Day 64 - PM

1		1	Q. I've been working on the basis for the last two days
2	(2.00 pm)	2	with your son and with you that the right date was
3	LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Yes, Mr Jay.	3	30 September 2009. Are you saying that's incorrect?
4	MR JAY: Mr Murdoch, may we move to Mr David Cameron?	4	A. I think so. If that was the date of the Labour Party
5	A. Certainly.	5	Conference, it's certainly wrong.
6	Q. When asked in 2006 when you thought of him, you are	6	Q. I'm as sure as I can be that it was 30 September 2009
7	reported as having said, "Not much". Is that correct?	7	that the Sun came out
8	A. I don't remember that. I certainly could give you my	8	A. Well, for the sake of argument I'll accept you. Oh yes,
9	recollection of him. I first met him once, maybe even	9	we came out, yes.
10	twice, at family picnics at my at weekends at my	10	LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: We'll sort it out eventually, anyway.
11	daughter's house in the grounds of Blenheim Castle,	11	A. I wasn't here the day we came out for the Tories.
12	where he came with his family, and my we were overrun	12	MR JAY: You're sure about that in your mind, are you?
13	by children, there were no politics, but I was extremely	13	A. Oh yes.
14	impressed at the kindness and feeling he showed to his	14	Q. When you refer to "policy" here, Mr Murdoch, did you
15	children and particularly to his retarded son. I came	15	discuss with Mr Cameron issues such as broadcasting
16	away talking about him as a good family man.	16	regulation?
17	Q. Did you feel that he was lightweight?	17	A. No. Mr Jay, you keep inferring that endorsements were
18	A. No. Not then, certainly. No. He hasn't had I think	18	motivated by business motives, and if that had been the
19	it's too early to make that judgment.	19	case, we would have endorsed the Tory Party in every
20	Q. When he was leader of the opposition, we know from one	20	election. It was always more pro business. I could
21	of the documents you've put in that you saw him on	21	have been like the Telegraph. I could even have texted
22	a number of occasions. It's our exhibit KRM29. That	22	him every day. But I didn't. I was interested in
23	will be turned up for you. Might be tab 28 in that	23	issues.
24	bundle. It's page 01907.	24	Q. But
25	A. Thank you, Mr Jay.	25	A. As it says here, we probably discussed Afghanistan.
	Page 1		Page 3
1	Q. We can see, Mr Murdoch, that there are a number of	1	Q. If, Mr Murdoch, part of your thinking involves an
2	meetings with him. In 2006, there were two, a lunch and	2	assessment of who's going to win the next election, of
3	a breakfast. You were discussing	3	course you wouldn't always be voting the same or
4	A. 2000 and?	4	wouldn't always be supporting the same party, would you?
5	Q. 2006. Politics and policy. In 2007, it's less clear	5	A. If that had been the case, but I've explained that was
6	whether that breakfast took place. In 2008	6	not the case.
7	A. It's unclear. I don't have a memory, but go ahead.	7	Q. Do you remember discussing with Mr Cameron the issue of
8	Q. It's just the general flavour of it. The exact dates	8	BBC licence fees?
9	probably don't matter for this purpose.	9	A. No, not at all.
10	2008, breakfast. Rebekah Brooks is quite often	10	Q. Did you discuss with him the role of Ofcom?
11	there, isn't she? Or sometimes.	11	A. No.
12	A. Once, I think it's stated.	12	Q. Did you discuss Mr Coulson in the context of his
13	Q. And then you attended and he attended the wedding of	13	becoming Director of Communications for the Conservative
14	Rebekah Brooks to Charlie Brooks, we can see that.	14	Party and then the Coalition government?
15	A. Yes, together with Mr Brown and Mr Blair and Mr Cameron,	15	A. No. I was just as surprised as anybody else.
16		110	Q. Were you not interested to know what Mr Cameron's
17	they were all there.	16	
17	<b>they were all there.</b> Q. If you turn over the page to 01908, there was	17	position was on the various matters I've just put to
18	<ul><li>they were all there.</li><li>Q. If you turn over the page to 01908, there was a breakfast meeting with Mr Cameron on the day the Sun</li></ul>	17 18	position was on the various matters I've just put to you?
