PRESS COMPLAINTS COMMISSION

From the Chairman

Lord Black of Brentwood
Chairman
PressBof
c/o Telegraph Media Group
111 Buckingham Palace Road
London SW1W 0DT   20th January 2011

Dear Guy,
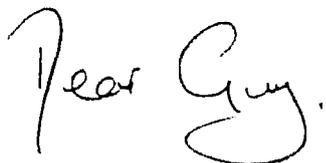
I am writing following yesterday's Commission's meeting, where the subject of Northern & Shell's withdrawal from the system of self-regulation was discussed at length.

The Commission regards this issue as a serious development, which has the potential to undermine the work of the PCC. I know you – on behalf of the industry – are working hard to explore ways to bring the company back within the fold. The Commission believes this is an important task, and hopes that every means will be explored to achieve a successful conclusion.

We believe that the continued absence of Northern & Shell – over the medium to long term – is likely to compromise how the PCC administers the system, and how the system is viewed by others (both the public, and legislators). Indeed, only yesterday Jeremy Hunt announced the advent of a new Communications Act, which means that all media regulation will soon be subject to legislative scrutiny. At a time when the great mess of content regulation (television, video on demand, online versions of traditional media, the internet more widely) is being examined and consolidated, apparent weakness in the system of press regulation could surely be up for debate.

MOD100051628

The Commission has asked that it be kept informed – as far as is possible – about the work that is being done to bring Northern & Shell back, and I look forward to discussing these next steps with you at the PressBof meeting in February.

With kind regards.

Baroness Buscombe

MOD100051629