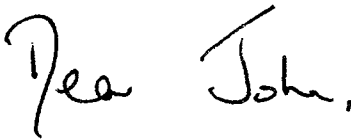


PRESS COMPLAINTS COMMISSION

From the Chairman

Rt Hon Lord Prescott
House of Lords
London
SW1A 0PW

2nd June 2011



Thank you for your letter of 24th May.

Several people have come to me following our appearance on Newsnight, offering the uniform view that I was speaking in the face of considerable – and needless – hostility from you. I have to say, regrettably, this is an opinion I share.

It is a matter of public record that you have used the PCC in the past successfully. In your own autobiography, you refer to the work of the Commission in 2000 in protecting your wife's privacy. You say the following:

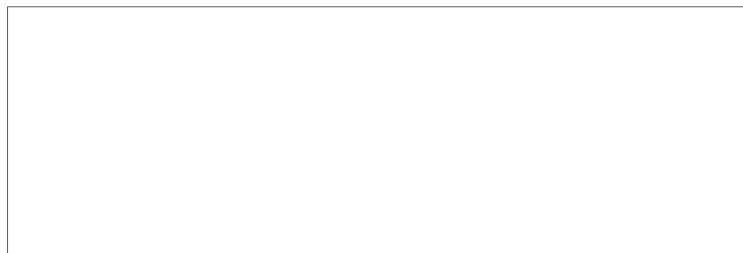
"He [Peter Mandelson] gave me some good advice, which was to go to the Press Complaints Commission. They managed to put a stop to further investigations as invasions of privacy".

You also obtained more recently – promptly, and for no cost – an apology in the Sun, published with a photograph, correcting an article about expenses. This seems to me to show the complaints system working.

As you know, we are constantly striving to improve the PCC and the public service it offers. You will have seen our last Annual Report (another copy of which I enclose), which contains the independent testimony of those people whom we are already helping.

Of course, the Commission seeks out – and benefits from – constructive criticism and support from interested parties. If you wish to engage with me constructively, I am always happy to listen. I am concerned, though, that sideline shouting and sniping (of the sort evident on Newsnight) runs the risk merely of undermining perceptions of the real work of the PCC. That is not going to benefit people who need us.

With kind regards.



Baroness Buscombe

CHAIRMAN
Baroness Buscombe

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