Tuesday, 30 October 2012

(2.00 pm)

(Delayed start)

(2.07 pm)

NICK POLLARD: Thank you very much, not only for coming along today but for all the work you have done to get documents ready which have been a huge help and in rough times we were hoping to, sort of, get through this afternoon in about an hour and a half or thereabouts, but if we find we are in full flow we are happy to extend. I wonder if we can ask Richard to give us a few ground rules first, to set the scene.

RICHARD SPAFFORD: I will just talk a bit about roles. Obviously you know Nick, the remaining team present are all advising and assisting Nick in his review. Alan and Richard here, these two here, are barristers who are playing a barrister role to the review. Ben and I are solicitors who are providing legal services and secretariat services to the review.

Two points just to raise at the beginning, the first is documents. Can I just repeat what Nick has said about thank you very much for the work that you have done so quickly. As you may know, may have mentioned to you, we do have a document return process which is people who are, in our view, likely to have material documents and are sending those document returns, asking them to fill that document return in, to sign it and to certify they have given all relevant documents as confirmed in that return. Obviously what you have given us does not constitute compliance with that procedure so what I would like to do is give you a copy of that document so you have it. Our intention is that we will certainly, with thanks, take what you have given and then ask you probably on your return from holiday to fill out a return properly when you have time.

PETER HORROCKS: Okay.

RICHARD SPAFFORD: And to add to that any additional documents which are responsive and you have not given us, okay?

PETER HORROCKS: Yes.

RICHARD SPAFFORD: The second issue I wanted to raise as a preliminary point is the confidentiality of this process. There are two sides to that. The first is the discussions that we have here are, on the one hand, we would like you, please, to keep these confidential so we do not want you to be talking about what you tell us or what you hear from us from anybody else. It is very important that you confirm that, are you happy with that?

PETER HORROCKS: I am happy to do that, yes.
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| coverage which I was responsible for up to yesterday morning. Then a slightly different category of information where I have come upon the information and I think, without invalidating my role, I let management be aware of things. So they create slightly different issues, especially the ones about the process in relation to confidentiality. I didn't write that in, it is a preliminary matter I just wanted to state that. **NICK POLLARD:** Is it difficult to manage those two roles? I get the sense from what you have written in the timeline that, perhaps because the corporate side of it was not particularly well organised, that you were having to take on -- **PETER HORROCKS:** You may say that, I could not possibly comment. I am going to try not to speculate about it. What I was trying to do, it was tricky, was to think the things that I am pointing out to the organisation management, corporately I regard the people running the, you know, the BBC's management of the whole thing as the corporate side but in terms of my personal managerial responsibility I thought when I had worked things out from publicly available information and I deduced things because I was focusing on things more closely than anybody else was it legitimate, particularly in speaking to Sarah Jones council to say, "I think you need to be thinking about this." You see some of the stuff in the second timeline. But going back to the, kind of, period before the period really starts to break I am vaguely aware of things and I have been wracking my brains about what I was aware of. I knew there was a story that had not appeared, I think I must have picked up on the press coverage. **ALAN MACLEAN:** Your role then was? **PETER HORROCKS:** Director of Global News and World Service throughout this period, so I don't have any specific editorial or managerial responsibilities in relation to **Newswight.** This would not be a story transmitted on the international services. **ALAN MACLEAN:** So it is nothing to do with you? **PETER HORROCKS:** That is one of the reasons why I am brought in to handle the editorial role later on. **NICK POLLARD:** The news editorial board you were on? **PETER HORROCKS:** I sit on the News Group board, the main board for BBC News Group and also on the editorial board of the BBC News Group. So one of the things I have been asking myself, and I also asked colleagues in one of the board meetings we have had since this exploded, to go back and look for documentation in relation to things that should have been in front of the board. **NICK POLLARD:** Just explain to me the relationship between those two things is. Is the editorial board a sub-group of News Group? **PETER HORROCKS:** I think it is in technical terms, but in effect that is what it is. A wider configuration of people, it includes people that don't report in managerially to Helen Boaden, so David Jordan for instance, the editorial controllers from Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. It is a broader group of people. **ALAN MACLEAN:** The News Group board is headed -- **PETER HORROCKS:** Both are chaired by Helen, the editorial board has an editorial role because it reports about audience performance. It also has, I am sure you will come across this, documentation that may be relevant to this. There is a document called the Managed Risk Programme List which is where stories of sensitivities of various descriptions, reputational sensitivity, should be lodged. That document is also shared with another board I sit on, the Editorial Standards Board, where all of the BBC's content divisions come together and maybe we get to the exchange of information between the news and the BBC, we talk about that in more detail. The other document which may be relevant, I don't know, I certainly have not looked back at the documentation from this time, is that there is a press report or a reputational analysis that is done by the comm's team each month and that would either pick up potential stories or sensitive stories that have appeared in the press. I have asked the next editorial report which there has not been one since this story has really been at its height should look at that. **ALAN MACLEAN:** That is Paddy Feeney? **PETER HORROCKS:** Correct, he is now the head of comm's but he was not through this period. James Hardy, head of comm's for the News Division was head of comm's at the time, particularly through December to September period for the whole of the news, yes, yes. So to go back to your original question, I remember being aware of it but I don't remember there being a discussion at either the news board or the News Group editorial board and, like all of us involved in it, I have been asking myself was there more I should have realised or should I have exercised more curiosity? I think if there had been a formal item or if it had come up as a part of discussion, especially because of my interests in the programme **Newswight,** I think I would have asked about it. I don't remember that, I can't be absolutely certain about that. **NICK POLLARD:** You recorded, it is interesting, the two, if