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Day 64 - PM

1

1	A. I did think that the idea of slicing it and giving it to	1 being properly protected, and I was dissatisfied with					
2	commercial competitors I'd never heard of that before	2					
3	and sounds strangely crazy.	3	any other Europeans. Our argument was that they should				
4	LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Mr Murdoch	4	be as well protected as the Americans.				
5	A. I don't believe they had that policy, did they?	5	And although we kept the relationship always with				
6	LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I'd like to ask you to separate	6	Mr Cameron I'm sorry, Mr Brown, you'll note in the				
7	out in your mind the question whether you might be	7	letters between he and I, we always finished with best				
8	discussing some topic or issue for commercial	8	wishes to our families.				
9	advantage you've told Mr Jay that you never did	9	Q. Yes. In terms then of how your bid for the remaining				
10	from the separate question: whether in fact these were	10	shares in BSkyB would be treated, you would work from				
11	topics that were worthy of discussion and on which you	11	the not unreasonable default position that the				
12	had a view. So, for example, you've mentioned that you		12 Conservative government would be more favourable to th				
13	talked about Afghanistan, and it would be perfectly	13 bid than a Labour government, is that fair?					
14	reasonable for you to have a view on that. Lots of	14	A. No, I didn't think it was the business of government.				
15	people will. And your view may be informed by your	15	It happens every day when controlling shareholders				
16	worldwide contacts through the businesses that you	16	decide to take in the outstanding shares.				
17	operate. That's merely your view. But, therefore, your	17	Q. I understand				
18	view on, for example, the regulation of television would	18	A. I didn't think there was any legal thing at all. The				
19	itself be of value and may be of interest to those who	19	only thing that was worrying me, I was sitting in				
20	are formulating policy, not because it necessarily would	20	America. What was worrying me was that the independent				
21	affect News Corp, but because this is a business to	21	directors were driving up the price to something				
22	which you have devoted your life, therefore it's not	22	unrealistic, many, many billions of dollars. I think				
23	surprising you will have strong views and I'm just	23	close to 13 billion. They didn't even settle for that.				
24	slightly surprised	24	There was nothing ever settled. That's a lot of money				
25	A. I understand.	25	to bring into this country. It's also a lot of money to				
	Page 5		Page 7				
1	LODD HISTICE LEVESON. if nahody did oak your view	1	fad				
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London EC4A 2DY

1	predictable, wasn't it, there would be?	1	that it's not just providing the politician with a large
2	A. I welcome that question, Mr Jay, because I want to put	2	megaphone, it is also powerful institutions like the Sun
3	it to bed once and for all, that that is a complete	3	endorsing the politician and therefore, so the argument
4	myth.	4	might run, the votes of British people might be
5	Q. Sorry, what's the myth, Mr Murdoch?	5	affected? Do you see that?
6	A. That I used the influence of the Sun or the supposed	6	A. Of course. I think they certainly would like us to
7	political power to get favourable treatment.	7	carry their views in a favourable way. I think that's
8	Q. The reason why we have what I've called the political	8	totally normal. And that goes for both parties or all
9	frisson at the very lowest is there's the perception	9	parties. And, you know, we're very lucky in this
10	about that you do use your influence impermissibly.	10	country that we have ten vibrant national newspapers to
11	Even if you wholly repudiate the factual basis for that,	11	keep the national debate going. I mean, I don't
12	that is what we see constantly, 1981, 1987, 1990, and	12	Mr Cameron might, of course, think stopping in Santorini
13	again in 2010. Don't you agree that that's a recurring	13	would impress me. I don't know. But I certainly
14	theme?	14	didn't
15	A. What, in the Guardian? And maybe the Independent? But	15	Q. But perhaps he, like you, Mr Murdoch
16	not everywhere. And, you know, after a while if these	16	A. I didn't I don't have any fealty to the Tory Party or
17	lies are repeated again and again, they sort of catch	17	to the Labour Party. Unlike Mr Barclay I don't get
18	on, and particularly if we're successful, it sort of	18	invited to dinner at 10 Downing Street.
