

THROWN TO THE WOLVES

**HOW THE ABSENCE OF
PRESS REGULATION
HURTS THE PUBLIC**

“ I've read some of the evidence that's been put forward, and frankly some of that evidence is incredibly shocking. Some of it is really heartbreaking.

The test of a regulatory system is not: does that make the politicians happier?

The test of the system is: is it going to provide proper protection to ordinary families who, through no fault of their own, get caught up in these media maelstroms and get completely mistreated... That's the test of all this.

*It's not: do the politicians or the press feel happy with what we get? It's: are we really protecting people who have been caught up and absolutely **thrown to the wolves** by this process. That's what the test is.* **”**



David Cameron evidence to the Leveson Inquiry, 14th June 2011

HEATHER TEALE'S DAUGHTER BETHANY DIED IN JANUARY 2018.

I asked one reporter:
“Why are you doing this? I'm grieving.”

He actually said:
“That's exactly why – we are doing this because grief sells newspapers.”

Heather Teale, mother of Bethany Walker

Bethany Walker, who died in January 2018



Bethany died suddenly after contracting sepsis resulting from a bout of flu. Her mother, grandmother, and her teenage brother Danny were also all sick at the time. But, in the midst of their grief and illness, they were hounded by reporters.

They were thrown to the wolves.

Heather Teale, Bethany's mother, described the intense press harassment that she, her family, and Bethany's friends suffered in the days after her death:

“Shortly after Bethany died, the local free paper contacted the school to run a tribute. The school asked permission and I said yes. I realised that it's local news and I thought a tribute sounded lovely. But as soon as it went to press, every reporter in the UK jumped on it. I got calls all day until 10pm, reporters constantly ringing up to ask if I would give an interview – how did it feel in intensive care with her, how was it in the ambulance, and other intimate questions. **They knew she had just died and I lost a daughter. What did they expect me to say?**

“At the time, my mother and my son Danny were also home. We all also had flu, like Bethany. My mother is an older person and Danny is a teenager. **We were all very sick but we carried on because we had to. All the hounding and harassment could have tipped me over the edge at any moment. Danny was absolutely devastated by it.**

“I couldn't understand why they kept ringing us. **I asked one reporter: “Why are you doing this? I'm grieving.” He actually said: “That's exactly why – we are doing this because grief sells newspapers.”**

“Then they came into the community. They asked around everywhere. **I received distressing messages from my daughter's school friends who were getting messages on Messenger asking for interviews and they felt really hounded.** Hounding teenagers was something I really had an issue with – the Highlands have a high suicide rate among young people. They were on to the school as well. Desperate for comments and seeking funeral dates. I was asked for the date of the funeral too, and that obviously made me worried. With our MSP [Member of the Scottish Parliament], **we organised for plain clothes police officers to be present at the crematorium in case there was any press. You should not have to do that. Not when you've just lost a daughter.**”

“BULLIED”

Figen Murray, mother of Manchester attack victim
Martyn Hett

“SUBJECTED TO A CAMPAIGN OF... HARASSMENT BY SECTIONS OF THE MEDIA”

Lawyer for Mr Kebede, Grenfell resident

“OPEN SEASON ON MINORITIES”

Fatima Manji, Channel 4 newsreader and journalist

#THROWNTOTHEWOLVES

“HOUNDED”

Manchester families, Kerslake Review

“LACK OF RESPECT”

Manchester families, Kerslake Review

“UNETHICAL AND CRUEL”

Figen Murray, mother of Manchester attack victim
Martyn Hett

“THE HOUNDING AND HARASSMENT COULD HAVE TIPPED ME OVER THE EDGE”

Heather Teale, mother of Bethany Walker

PRESS ABUSE: NOTHING HAS CHANGED, AND PEOPLE ARE SUFFERING. NOW.

Week in, week out, ordinary people in Britain suffer shocking cruelty dished out to them in the name of journalism. Not a few, but many. Some newspapers today feel as free as ever to distort, intrude and throw their weight around, and thousands of our fellow citizens are their victims.

In these pages you will read about just some of those cases. They are not historic, but recent – though you may not have heard of them because it suits the press to hide these things away.

As in the past, victims frequently have no viable means of redress and papers face no consequences for their misdeeds. They have only a sham regulator that will never investigate them and never punish them, so they just go on dishing out the cruelty.

Of course the best of Britain's press is a force for good, campaigning in the public interest, exposing corruption and incompetence in high places and helping to bring communities together.