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**Interview with Peter Horricks**

**Reed Smith Meeting**

30 October 2012
Interview with Peter Horrocks

1. I asked the question about the Managed Risk Programme.
2. List, I asked as a process point to Helen Boarden could
3. the next editorial board see the Managed Risk Programme.
4. List for last December and she said that yes, that will
5. be shared, but we know that the Newsnight definitely was
6. not on the News Group level list. The Programmes
7. Department of which Newsnight is a part, apparently it
8. was listed there, it didn’t get to News Group level. It
9. might be a tiny issue, but by the time the issues were
10. being compiled the story was not going ahead.
11. ALAN MACLEAN: Can you unpack that, it sounds like it was on
12. one list and not another?
13. PETER HORROCKS: Yes, there is a tiering. In the Programmes
14. Department people get confused, it is easier to think
15. about it as the current affairs department, amalgamates
16. its information about programmes of potential
17. sensitivity and then there is a tiering process and
18. more significant of those then get amalgamated into
19. News Group managed risks programme and that gets
20. consolidated into a BBC-wide list, news and current
21. affairs items generate greater sense.
22. RICHARD SPAFFORD: Was this a risk at the lower level that
23. didn’t make it to the risk higher up the chain?
24. PETER HORROCKS: I don’t know, I just know the information I
25. was given last Thursday, it was on the programmes list

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PETER HORROCKS: Yes, just as a colleague. I know him well,

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1. you like, passing references to the two, I suspect quite
2. important, Helen had; one with Peter Rippon about the
3. Savile programme and the other one that she had, the
4. famous "ten second conversation". She told you about
5. both of those, is that right?
6. PETER HORROCKS: She did, this is moving into the second
7. stage where Exposure has transmitted. I was in Cairo
8. when that happened, I remember having the odd message
9. from some correspondents saying it is not looking very
10. good and it is going to get worse and I had not realised
11. the potential significance. I knew it was a tricky
12. story.
13. ALAN MACLEAN: This is ITV?
14. PETER HORROCKS: Yes, the Exposure broadcast makes the whole
15. thing a major public issue. Then on my return from
16. Cairo things were starting to go, build up
17. significantly. So these conversations I had with Helen,
18. I have not been able to place these exactly yet, were
19. after my return from Cairo. In the week after exposure,
20. it must have been.
21. NICK POLLARD: So really the first kick off point, in a way,
22. is Wednesday October 10 when really you don’t have
23. an official involvement but you are texting Peter just
24. to express support, really?
25. PETER HORROCKS: Yes, just as a colleague. I know him well.