19	you know, there are people who are a little resentful	19	Q. It's the importance of the face-to-face meeting, isn't
20	and grab onto them. But they just aren't true.	20	it, Mr Murdoch, importance which you appreciated when
21	Q. Okay. We don't have in this list we've been looking at	21	you invited yourself to Chequers on 4 January 1981? He
22	Mr Cameron flying out to Santorini and your yacht on	22	was seeking that access to you, wasn't he?
23	26 August 2008, which you tell us in your witness	23	A. Let me be quite honest, Mr Jay. I enjoy meeting
24	statement your wife remembers but not you. You have no	24	let's call them our leaders. Some impress me more than
25	recollection of that at all, do you?	25	others. And I meet them around the world. And I could
	Page 9		Page 11
1	A. No. It's coming back to me vaguely. Actually,	1	tell you one or two who particularly impressed me.
2	I checked it with my daughter, because he was being	2	Q. I mean, you mentioned the
3	flown, I believe, by my son-in-law's plane, on his way	3	A. If one looks at their personalities, their knowledge,
	to holiday in Turkey, and he did stop in Santorini and		
4	to nonday in 1 di key, and ne did stop in Santorini and	4	their policies, their principles, or one hopes their
4 5	she says that I in fact met him on her boat. But it	45	their policies, their principles, or one hopes their principles.
5	she says that I in fact met him on her boat. But it	5	principles.
5 6	she says that I in fact met him on her boat. But it doesn't matter. There were a couple of boats together.	5 6	<b>principles.</b> Q. Can I bring you back to the issue of the democratic
5 6 7	<ul><li>she says that I in fact met him on her boat. But it</li><li>doesn't matter. There were a couple of boats together.</li><li>Q. Here's Mr Cameron taking quite significant steps to meet</li></ul>	5 6 7	<ul><li>principles.</li><li>Q. Can I bring you back to the issue of the democratic process? Do you feel that there's any validity at least</li></ul>
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1	time he runs for re-election.	1	Q. Were not your advisers in the United Kingdom briefing
2	Q. Shortly after the Coalition government was set up, you	2	you constantly as to what was happening here
3	went for tea at Number 10 on 18 May 2010.	3	politically, what was likely to happen in the election,
4	A. Yes.	4	all in the context of how the bid would be confronted in
5	Q. On that occasion and possibly other occasions you go in	5	June 2010?
6	through the back door; is that right?	6	A. No. The two things were not linked at all.
7	A. That yes. There are reasons for that. They always	7	Q. I think the first thing is correct then, Mr Murdoch.
8	seem to don't want me to be photographed going out	8	You do have advisers here in the United Kingdom briefing
9	the front door or I don't want to be, but it also	9	you on the current political situation, don't you?
10	happens to be a shortcut to my apartment, so it's quite	10	A. Well, editors and people I speak to and gossip with.
11	okay.	11	There's no sort of formal advice, but yes.
12	Q. All right. Why do you think	12	Q. The way it works, a corporation with worldwide
13	A. And the car park is usually parked behind there, there's	13	interests, the chairman can't possibly have his
14	a car park behind 10 and 11 Downing Street.	14	metaphorical fingers in every pie. You have advisers
15	Q. You deal with this fairly short encounter over tea at	15	scattered around the world who are capable of feeding
16	paragraph 110 of your witness statement, don't you,	16	you relevant information about the political situation,