But far too often, as the Leveson Inquiry found, it is the opposite – abusive, vindictive, invading the privacy of ordinary people, and compounding the anguish of grieving families.

Unfortunately key recommendations of the Leveson Inquiry were ignored and the industry escaped meaningful reform. It just did what it has always done when the public was angry: it made empty promises of change and replaced its old puppet regulator the PCC with a new one – IPSO.

But as these pages prove, **nothing has changed.**

IPSO, like its predecessors, is dominated by the big press corporations that control it and wrote its rulebook. So when there is injustice, far too often IPSO can't or won't help. And since ordinary people can't afford to go to court, the victims of the press are, to borrow a prime minister's words, 'thrown to the wolves'.

A decent society does not throw its citizens to the wolves; it protects them. That can be done – and without threatening freedom of expression. **We call on Parliament to act.** It must stop the all-too-frequent trashing of people's rights and lives by the press and it must defend the public it represents.

The cases included in this booklet fall into four categories:

- Disasters – grossly intrusive conduct compounds grief and trauma
- Communities and minority groups – subjected to smears and discrimination
- Children – whose welfare and privacy are disregarded
- Suicides – reckless reporting puts vulnerable people at risk

These problems are not new. They have been known about for years. But without independent, effective regulation the press will continue to ignore all the lessons of the past and will continue to make people suffer.

IPSO is neither independent nor effective. It does not regulate. Despite abundant evidence of appalling newspaper behaviour it has not carried out a single investigation or imposed a single fine. Nor has it demanded a single front-page correction of real prominence or handled a single arbitration case.

HARASSMENT AFTER A TRAUMATIC EVENT

Kerslake Report

*"The Panel was shocked and dismayed by the accounts of the families of their experiences with some of the media. They spoke of being 'hounded', of a 'lack of respect', and of 'sneaky' attempts to take photos when families were receiving bad news. To have experienced such intrusive and overbearing behaviour at a time of such enormous vulnerability seemed to us to be **completely and utterly unacceptable.**"*

Families themselves said:

"By far the worst thing was the press."

"They ... are a disgrace, they don't take no for an answer, they have a lack of standards and ethics."

These are the words of the Kerslake Report into the Manchester bombing attack published in March 2018.

The report went on to describe press misconduct in further detail:

- 1 People talked about feeling 'hounded' and 'bombarded'.
- 2 There were at least two cases of alleged impersonation by journalists. In one case a journalist was reported to have phoned a family claiming to be a bereavement nurse. In another, someone telephoned claiming to be from the police but the family concluded it was a journalist.
- 3 At the hospitals, families looking for missing loved ones and visiting the injured described having to force their way through scrums of reporters who 'wouldn't take no for an answer'.

Shouldn't newspapers cover major tragic events?

It is perfectly possible for journalists to cover major events such as terrorist atrocities, natural disasters and similar events without inflicting further trauma upon the individuals affected and their families. It is possible to make approaches to affected families in a respectful and sensitive way. Sometimes families will reach out to newspapers themselves.

But it is unacceptable to repeatedly knock on the doors of the bereaved, lift content from private social media pages without consent, and attempt to gain entry to hospitals or other places where individuals are recovering – yet misconduct of this kind was reported after last year's Manchester attack, the Bataclan and other attacks in Paris, the Shoreham Air Disaster, and after people have suffered personal tragedies.

Why didn't IPSO take action after the Kerslake Review into the Manchester attack highlighted so much intrusion and abuse?

IPSO's excuse for inaction was that they didn't receive any complaints. That is to be expected from a sham regulator: it was not set up or equipped to step in and protect the public at times of crisis. For IPSO the interests of the press come first. And even when the Kerslake Report supplied ample evidence of appalling abuses by newspapers, IPSO continued to turn a blind eye. A serious regulator would have launched investigations, but IPSO has not launched a single one in its four years of operation. The result of this inaction is that misconduct is not exposed or punished, and so is bound to be repeated next time.



Martyn Hett, who died at the Manchester Arena attack in May 2017



Martyn with his mother, Figen Murray

**"UNETHICAL AND CRUEL...
NO BEREAVED FAMILY SHOULD
BE BULLIED IN THIS WAY"**

Martyn Hett was one of those who lost his life at the Manchester Arena attack on 22nd May 2017. Martyn's mother, Figen Murray, described the conduct of journalists after the disaster:

"On the day after the bomb my family were in the terrible position of knowing that Martyn was missing but having no confirmation of his death. I was at the stadium hoping to find out what had happened to him and my children were at home on their own. These two teenagers were harassed by journalists with phone calls and emails asking for comments, and repeatedly showing up on our doorstep, and it just didn't make any difference when they asked to be left alone.