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PETER HORROCKS: This must be at the end of the week,
previously, so the Friday before Wednesday October 2nd.
So it would be Friday October 12.
NICK POLLARD: Well after the ITV programme had been
produced?
PETER HORROCKS: Yes, yes, yes. So well after the ITV.
NICK POLLARD: Was there debate how much the BBC should
investigate a response, but the story itself?
PETER HORROCKS: But there was a shift -- this is the
crucial thing -- on October 12 because when
Meirion Jones and Liz MacKeen were moving from Newsnight
to Panorama with me, I should stress, the agreement with
Steve Mitchell, the head of department, and the blessing
of the editor of Newsnight, in effect the intention was
to say "we didn't do the original investigation story
and we need to get that done." Although it is shutting
the door after the horse has bolted, it would be better
for the BBC to do that and bring some of the material
Newsnight had gathered to light, a different assessment
of the legal risks in relation to that once ITV have
published.

Then the row about the BBC's mishandling of it is
escalating and he is escalating in parallel and it is on
the Friday evening that George Entwistle announces what
leads to your appointment and so, you know, the story
starts to take on a different dimension. Meirion Jones
and Liz MacKeen have gone to Panorama as a production
team and then some people start to question, and I said
about this in the timeline, whether that is appropriate.
Should they be allowed to be, as it were, reporting on
something where they are now part of the story?

So what happens is that there is debate about that
before I formally get involved and it is decided that
they can be contributors to the programme but they
should not be in editorial control of it. So I am
joining and getting involved on Wednesday, Fran is aware
of these internal arguments with people with different
perspectives, whether this is appropriate, and she says,
"This is a tangle, can you help me?"