17	Mr Murdoch?	17	the economic situation, everything which might be
18	A. Do you want it here? I can't tell you everything from	18	relevant to your company. That's right, isn't it?
19	memory.	19	A. You talk about them as advisers. I would call them
20	Q. Page 03015.	20	senior executives, but yes.
21	A. Oh.	21	Q. Why was the bid announced one month after the election?
22	Q. Paragraph 110.	22	A. I don't know. I'd have to go and look at my records.
23	A. Yes?	23	I know that Mr at their sort of away weekend of
24	Q. You say most of the way through that paragraph	24	directors, which takes place I think some time around
25	A. Which one?	25	June, Mr Carey had raised the question with the outside
	Page 13	<u> </u>	Page 15
1	O. 110.	1	directors that we would like to find a way to move
1 2	Q. 110. A. I'm sorry? Yes. It's about Mrs Thatcher?	1	directors that we would like to find a way to move forward on this, but there wasn't I don't think there
1 2 3	A. I'm sorry? Yes. It's about Mrs Thatcher?	1 2 3	forward on this, but there wasn't I don't think there
2	<ul><li>A. I'm sorry? Yes. It's about Mrs Thatcher?</li><li>Q. Yes, that's at the top, but if you go halfway down, the</li></ul>	2	forward on this, but there wasn't I don't think there was ever a formal bid as such.
2 3	A. I'm sorry? Yes. It's about Mrs Thatcher?	2 3	forward on this, but there wasn't I don't think there was ever a formal bid as such. Q. No. What interests me, Mr Murdoch, it's a multi-billion
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2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23	<ul> <li>A. I'm sorry? Yes. It's about Mrs Thatcher?</li> <li>Q. Yes, that's at the top, but if you go halfway down, the sentence beginning: <ul> <li>"I do recall that"</li> <li>Do you see that, Mr Murdoch?</li> <li>" shortly after his election, Mr Cameron invited me in for tea at Number 10 he thanked me for the support of our papers [I'm sure he did that].</li> <li>I congratulated him and told him that I was sure our titles would watch carefully and report whether he kept all of his campaign promises."</li> <li>Is that the extent of it, Mr Murdoch?</li> </ul> </li> <li>A. Yes. If I could add that Mr Coulson was present.</li> <li>Q. At that stage, of course, the BSkyB bid was about to be announced. It was announced in June 2010. May I ask you this: was there no link in your mind between your support for Mr Cameron and the BSkyB bid?</li> <li>A. None at all.</li> <li>Q. Were you not fearful that if your guess was wrong and that Mr Brown had won that election, that the BSkyB bid would hit choppier waters?</li> <li>A. No, I never gave it any thought. It was a legal bid.</li> </ul>	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23	<ul> <li>forward on this, but there wasn't I don't think there was ever a formal bid as such.</li> <li>Q. No. What interests me, Mr Murdoch, it's a multi-billion pound acquisition. It needs very careful planning. You need to get all your finances in place. It probably takes years to conceive, in one sense, and then serious consideration is given internally to this bid in 2009. Surely in strategic terms you're also being advised as to when best to announce the bid. Isn't that right?</li> <li>A. I don't think we gave any thought to the timing of it, except that it would be good to talk to all the directors when they were together.</li> <li>Q. So it follows, then, it's pure coincidence it's a month after the General Election; is that right?</li> <li>A. Yes.</li> <li>Q. Can I deal with one more topic and then we might break, let's see how we get on, and that's Mr Alex Salmond. Can we just deal with some history. I can do this very shortly. The Scottish Sun was pro-SNP in 1992 but it was anti-SNP in 2007. The headline was:     "Vote SNP today and you put Scotland's head in the noose."</li> </ul>

4 (Pages 13 to 16)

Day 64 - PM

1	Labour Party.	1	apologise because we reduced Sky's employment numbers
2	Q. You did support the Labour Party?	2	quite dramatically in Scotland. We decided to break up
3	A. Am I right about that?	3	our call centre from many, many thousands of people into
4	Q. Yes, you are.	4	three different ones around the United Kingdom. Just
5	A. And then in 2010, the next election was it?	5	for security reasons.
6	Q. Yes.	6	Q. Having, in your eyes, perhaps
7	A. When we supported Mr Salmond and his party.	7	A. But we are, you know, we still remain a very large
8	Q. After the 2007 election, your relationship with	8	employer in Scotland through that and through the
9	Mr Salmond, one might suggest, improved. If you look at	9	Scottish Sun.
10	your exhibit KRM28, which is going to be tab 27	10	Q. Yes.