"My youngest daughter heard of her brother's death for the first time from a journalist on our doorstep. You cannot unhear what you hear. She was a child. That was absolutely not fair: it was fiercely unethical and cruel."

Figen described how she was bullied into giving an interview afterwards:

"One journalist told me that they would be writing about Martyn, like it or not, so I should really say something while I have the chance or they would make something up anyway. At that point, less than two months after his death and still upset, I felt I had no choice but to sit down and be interviewed. No bereaved family should be bullied in this way."

PRESS ABUSE AND HARASSMENT AFTER GRENFELL TOWER

MailOnline

News

The man 'whose faulty fridge started tower inferno': Neighbour reveals how Ethiopian taxi driver raised the alarm when deadly blaze started in his fourth-floor kitchen

By Helen Jones

- Behailu Kebede raised the alarm on the Grenfell Tower inferno before it spread, his neighbours have said
- Father of one, 41, who lives on the fourth floor, discovered the fire in his fourth-floor kitchen when he woke
- He alerted his neighbour, who lived on the floor above him, to the fire, prompting a fire alarm to sound
- Firefighters arrived at the scene at 10.15pm and the fire was extinguished at 11.15pm
- After 10 minutes, most of the tower was smouldering, but no one knew the building was engulfed in flames

This is the first time the man who is said to have started the Grenfell Tower fire has been named in a newspaper.

Behailu Kebede, 41, is of one, whose father is from Ethiopia, lives on the fourth floor of the tower.

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TOWER BLOCK INFERNO

Anguish of taxi driver whose fridge 'started fire'

By Elaine Simms, Aisha Rouse and Nick Fagge

A FATHER of one who lives in the flat where the Grenfell Tower inferno is thought to have started has been left devastated by the loss of life.

Behailu Kebede is said to have raised the alarm after flames engulfed his fourth-floor flat in the early hours of Wednesday morning.

The married driver, 41, banged on his neighbour's door and told them that his fridge had exploded, urging them to leave the building.

Last night Mr Kebede told the Daily Mail: "I was very quiet."

Mr Kebede, who moved to the UK from his native Ethiopia 20 years ago, has been plagued by nightmares for weeks, often waking up in a panic.

He said he was very quiet when the fire started, but he was not alone.

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THE Sun

We have
pixellated
Mr Kebede's
face, but The
Sun did not.



Alerted neighbours Behailu Kebede

on Monday or any other warning, just Mr Kebede) who told everyone on my floor and the surrounding doors, if he hadn't have told me I wouldn't have known.

By the time I got down, flames were coming out of next door's flat. The fire just went wild. There were lots of people.

Malcolm Eppl, another fourth floor neighbour, said: "I don't know how we were able to get out. I don't know how we were able to get out."

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New Labour MP was on board of company that 'ignored warnings'

The new Labour MP for Kensington yesterday brushed off criticism that she sat on the board of the company accused of ignoring fire warnings over the doomed Grenfell tower.

Former local councillor Emma Dent Coad - who took the well-heeled consultancy from the Tories by just 20 votes last week - attacked the Kensington and Chelsea Tenant Management Organisation, the body which runs social housing in the area for the council.

But critics pointed out that she herself previously sat on the board of the company. One asked her on Twitter:

"How much did you pocket from KCMO?"

The new MP, an architect critic, replied: "Not a penny."

Last night her spokesman confirmed she sat on the board as an opposition representative from 2008 to 2012, leaving some six months before the start of the refurbishment programme.

Speaking to the Guardian about the fire disaster, Mrs Dent Coad, 52, who lives near the block, said yesterday: "I can't help thinking that poor quality materials and construction standards may have played a part in this hideous and unforgivable event."

DISCRIMINATION IN THE PRESS: SMEARING WHOLE COMMUNITIES



MUSLIM FOSTERING STORY PACKED WITH LIES AND DISTORTIONS

This front-page story published on 28th August 2017 about a five-year-old Christian girl fostered with a bigoted, extremist Muslim family caused a storm of outrage and was repeated in other newspapers.