ALAN MACLEAN: Who decided it was going to be a Panorama
programme, that was before you involved?
PETER HORROCKS: Yes, the editor of the programme would have
decided he would do that, you need to ask Tom Giles
whether he ran it by Steve Mitchell. Normally you get
on with it, but this has BBC sensitivity. I imagine he
talked with Steve, he must have done at some stage
because the request from staff to transfer from one
programme within the department to another was
definitely agreed by Steve so those conversations must
have been happening in the week of the 8th October,
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<td>1 I can't remember exactly when that was and how that</td>
<td>1 different teams that was complicating the ability to get</td>
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<td>related to the timeline of the alerts going to</td>
<td>to the bottom of things and understand the facts and</td>
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<td>management and all those sorts of things. You will need</td>
<td>that is relevant to the good conduct of an investigation</td>
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<td>to unpick that, I don't have all the details of that.</td>
<td>that was always going to be tricky because it was</td>
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<td>5 NICK POLLARD: Okay. So do you know when work on that</td>
<td>5 an investigation into an organisation and I think it had</td>
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<td>Panorama programme started?</td>
<td>6 some bearing on the corporate mindset towards the story</td>
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<td>7 PETER HORROCKS: I don't, to be honest, no. I think Tom</td>
<td>7 and the Corporation's understanding of the facts and</td>
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<td>picked it up and said, &quot;This is something we need to be</td>
<td>8 that influenced its ability to be able to clarify its</td>
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<td>doing and seem to be doing&quot; but by the time I was asked</td>
<td>9 public position. We are jumping ahead a bit here.</td>
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<td>to get involved on that Wednesday 17th the programme was</td>
<td>10 ALAN MACLEAN: Can I just ask about whether you have any</td>
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<td>already up and running and, you know, the dual aspect of</td>
<td>11 view about the extent to which the decision to stop the</td>
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<td>it which became the programme as transmitted, IE that</td>
<td>12 story, not to broadcast the Newsnight story last year,</td>
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<td>there was, you know, the basic Jimmy Savile story, the</td>
<td>13 was that a decision that was accepted or welcomed or not</td>
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<td>historical stuff but also the BBC's handling of it more</td>
<td>14 welcomed or not accepted, first of all by the Newsnight</td>
<td></td>
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<td>recently, those elements were established by the time</td>
<td>15 journalists as a whole and then, secondly, by the</td>
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<td>16 I joined it.</td>
<td>16 management? Or were you not able to form a view about</td>
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<td>17 NICK POLLARD: Fran was dealing with the daily news side of</td>
<td>17 that?</td>
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<td>it, or were you increasingly taking that over as well?</td>
<td>18 PETER HORROCKS: You have asked an extremely broad question</td>
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<td>19 PETER HORROCKS: I was taking that over, but she was dealing</td>
<td>in terms of the number of people who would have a view</td>
<td></td>
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<td>with the interplay between Newsnight and Panorama. So</td>
<td>on that.</td>
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<td>20 by that stage some of the Newsnight team had started to</td>
<td>21 ALAN MACLEAN: There is some suggestion, for example,</td>
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<td>21 believe things about how the investigation had been done</td>
<td>22 Mr Rippon's blog, that his decision was supported by</td>
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<td>23 which made them question the way that Meirion Jones and</td>
<td>23 some and not supported by others at the time.</td>
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<td>24 Liz MacKean had done some of those things. Indeed,</td>
<td>24 PETER HORROCKS: Well, again, I don't have direct knowledge</td>
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<td>25 I will come to this, I have my own questions about</td>
<td>of this obviously so I can only rely on the few</td>
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| 1 whether they at all times did the right thing. I am not | 1 conversations I have had with people. |  |
| 2 coming in here and saying one group of people that did | 2 ALAN MACLEAN: Some of us agree strongly and some of us -- |  |
| 3 it right and one group of people did it wrong, there is | 3 PETER HORROCKS: Yes, yes, so, again, this is useful context |  |
| 4 issues and questions for everyone. | 4 and bound to come out through conversations that you |  |
| 5 So Fran was dealing with some of the Newsnight team | 5 will have, so it is less about my direct knowledge, it |  |
| 6 saying this is not appropriate and also throwing up | 6 is a legitimate context to assist you in being able to |  |
| 7 questions about things like the interview with the aunt | 7 understand what has happened and ask relevant questions |  |
| 8 that I refer to in the later timeline, and I don't know | 8 in relation to that. It is not any secret that |  |
| 9 if you want to go down those particular rabbit holes at | 9 there had been quite a lot of press |  |
| 10 this stage. There are one or two rabbits I had to knock | 11 stories, things that had emerged from journalists that |  |
| 11 on the head during the course of it, they ended up being | 12 worked on the programme or left the programme and that |  |
| 12 distractions from what the key issues were. | 13 is an important context on how he is communicating with |  |
| 13 NICK POLLARD: I guess there was, just to make things | 14 his team and potentially about the communication above |  |
| 14 harder, a fair bit of unofficial briefing going on of | 15 as well. So you need to ask the people directly |  |
| 15 newspapers and other contacts by people with, you might | 16 involved what their particular perspectives on that |  |
| 16 say, with a bit of an axe to grind from one side or the | 17 were, but that was definitely a background to it. |  |
| 17 other? | 18 From what I understand -- this is predominantly from |  |
| 18 PETER HORROCKS: I was certainly aware of that and something | a conversation last week with the now acting editor, |  |
| 19 I was having to manage through the course of this was | Liz Gibbons, who had some awareness of it being the |  |
| 20 people who had different perspectives on it who felt | deputy editor at the time this happened -- most of this |  |
| 21 their positions were being accurately reported. The | was being handled by Peter Rippon in direct relationship |  |
| 22 producer felt they were being malignted but equally there | with the team and there was not necessarily that |  |
| 23 were people close to the original Newsnight and who felt | widespread knowledge until the moment when the story was |  |
| 24 that the leaking that was happening was, you know, | not going ahead. It is clear that there must have been |  |
| 25 producing them. So there was an atmosphere between | | 20 |
some discussion about that with a number of other people, not least because Caroline Hawley discusses it with the Director General at a drinks party.

NICK POLLARD: She is not a Newsnight reporter?
PETER HORROCKS: No, I think she was attached, she moved across every now and then to back up Newsnight. So the fact of the story not going ahead is a matter of some knowledge within the team, but exactly who knew what and the level of detail I don’t know.

