufficient troops (when we are far above any other country except the US and still offering more) that is a factor in explaining why two-thirds of British people are currently against the UK being in Afghanistan. I know the Sun wanted to increase support for more troops: what they appear to be persuading the country is that there is little point in having any troops.

Popular or not, I will continue to press allies to step up - as we will do - the contribution to Afghanistan. And my job in the next few weeks is to persuade a number of European countries to offer real troops on the ground.

My only request is not about me: it is that newspapers and broadcasters expose both Al-Qaeda and the Taliban for the threat they are.

My best wishes to Wendi,

Gordon