Almost every detail has been authoritatively rebutted. The Times said the Muslim carer did not speak English: she did. It said she wore the niqab, covering her face; she did not. It implied that she had mocked the child's religion; her family held an Easter egg hunt for her. It said she took away the child's crucifix; she removed it for safe keeping because it was heavy and valuable.

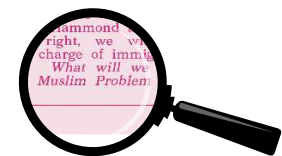
This was one of many stories the Times wrote at the time. IPSO refused to accept any complaints from the public about the lies, but was eventually required to accept a complaint about another front-page article from Tower Hamlets council. The adjudication was buried on page 6.

Who is harmed by such reckless, warped journalism? Every Muslim. What can they do about it? Nothing. Ordinary Muslims smeared in this way have no remedy.



NAZI RHETORIC TARGETED AT MUSLIMS

- 1 In the Sun on 14th August 2017 Trevor Kavanagh declared that Britain had a "Muslim Problem" – language directly echoing Nazi references to "the Jewish Problem" before the Holocaust.
- 2 This was not only offensive: it incited hatred and abuse towards Muslims.
- 3 Despite a letter from the Board of Deputies of British Jews and criticism from the Muslim Council of Britain, IPSO took no action. Kavanagh sat on the IPSO board at the time.



BRANDED AN EXTREMIST: IPSO DOES NOTHING

- 1 This Sunday Telegraph article from 31st January 2016 branded Haras Ahmed an "extremist", simply because he was critical of the government's anti-terror strategy – as many politicians, academics and ordinary members of the public are.
- 2 Prevent Watch, a campaign which was trademarked in the article, brought a complaint to IPSO, who dismissed it. But when Mr Ahmed took legal action against The Telegraph, the newspaper admitted fault and settled.
- 3 This was a humiliating result for IPSO, who saw their vindication of the newspaper overturned after Mr Ahmed initiated legal proceedings.



THE ALARMIST IMMIGRATION ARTICLE THAT WAS SO WRONG EVEN MAILONLINE PULLED IT (AFTER EIGHT DAYS)

On 28th July 2018 the Daily Mail published a two-page spread asserting that the Paris suburb of Saint Denis was a 'powder keg' crowded with 300,000 illegal immigrants. Its reporter Andrew Malone gave what was described as a first-hand account of 'the tensions in a community at odds with mainstream society'.

Eight days later MailOnline took the article down 'for investigations' after it had been publicly fact-checked on Twitter by a French citizen, Marwan Muhammad. He detailed 15 mistakes, including:

- 1 The Mail claimed the figure of 300,000 illegal immigrants in Saint Denis came from a report from France's parliament. Muhammad quoted the relevant report saying: 'The only thing we are sure about is that the State doesn't know how many illegal immigrants there are.'
- 2 Muhammad quoted official data showing that the total population of Saint Denis was 110,733. He asked: 'Please explain to us... how could 300,000 of these 110,733 human beings be illegal immigrants?'
- 3 The Mail quoted a local allegedly saying: 'Now they won't let Christmas happen.' Muhammad showed photographs of the busy Christmas market at Saint Denis, right in front of the city hall.

Isobel Ingham-Barrow, Head of Policy & Research at the Muslim advocacy organisation MEND (Muslim engagement & development):

The repetitive discriminatory and abusive misrepresentation of Muslims by newspapers results in distorted understandings and leads to:

Hate crime: The Home Affairs Select Committee has noted the link between negative and discriminatory media representation of minority communities and hate crime. As Baroness Warsi concluded, "There is evidence to show that this does play into the way people react on the street, the kind of things people quote back when they engage in hate crime".

Discrimination: The promotion of stereotypes leads to public biases and discrimination in areas such as employment. Studies have shown that CVs submitted under a non-Muslim name are three times more likely to be offered an interview than those with a Muslim name.

Marginalisation: Encouraging public fear against a scapegoated community culminates in calls for restrictions, punitive laws, and the curtailment of civil liberties and freedoms. This leads to institutionally racist and Islamophobic policies.

Considering the impacts of fear-fuelled reporting, editors and journalists must be aware of their ethical responsibilities to report, explain, and inform the public accurately and responsibly, without inflaming and pandering to public panic and purposely fuelling social tensions.



ISN'T IT RIGHT THAT RACE AND RELIGION IS DISCUSSED IN NEWSPAPERS?