ALAN MACLEAN: To the extent the blog suggests there were some people leading the cheering and some leading the booing for Rippon’s decisions. Do you know who the boo-ers were and who the cheerers were?
PETER HORROCKS: I don’t, apart from the people we are concerned about whose views have been... NICK POLLARD: It is clear from some of the notes we have seen that Liz Gibbons was against it. She is on the record as criticising it both through a matter of taste and as a matter of appropriateness for the programme.
PETER HORROCKS: That would fit with what I heard. I think clearly, other than a hindsight aspect, I think there were people who genuinely felt that it was, you know, maybe unseemly and too soon after his death and, you know, we talk about the judgment itself and its appropriateness. That is an aspect of the judgment depending on the strength of the testimony and all those sorts of things.

NICK POLLARD: But did you get the impression, perhaps from a conversation with Liz or wider knowledge, to put it bluntly, it was an unhappy programme team perhaps? There is always in every programme low level grumbling and people let off steam that way, but more than usual?
PETER HORROCKS: No, I would say -- I had direct knowledge of Newsnight for the best part of 30 years and I would say it is a more divided team than most.

ALAN MACLEAN: According to readable news reports is right to reply letter effectively with.

So Ceri was talking to other editors, there was already a, sort of, view that too much of the blame was being put on Peter Rippon and a significant part of that was the strong belief which, you know, I think there was a legitimate point to. It is one thing for a reporter and producer to go from one programme to another to do an investigation on somebody else but to go from one programme to another and then start doing an investigation on the organisation and in particular because this process had by then been constituted, so in the legal letters that we had David Price writes on behalf of Peter Rippon during the course of the run up to the transmission and says that it is against natural justice: how can the BBC have constituted this process and also be investigating my client in public and how does the BBC reconcile those things? We deal with that. That view is the view that Ceri Thomas is expressing on behalf of Peter Rippon and that is coming to me from Fran because she is at that stage taking over all responsibility.

NICK POLLARD: Okay. So, I mean -- PETER HORROCKS: Other people are expressing that view and there are details, but we don’t need to go into that.
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a letter that Panorama would send out, probably to anybody that they were doing an investigation about.

PETER HORMROCKS: Yes, sorry, I didn't actually address the question in my early view of it. I am being influenced to some extent by some of the concerns that people are expressing about whether it is being fair to Peter Rippon. I have not yet got my own hands on the evidence. I have not read any of the transcripts of the interviews or at this stage have I had the face-to-face meeting with Meirion Jones. I am just reacting to the letter. It just seemed a bit hostile. Looking back in hindsight, I think I used the word "loaded" and I think there were one or two phrases which, looking back on it with more understanding of things now, I probably would say are loaded. But the, the kind of, the list of accusations, as it were, they were legitimate ones, I think, to have raised.

NICK POLLARD: You said to Clive Edwards that you thought it was -- and that was in your capacity then as effectively editorial head of Savile coverage?

PETER HORMROCKS: I can't be absolutely sure, Nick, I would have to look at the time of day when George Entwistle sent -- George sent me the email at 14.15, no, this is before I am given that responsibility so I am still in a deputy capacity on the Friday. I am getting involved in it. I think it is loaded, Clive says, "Don't be ridiculous, there are serious things to run and we need to get on with it." By lunchtime I have sat down with Meirion, that is for me the significant moment for me understanding what has happened and that shifts my perspective.

NICK POLLARD: Friday morning you get this email from Roger, slightly out of the blue, saying you are now handling Panorama. Did that come as a bit of a surprise?

PETER HORMROCKS: By the way, well, it didn't totally no. I could see Fran was keen for support and I had, I looked after the John Ware programme that proceeded the Hutton report that had some impact on BBC governance eight years ago. I had been put in this position previously so I was not totally surprised, to be honest.

NICK POLLARD: Okay. Interestingly, that note at 9.20 about Paul Milrea, is that how you --

PETER HORMROCKS: Yes.

NICK POLLARD: Milrea. This, it seems to me, kicks off this issue about the BBC's public handling of press matters.

PETER HORMROCKS: That was a piece of information which I battled with myself whether to include, I decided it is sufficiently important that even though that is me passing on to the inquiry information which I gained in my senior corporate capacity, because it was just, it is

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a rota of the senior BBC News representatives attending that call and although procedures had been put in place where people were in different units there were people on the corporate side and editorial side I was on the rota for that. I thought do I need to go in?

