
From: Gilbert, Rodney []
Sent: 23 November 2011 14:08
To: 'generalenquiries@levesoninquiry.org.uk'
Subject: Personal View

Dear Leveson Enquiry

I am an NHS consultant paediatrician. I am not a celebrity and my story has nothing to do with telephone hacking. It does, however, speak to question 1 in your document about the culture and ethics of the press.

In February 2004 a patient of mine, a young child with chronic renal failure, was admitted 12 hours after leaving the ward with an extremely high concentration of sodium in the blood. The only explanation I could find was that someone had given the child a very large dose of salt. I reported my concerns to the hospital's child protection team who notified the police. The child died a few days later and the mother was subsequently charged with murder. The trial took place at Winchester Crown Court in September and October 2006. (R v Marianne Williams) I was one of the main prosecution witnesses. The accused was acquitted. On 28th and 30th October the Daily Mail ran front page stories about me, alleging a variety of things ranging from incompetence to perverting the course of justice and perjury. I have no doubt that these stories were planted by a well-known campaigner against those who allege child abuse. (It should be noted that I did not ever make accusations against any particular person; it was the police who determined that the mother was the only person with opportunity.)

The campaigner I have just mentioned and the family then complained to the police about me, making the same allegations but adding, for good measure, a charge of manslaughter. There followed an investigation by the IPCC which cleared me of any wrong doing. Just before the CPS announced their decision, the Sunday Express ran another article again alleging all the same crimes.

I was never directly asked to comment on any of these stories. The hospital media relations department got wind of the Express story and the Assistant Chief Constable of Wiltshire (I am told) contacted the newspaper and told them that there was no story and that the CPS would exonerate me. They printed the story anyway. (This was around Easter 2008)

I once heard Kelvin McKenzie being interviewed on Radio 4. He made the comment that sometimes if one researched a story it disappeared and that the press therefore sometimes made a deliberate decision not to examine a story too closely.

A campaigner with a grudge against paediatricians sought to destroy my career. The Daily Mail and Sunday Express were happy to assist. Had they put any effort into researching the story they would have found that the campaigners story was composed of lies, half truths and misleading selective quotation from the court record. This, I believe, summarises the "ethics" and culture of the tabloid press.

Yours sincerely

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