There is a clear distinction between criticising beliefs, which journalists must be free to do, and coverage which is pejorative, discriminatory and incites hatred – whether that is based on race, religion or any other characteristic. The Leveson-standard press regulator IMPRESS, which mainly regulates local news publishers, allows groups to complain where coverage incites hatred, proving that regulation of this kind of material can be done in a way which protects freedom of expression.

"IT IS OPEN SEASON ON MINORITIES... IT IS FRIGHTENING"

"It was upsetting enough to find myself the latest victim to Kelvin MacKenzie's tirade. But now to know that has been given the green light by the press regulator and that effectively it is open season on minorities, and Muslims in particular, is frightening."

That was the response of Channel 4 News presenter Fatima Manji to IPSO's rejection of her complaint in July 2016 about a Sun article expressing outrage that she, a Muslim wearing a headscarf, had been allowed to present the programme on the night of the Nice massacre, carried out by a Muslim.

- 1 Former Sun editor MacKenzie wrote in his column: 'Her name is Fatima Manji... Was it appropriate for her to be on camera when there had been yet another shocking slaughter by a Muslim?', adding "Who was in the studio representing our fears?"
- 2 In the eyes of IPSO, somehow the article did not contain 'a prejudicial or pejorative reference to the complainant [Manji] on the grounds of her religion'.
- 3 For Manji herself it wasn't over with the IPSO ruling. She was promptly accused in the Sun of 'making a fool of herself' by Trevor Kavanagh – himself a member of IPSO's board.

Again, IPSO refuses to see discrimination. Again, all Muslims lose.



THEY NEVER LEARN

- 1 In April 2015 an article in the Sun (above) said migrants were like cockroaches.
- 2 Since no individual was named, IPSO did nothing.
- 3 In response to criticism, IPSO said that under the terms of the code: "Migrants as such are not a group that can be discriminated against." Nothing has changed.

THE CASE FOR LEVESON: HOW IT WOULD PROTECT THE PUBLIC FROM ABUSE

THE LEVESON SYSTEM: INDEPENDENT SELF-REGULATION

GOVERNMENT

Hands initial funding to the Press Recognition Panel. The Government is then banned from further involvement.

Absolute independence from Government: a Leveson red-line.



PRESS RECOGNITION PANEL

Independently appointed and reviews the conduct of self-regulators (set up by the press) every three years, according to Leveson's criteria for independence and effectiveness.



INDEPENDENT SELF-REGULATOR

Applies for recognition from the Press Recognition Panel. When recognised sets its own rules, writes the standards code, and conducts investigations.



Independence of Board members and of operation is guaranteed.

ARBITRATION SERVICE

Free for the public, cheap for the newspapers, fair for both sides and compulsory for all members.



INVESTIGATIONS

Can conduct investigations whenever there are serious or systemic breaches of the code.



CODE

Standards code agreed by the regulator, advised by a committee with the involvement of working journalists.



IPSO: INDUSTRY-RUN COMPLAINTS HANDLING

GOVERNMENT

Oversight of regulation rests with politicians, who may be either seeking to ingratiate themselves with or intimidate news publishers, and who decide at their own discretion (and without specified criteria) what is good enough for the public.

Senior Ministers continue to meet with press editors & executives on an un-minuted basis.



REGULATORY FUNDING COMPANY

Committee of executives mainly from the big newspaper groups which meets in secret. Manages IPSO's funding allocation and has a veto over any rule changes.

Industry influence hangs over funding & rules.



IPSO

No real power over the code or its own rules, never conducted an investigation, never imposed a fine and never required a national paper to print a front-page correction. Not independent of the industry.



ARBITRATION SERVICE

Biased, because it is managed by the newspapers, and signing up is optional for all newspapers. Most have not.



INVESTIGATIONS

Threshold for establishing an investigation is irrationally high; requiring misconduct to be not only serious, but repeated on a systemic basis. IPSO has never launched one.



CODE

Written by a committee of newspaper editors and executives. IPSO has no power to change or amend it without the editors and executives.



DISREGARD FOR CHILDREN'S WELFARE

FRONT PAGE PICTURED TEENAGE GIRL AS "SLAUGHTERED" - WHEN SHE WAS NOWHERE NEAR THE ATTACK

In this Daily Star front page from 24th May 2017, following the Manchester bomb attack, an image taken from Twitter was published as the picture of a missing girl. There had been no contact with the family of the girl, who was only 13 years old at the time.

The girl in the picture was not missing - she wasn't even at the concert. Yet under the heading "Slaughter of the innocents" a national newspaper informed the world,

including her friends and family, that she was missing or deceased. Though this went on the front page, and though it was information of huge emotional impact for those involved, no one at the paper seems to have checked.