ALAN MACLEAN: Can I ask you about this DG communications call, you said you were on the rota. This happens every morning, does it?

PETER HORMROCKS: Yes, the same time every morning.

ALAN MACLEAN: This gives a heads-up what is going on?

NICK POLLARD: It is a conference call.

PETER HORMROCKS: It is a morning meeting and it was instituted, I think, after a previous set of public reputational issues the BBC had to face and the importance of all the senior leaders coming together very rapidly in effect of communications and press tends to dominate. If there has been a blackout on the website, those sorts of things will be raised as well.

ALAN MACLEAN: An opportunity to put things on to the Director General's plate?

PETER HORMROCKS: It is, the new Director General was saying, "I don't want it to just be dominated by the cuttings of The Daily Mail, I want to hear about other things."

This meeting was dominated by what was happening in the press, it is meant to be --

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ALAN MACLEAN: How often would you be on the rota?

PETER HORMROCKS: Once a week. I am formally Helen Boaden's deputy and she joins most of the calls, that particular Friday morning was one where I was rostered so I decided it was important for BBC News to be represented for a whole range of issues.

ALAN MACLEAN: When you listen in you are not a participant in the discussion, you are not --

PETER HORMROCKS: No, no, I could have said something but and this is very important to say -- that I did not pass that information on to the editorial team in Panorama having heard that, I use that in my corporate capacity subsequently in the conversations I describe later on that day.

ALAN MACLEAN: So it is important to your mindset and those who participated in that discussion that you are wearing a particular hat?

PETER HORMROCKS: I don't think they were particularly thinking about it, to be honest. They knew I was on the call, everybody announces themselves.

ALAN MACLEAN: You were there wearing your corporate hat --

PETER HORMROCKS: Not my -- well, I was not formally leading Panorama at that point. I think, yes, I don't think I knew that. I knew about the Panorama because Fran had been asking me about it and I had had some phone calls
1 through the course of Thursday, as I said, I was
2 traveling and appearing at the literary festivals.
3 I had had calls about it, I was gaining knowledge, when
4 I read the story in The Times and then read the way it
5 was being described on the call I thought there may be
6 a gap between my emerging understanding and how I took
7 the corporate position to be.

8 ALAN MACLEAN: What was the thrust of the times story?
9 PETER HORROCKS: The thrust was what was being referred to
10 when it was described as ridiculous was the definition
11 of the story, the nature of the investigation, if
12 focused on Surrey Police and their handling of it.
13 NICK POLLARD: The suggestion by The Times was that it was
14 not true?
15 PETER HORROCKS: It was the first of the series of emails
16 that started to appear which showed the production did
17 not hold that view.

18 ALAN MACLEAN: So The Times was questioning the story or the
19 line that had been put out that Newsnight was looking at
20 what the police had been doing and The Times was saying
21 we have a document that suggests it was doing something
22 different?
23 PETER HORROCKS: It was probably the Liz MacKean email,
24 something like that, that subsequently appeared in
25 a number of other places and also my sense was the --

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1 sorry, was that the context of leaking, and I can't
2 remember what other stories had already appeared by this
3 stage so please forgive me, doing a pull of the press
4 stuff against the time would help with this, but my
5 sense was I don't know if I can talk about it. I then
6 have some conversations and write some emails and send
7 some texts in the afternoon, after I have spoken to
8 Meirion, to a number of people on the corporate side.
9 ALAN MACLEAN: What was ridiculous? What was described as
10 ridiculous?
11 PETER HORROCKS: I suppose what was being said was that
12 The Times was read to have swallowed the version of the
13 story because we know from the BBC corporate point of
14 view that is not true, was what I read into the use of
15 the word ridiculous.
16 ALAN MACLEAN: But Mr Milrea is a comms man, not somebody
17 directly involved in the events the year before.
18 PETER HORROCKS: This is a conversation that is happening
19 about the BBC's handle before. As I say, the
20 Director General did correct him or adjust his view, he
21 said, "I think you ought to nuances this, there are
22 people who have different views." There was a sense by
23 that stage, now he know the direct information available
24 by that stage, but it was still for me there was still
25 a -- it was still clear the corporate mindset certainly