11	A. Yes?	11	A. And, of course, the lesser activities like distribution
12	Q can you see, Mr Murdoch, that between 17 November	12	of films and books and so on.
13	2000 and 12 October 2007 there was no contact between	13	Q. How would you describe your relationship with
14	you and Mr Salmond?	14	Mr Salmond? Is it warm or is it something different?
15	A. 17 November 2000?	15	A. Today?
16	Q. And 12	16	Q. Yes.
17	A. There was a telephone call, possibly.	17	A. I would describe it as warm.
18	Q. Yes.	18	Q. And over this period, is the general impression we might
19	A. And the same as for 12 October 2007, so they were seven	19	derive that your relationship is continuing to improve throughout? That's the period 2007 to the present day.
20 21	years ago apart for two perhaps telephone calls. Q. Yes. I think the point was more: there was absolutely	20 21	
21	no contact between you and Mr Salmond, but from	21	A. Yes. I mean, I don't know Mr Salmond well, but we've
22	certainly 30 October 2007, there is I won't say	22	had three meetings here and he's an amusing guy and
23 24	frequent contact, but there's far more contact, isn't	23	I enjoy his company, I enjoy talking with him, or listoning to him
24	there, and we can see this is page 01904	24	listening to him.
23	Page 17	23	Q. Can I invite you, please, to look at some correspondence Page 19
	146017		1 450 17
1	A. Well, you can see here that on 30 October, we opened	1	that Mr Salmond's office has released? It's in my
2	a large and very modern printing plant in Scotland, and	2	tab 93 of the second file. The first page says:
3	Mr Salmond, along with many other notables, were invited	3	"Alex Salmond releases Rupert Murdoch papers."
4	to be present.	4	Unfortunately, this isn't paginated. But on
5	Q. Then there's a breakfast meeting on 4 April 2008, which	5	24 October 2007, which is a number of pages through
6	must have been either one to one or certainly more	6	this, Mr Murdoch, Mr Salmond writes to you in New York.
7	intimate where you discussed your family's Scottish	7	See if you can find that, please.
8	roots. Do you see that?	8	A. This is BBC News.
9	A. I forget that, but it's possible. It doesn't say where	9	Q. Yes. BBC News are announcing that Mr Salmond's office
10	that was held.	10	has released the papers which we're about to look at.
11	Q. No.	11	I wonder if you might be given some assistance on this
12	A. He might have been visiting New York or something.	12	to find this letter of 24 October 2007. It's about six
13	Q. Well, the location isn't given	13	pages into this bundle.
14	A. Breakfast meetings tend to take place much more in	14	A. Yes. Is this the
15	New York than here.	15	Q. This is Mr Salmond
16	Q. Then there are a series of telephone calls. On 20 June	16	A. October 2007?
17	2011, you discuss Mr Salmond's interest in Scottish	17	Q. That's right.
18	independence, do you see that?	18	A. 24th, I think it says.
19		19	Q. Yes. He met you in New York in early 2007, we can see
20	Q. Then there's another meeting, December 2011, this time	20	that, can't we?
21	you discuss News Corp's investments in Scotland, do you	21	A. Yes.
22	see that?	22	Q. And he found your views both insightful and stimulating,
23	A. I don't know who wrote this, but	23	there was a reference to a book by Mr Webb which you
24	Q. Well, it's reconstructed.	24	gave him to read, and then he's telling you about
25	A it wasn't to ask for anything. It might have been to	25	GlobalScot.
	Page 18		Page 20

5 (Pages 17 to 20)

1			
1	Then on 31 October 2007, which is the next page	1	general tenor of the political endorsement in 2007?
2	A. This was a book by well he's now temporarily	2	A. I think we decided to support Labour, yes, throughout.
3	Senator Webb, who wrote some years ago talking about the	3	Q. The emotional attraction to the SNP was not manifested
4	Irish Scots and their persecution, it was very	4	by you in any way in your choice of endorsement in 2007,
5	fascinating, and how they had gone but they were	5	was it?