The girl's mother said the experience had been *"traumatic"* and had *"intruded into her daughter's private and family life"*.

Although the picture was published on the front page, IPSO let the Daily Star off the hook with an adjudication buried on page 4, after a tiny correction on page 2.

IPSO has an appalling record when it comes to protecting children's welfare. Lacking the powers to deter such coverage and the willingness to remedy it, IPSO's inaction has allowed children to be treated as fair game for stories in newspapers time and again.



None of these children's faces were pixelated when they appeared in the newspaper.



RECKLESSLY NAMED AS THE CHILDREN OF A HOMELESS, ALCOHOLIC ADULTERER

- 1 In reporting on a salacious story about a homeless alcoholic man's affair with a married woman on 28th September 2016, the man's children were needlessly named.
- 2 The children's mother, who complained, said the article "had a profound effect on the daily lives" of her children, and "caused them great distress".
- 3 IPSO rejected the complaint.

THEY NEVER LEARN

Where the wellbeing of children is concerned you might think the press would show special care. And where they get things wrong you might think there would be serious consequences. That's not what happens, and so the papers never learn.



The boy's face was not pixelated in The Sun.

NAMED AND PICTURED FOR LIFE IN A NATIONAL NEWSPAPER

- 1 This story, from July 2014, clearly identified a young boy before he was old enough to consent to use of his image; in particular without clothes on and exposing a mark on his chest.
- 2 Unlike in this screenshot, the boy's picture was unpixelated in The Sun's original front page. He and his family, including his young siblings, were named.
- 3 IPSO's response? It considered the matter resolved when a note on page 2 some weeks later implied some regret, while shamelessly celebrating The Sun's "record of standing up for children". The Sun made no apology for publishing the story, or using the child's name or image.

IMAGES OF CHILDREN USED FOR SEXUAL GRATIFICATION REPRODUCED IN NEWSPAPER

- 1 In a story from January 2015 about Facebook images of local children being shared online for sexual gratification, the images were reproduced in the local newspaper, the Lancashire Evening Post.
- 2 The images were pixelated, but the children could still be identified from them.
- 3 In this case IPSO actually upheld the complaint, but to little effect. While the images had appeared on the front page, the adjudication was buried on page 9.



CHILD VICTIM'S NAME, MEDICAL CONDITIONS AND ABUSE PUBLICISED IN GRAPHIC DETAIL

In reporting on a case of child abuse a young boy was named and his severe injuries, which will affect him for the rest of his life, were described in graphic detail. The lifelong disabilities which were caused by these injuries were also listed. Though he was just a child, and though he was the victim of appalling abuse, there was no protection for the boy's privacy and his medical conditions were paraded before the world.

The boy's grandmother complained to IPSO about the invasive coverage, which is certain to stay with the boy as he grows up.

IPSO rejected her complaint on all grounds.



WHY DOESN'T IPSO AT LEAST REQUIRE AN APOLOGY OR CORRECTION?

Despite Leveson's recommendation, IPSO lacks the power to order a newspaper to apologise when it has acted in breach of the Code. IPSO does have the power to require publication of an adjudication after it has upheld a complaint. But it never uses this power to any meaningful effect. Instead of requiring a front page adjudication to be published when the code-breaching article has appeared on the front page, IPSO typically orders a short and usually cryptic message in far smaller type to appear in the corner of the page. The code breach, regardless of its severity and the distress and damage caused to the child, is never properly remedied. And the abuse continues.

WHY DOESN'T IPSO INVESTIGATE THIS KIND OF COVERAGE?

Leveson said that regulators should have the power to investigate newspapers where there are serious or systemic breaches of the standards code. When newspaper executives drew up the plans for IPSO's rules, this was one of the many Leveson proposals they rejected. Instead, to prompt an investigation under IPSO, breaches must be **both** serious **and** systemic. This higher bar means in practice that investigations are far less likely.

In four years, IPSO has not launched a single investigation into any code breach or misconduct, despite repeated intrusions into children's lives. There are countless other cases of children being recklessly named or otherwise identified in similar stories. IPSO does nothing and so the practice goes on.