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1 was not even handed about the nature of the
2 investigation.
3 NICK POLLARD: As it turns out, if you look at the position
4 that the BBC later reached, later acknowledged, it was
5 the very opposite of ridiculous. I mean, ridiculous was
6 a very considerable overstatement, was it not?
7 PETER HORROCKS: Well, I said to people that I thought
8 ridiculous was the wrong description, as you see from my
9 subsequent communication with the general council and
10 the conversation I had with Jessica Cecil, the chief of
11 staff to the Director General. I noted it was being
12 described as ridiculous, I assessed that myself because
13 I was trying not to take a position on anything, as you
14 can see. Initially though the Panorama view was
15 loaded, I was trying to keep as neutral a view as
16 possible and find out what was going on. I thought
17 talking to Meirion might be useful.
18 NICK POLLARD: Just before you leave the press call, who do
19 you think Milray would have got that line from, do you
20 think?
21 PETER HORROCKS: I don't have a clear view of how the
22 corporate perspective has come together through this.
23 My main understanding of the corporate perspective is
24 largely through communication with Milrea of a different
25 nature, not a conference call but interacting with him

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1 and how the corporate side has organised itself, has not
2 been immediately apparent to me, that has been kept
3 separate for obvious reasons. I know the BBC has an
4 instant command system, gold command, so if is appointed
5 as gold command my understanding is that has not been
6 Director General because they are involved in the story
7 and it is not good practice for somebody caught up in
8 something to be taking those even-handed decisions. My
9 understanding is for part of this period Roger Mosey was
10 that person which is the reason why the email came to me
11 from Roger saying I was given responsibility for
12 Panorama.
13 ALAN MACLEAN: He is?
14 PETER HORROCKS: Acting Director for BBC Vision. He was
15 previously responsible for BBC's coverage of the
16 Olympics.
17 NICK POLLARD: When George Entwistle moved up from Director
18 of Vision --
19 ALAN MACLEAN: The George Entwistle --
20 PETER HORROCKS: His substantive role is Director of Vision.
21 In this role, as I understand it, he has taken on the
22 acting DG responsibility because of George. Once he has
23 commissioned you guys he is no longer allowed to be
24 taking decisions in relation to that, although there are
25 some things he communicates to me so I am not quite sure

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Interview with Peter Horrocks

1. behind the corporate veil, as it were, whether decisions are taken by Roger and given to George. In this context, I think Roger may well have taken some of these decisions.

NICK POLLARD: Then you say Meirion and a lot of things surprise you about that, not least that you are really the first manager he has spoken to, is that right?

8. PETER HOREKKS: I am the first BBC News manager he has spoken to. He has spoken to Ken MacQuarrie and I think -- when was that? I seem to remember that was 10 October. It is in Meirion chronology I forwarded to you. We are now on the 19th, is that right? I am thinking it is really nine days. He definitely talks to Meirion before George Entwistle’s press conference on 9 October and the corporate mindset is still not even handed in relation to the issues in question but, anyway, Meirion says to me in effect, you know, it is good to be talking to you, Peter, because no-one in BBC News -- I have not had an opportunity to talk to anybody in BBC News, either his editor or above his editor, since December last year when the story was pulled. He has a timeline in front of him which he is going to be developing already. I ask him whether he is happy for that, something like that, to -- George is going to be appearing before the committee on Tuesday 1.

and he says, “Of course, of course, I have been trying to make sure the BBC is clear about its position.”

1. RICHARD SPAFFORD: The meeting with MacQuarrie is on 19 October?

5. ALAN MACLEAN: Why are you astonished about this revelation?

6. You say when he says you are the first BBC News manager he has spoken to since last December you say you are astonished?

