

Letter from PCC published in Press Gazette

In the October edition of Press Gazette, you quote a reference to the Press Complaints Commission in Tony Blair's memoirs. Despite all of the proper assistance the PCC offered to the Blairs over the years, we appear only once in the whole book. Sadly, that description of his dealings with the Commission is not accurate.

Mr Blair refers to a complaint he made about coverage of the Queen Mother's funeral, saying that this was the "last time" he came to the PCC. Not true. He made formal complaints after that point, and his representatives were in regular touch with the PCC about privacy matters.

He also said that, in the consideration of his complaint, "the PCC panel was made up of the editors". This is not right: the Commission was then a body of 16 people, with a clear majority of public members (with no connection to the newspaper industry). It is also a matter of longstanding PCC policy that editorial Commissioners do not take a part in the consideration of complaints about their own publications.

The Commission was not, therefore, made up of "the editors" involved in the Queen Mother story, but of a majority of independent public members.

I have informed Mr Blair's representative of these errors, but received no response.

**Jonathan Collett, Director of Communications
Press Complaints Commission**

ENDS

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