TRIVIALISED, DISTORTED AND INTRUSIVE: RECKLESS SUICIDE REPORTING

THEY NEVER LEARN

The suicide of actor Robin Williams in 2014 prompted a frenzy of press speculation about the cause and method of his death – even though specialist mental health and suicide prevention organisations had been warning for years that this kind of coverage was known to encourage others to take their own lives. Despite these terrible risks, the reckless coverage wasn't punished by the regulator of the time; it wasn't even criticised.



WHAT IS WRONG WITH PRESS REPORTING ON THE SUICIDES OF WELL-KNOWN PEOPLE?

No one objects to the press reporting the facts of a suicide. Mental health organisations, however, have repeatedly called on newspapers not to go into detail about the methods used, because doing so can trigger "copycat suicides".

Similarly, mental health charities have warned that speculation over the reasons for an individual's suicide should be avoided.

The Editors' Code also requires publication to be handled "sensitively".

When even a weak code is not enforced, newspapers know they have a free hand.



WOMAN'S MENTAL ILLNESS TRIVIALISED AFTER HER DEATH

These articles were published on October 5th 2017, after a woman suffering from mental illness took her own life in July 2016 after suffering from mental illness.

In particular, she suffered from facial dysmorphia, and on one occasion stated her intention of buying cosmetic treatments. Her husband responded by taking her credit card. Later that day, she took her own life.

- 1 The Botox element was barely relevant to the story yet almost all the coverage led on this element.
- 2 Mental health charities have repeatedly called for speculation over motive and method of suicide not to be published. Many of these stories ignored those warnings, despite the clearly stated risks of "copycat" suicides.
- 3 One online article was removed – but other articles remain published. There has been no correction and no apology.



CAN IPSO ACT WHEN SUICIDE REPORTING, SUCH AS IN THESE EXAMPLES, BRAZENLY BREACHES THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF MENTAL HEALTH ADVOCACY GROUPS?

IPSO can act – the Editors' Code has a provision saying 'care should be taken to avoid excessive detail of the method used' – but what little has been done has made barely any impact. Well over a decade after specialist organisations began pointing out the risk, reckless reporting is still going on.

NO ONE SHOULD BE THROWN TO THE WOLVES

**CHANGE IS POSSIBLE - WITHOUT
THREATENING REAL PRESS
FREEDOM**

These case studies show that much of the press is at least as cruel and unethical today as it ever was. There are many others that we could have included. Week in, week out, innocent people continue to suffer just as they did before the Leveson Inquiry.

Nothing has changed.

Editors have no excuse: they know exactly what they are doing. And as a consequence our fellow citizens are STILL being **thrown to the wolves**.

Some claim that journalism is a blunt instrument, and that this is the price we must pay for a free press. We disagree.

That is not what happens in a civilised society. Our broadcast journalists are the most trusted in the country, and feel no need to sacrifice their fellow citizens in this way.

There is a simple solution, agreed by Parliament and supported by the vast majority of the public: implement Sir Brian Leveson's moderate recommendations immediately and in full.

We call on the government to do just that.