6	great fighters, but how they went and settled in	6	A. I don't know much about the SNP. I just have met
7	Virginia and Tennessee and so on, but who if you go	7	Mr Salmond a few times, and find him an attractive
8	through the names of casualties in American wars, you	8	person, and as I say, I said to you, it's a nice idea.
9	see a disproportionate number of them there.	9	Q. There's only one further point arising out of this, and
	Q. Okay. He writes to you again on 31 October, which is		
10		10	I don't think it's necessary to turn up the letter,
11	the next page, inviting you to go to see a play called	11	Mr Murdoch. But Mr Dinsmore, the general manager of
12	"Black Watch" in New York, but warning you that it's	12	News International Newspapers Scotland, wrote to
13	quite challenging:	13	Mr Salmond on 9 May 2011 congratulating him on last
14	"A rough, tough production."	14	Friday's "quite astonishing victory", and points out
15	Did you go and see that play?	15	that the result was "born out of a desire for change and
16	A. I'm afraid not.	16	the reinvigoration of Scotland". He says:
17	Q. There are other letters which pass between you. I'm not	17	"I look forward to News International playing its
18	going to look at all of them, I'm just going to pass	18	part in helping to make the country a place where
19	over them. Mr Salmond to you in February 2009. Then	19	outward looking, forward thinking and risk taking are
20	in	20	the norm."
21	A. Sorry, excuse me, I'm not with you.	21	A. What letter is that?
22	Q. It doesn't really matter, Mr Murdoch. I'm just passing	22	Q. 9 May 2011.
23	over it.	23	A. Yes.
24	A. Okay.	24	Q. It might be said
25	Q. Then the Scottish Sun supports the SNP in the Scottish	25	A. Short letter.
	Page 21		Page 23
1	election of 2011, I think it is, although the Scottish	1	Q that you had an ally in Mr Salmond now and you were
1	Sun is neutral on the issue of independence. You follow		pointing out what News International rather,
2	*	2	· -
3	me?	3	Mr Dinsmore was pointing out what News International
4	A. I don't see that in this letter.	4	hoped to achieve in Scotland in the future; would you
5	Q. No, you don't, because I'm moving on.	5	agree with that?
6	A. Oh.	6	A. Well, Mr Dinsmore may have gone a little too far in his
7	Q. It's a matter of public record that the Scottish Sun	7	enthusiasm. I can only tell you, as a matter of
8	supported the SNP in the Scottish election, although it	8	interest, that if we didn't continue to support
9	was neutral on independence. Was that a decision you	9	Mr Salmond at this stage, I really would have an
10	contributed to?	10	insurrection up there.
11	A. I don't remember, but probably, yes.	11	MR JAY: Mr Murdoch, I am certainly beginning to flag,
12	Q. And why did you support Mr Salmond's party? Can you	12	whether you are or not I don't think matters. I think
13	recall?	13	it's probably right, as I'm going to move on to a
14	A. Well, it's a little emotional, but I am attracted by the	14	LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Mr Murdoch, this is my decision.
15	idea, but I'm not convinced, and so I said we should	15	I think we've probably had enough today. I'm sorry to
16	stay neutral on the big issue, but let's see how he	16	have to inconvenience you tomorrow as well
17	performs.	17	A. It's quite all right.
18	Q. Of course your emotions have taken you to a different	18	LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: but I think it's more important
19	place previously. As we've seen, in 2007 you didn't	19	that we take this in a measured way, without getting too
20	support the SNP. Indeed, there was the head in the	20	tired. So thank you very much indeed. 10 o'clock
21	noose headline, wasn't there, which I mentioned about	21	tomorrow morning.
22	ten minutes ago?	22	A. Thank you, sir, for your consideration.
23	A. I didn't write that.	23	(2.48 pm)
24	Q. You wouldn't have been responsible for the detail of the	24	(The hearing adjourned until 10 o'clock the following day)
25	headline, but would you have been responsible for the	25	
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