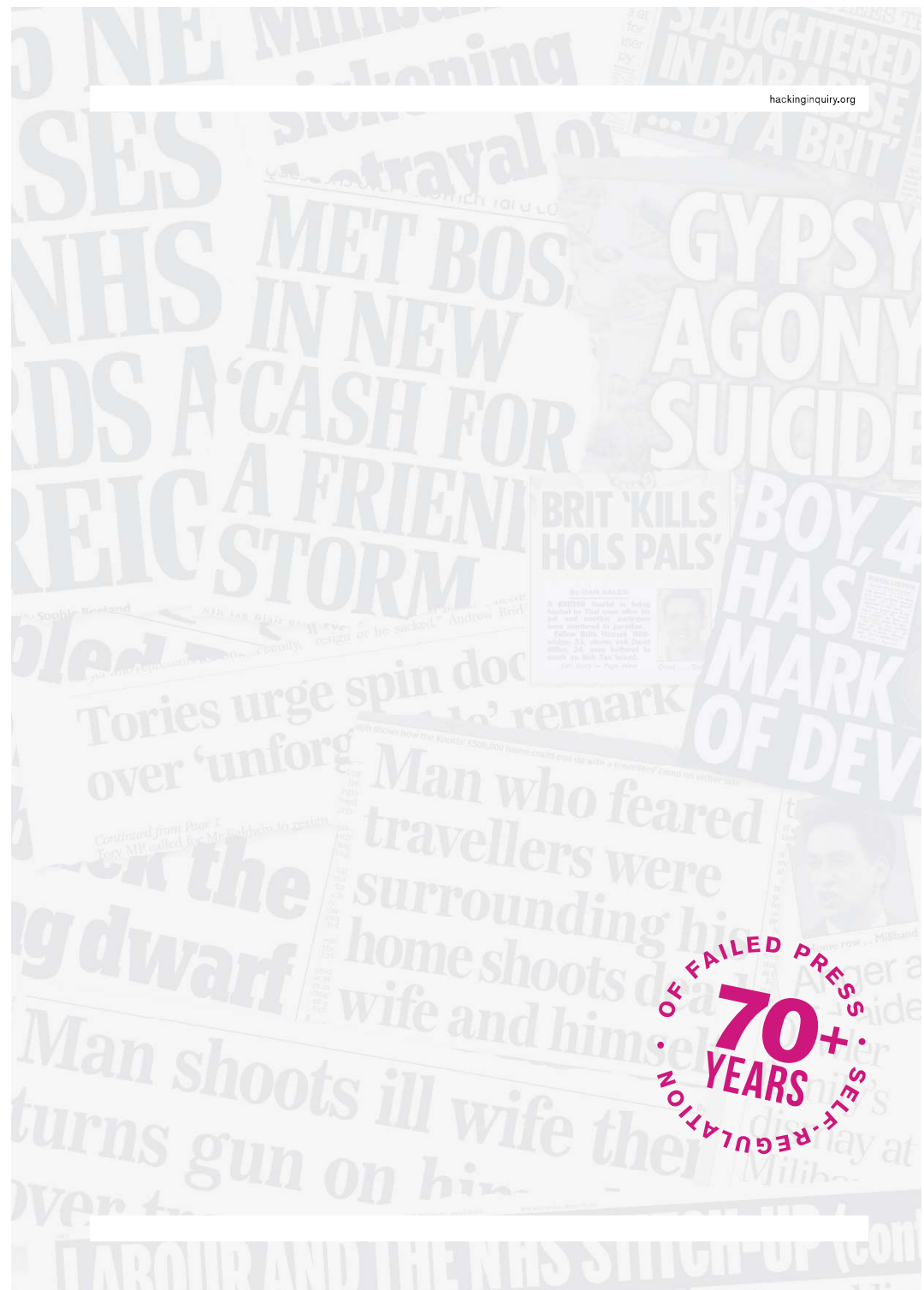
**INDEPENDENT, EFFECTIVE
REGULATION IS THE ANSWER**

- 1 A code of practice that reflects the needs of the public as well as those of decent journalism.
- 2 An unbiased body that judges difficult cases fairly and on their real merits, investigates properly when things go badly wrong, and can impose sanctions severe enough to ensure that lessons are learned.
- 3 Guaranteed insulation from any political influence to ensure that journalism remains entirely free from government interference.

That is what Leveson recommended and what Parliament approved in 2013, until this Government caved in to press demands and abandoned its full implementation.

The kind of harm presented here is avoidable without hindering important journalism which informs the public and holds power to account.

It is time for politicians to stand up for the public interest, and to send a message that editors and proprietors cannot trample on the feelings of ordinary citizens. It's time to implement Leveson.



IT'S TIME TO BREAK THE PATTERN OF FAILURE TO PROTECT THE INNOCENT

A sham regulator controlled by the industry allows the press to mark its own homework.

Innocent people are cruelly mistreated by some of the most powerful national newspapers.

Without funds to go to court, they have nowhere to go for remedy.

There has been an inquiry into these problems, but its recommendations have been ignored.

Does this sound familiar?

This was the state of the newspaper industry in 2011, before the phone hacking scandal. In many ways, in fact, it has been the state of things for 70 years, despite no fewer than seven inquiries and Royal Commissions into the press.

Every time we have seen the same outcome: the industry makes bold promises of change, while pressuring craven politicians into dropping the reforms needed.

Six years after Leveson, it is happening again.

It must be stopped.

As this publication shows, ordinary people are suffering, right now. Powerful press organisations are trashing their lives and they have no one to turn to.

And it can be stopped. The Leveson Report showed how. We can have effective, independent regulation giving people affordable justice, without any loss of freedom of expression.

There is no excuse. Parliament must act.

No one should be thrown to the wolves.

#THROWNTOTHEWOLVES

With thanks to the brave victims of press abuse, persistent IPSO complainants, the general public and our supporters who continue to generously support our campaign.

Thrown to the wolves.

How the public suffers from the absence of press regulation - September 2018

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