9. PETER HOREKKS: There could have been a number of opportunities where such a conversation could have happened, either before the Christmas of December when the story is being pulled and clearly there has been a quite strong debate about it. A decision has been taken, sat down with a reporter and producer to talk through, even if it is just to handle their discomfort about it. Certainly when the stories start to appear in the Mirror and the Oldie I imagine there would have been some commons consideration: what is the BBC’s response going to be to this? There would be discussion with the people involved as well as the editor in the run up to the exposure of documentary and then, importantly, once the blog was published, you see from the blog later on Meirion and Liz flag up a different perspective on it.

I always try and take the view throughout this it is not obvious that their view is the only one that matters,
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<th>Reed Smith Meeting</th>
<th>30 October 2012</th>
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<tr>
<td>1 non-editorial, that was a mistake, but even in that</td>
<td>1 PETER HORROCKS: Yes, it is used as a noticeboard when the</td>
<td>1 PETER HORROCKS: Yes, it is used as a noticeboard when the</td>
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<td>2 event there was room for an investigative journalist, if</td>
<td>2 BBC wants to get a point of view about launching a new</td>
<td>2 BBC wants to get a point of view about launching a new</td>
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<td>3 you come to see me or come to see Tom Giles at least</td>
<td>3 programme or something like that. Also when there is</td>
<td>3 programme or something like that. Also when there is</td>
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<td>4 there would have been another kind of scrutiny.</td>
<td>4 something awkward, say inappropriate pictures on the</td>
<td>4 something awkward, say inappropriate pictures on the</td>
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<td>5 NICK POLLAIRD: We will ask in detail about his reaction.</td>
<td>5 10 o'clock news, somebody will confess their sins in</td>
<td>5 10 o'clock news, somebody will confess their sins in</td>
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<td>6 Okay. Just take us through the things that you did, if</td>
<td>7 public.</td>
<td>7 public.</td>
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<td>7 you like, as a result of your conversation with Meliron</td>
<td>8 ALAN MACLEAN: It is a way of doing things in public?</td>
<td>8 ALAN MACLEAN: It is a way of doing things in public?</td>
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<td>8 --</td>
<td>9 PETER HORROCKS: It is significant. We do have a policy of</td>
<td>9 PETER HORROCKS: It is significant. We do have a policy of</td>
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<td>9 RICHARD SPAFFORD: Do you mind, you said in the</td>
<td>10 linking to it prominently, particularly if it is</td>
<td>10 linking to it prominently, particularly if it is</td>
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<td>10 conversation, &quot;it appears he has some strong points.&quot;</td>
<td>11 something to do with the core BBC News. If there has</td>
<td>11 something to do with the core BBC News. If there has</td>
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<td>11 I think you say in your timeline, 14, 15, &quot;Meliron --</td>
<td>12 been a mistake about something you will see the links to</td>
<td>12 been a mistake about something you will see the links to</td>
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<td>12 convinced me he had some strong points about it not</td>
<td>13 other aspects of the story. Editor's blog apology,</td>
<td>13 other aspects of the story. Editor's blog apology,</td>
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<td>13 going ahead and...&quot; Can you tell me about the strong</td>
<td>14 something like that, if it is relevant.</td>
<td>14 something like that, if it is relevant.</td>
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<td>14 points about the item not going ahead?</td>
<td>15 ALAN MACLEAN: It is an established mechanism?</td>
<td>15 ALAN MACLEAN: It is an established mechanism?</td>
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<td>15 PETER HORROCKS: Well, he tells me about the fact there were</td>
<td>16 PETER HORROCKS: It is a serious accountability and</td>
<td>16 PETER HORROCKS: It is a serious accountability and</td>
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<td>16 two interviews, the strength of the testimony he has</td>
<td>17 transparency mechanism the BBC uses, it is not a sop, it</td>
<td>17 transparency mechanism the BBC uses, it is not a sop, it</td>
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<td>17 other research information that was not on camera but</td>
<td>18 is serious and people take it seriously. We often have</td>
<td>18 is serious and people take it seriously. We often have</td>
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<td>18 was helping to substantiate it and I think his point is</td>
<td>19 a discussion about how far should we go and the</td>
<td>19 a discussion about how far should we go and the</td>
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<td>19 why were we stopped, why didn't we continue it? At</td>
<td>20 press office are often saying, &quot;Come on, we don't have</td>
<td>20 press office are often saying, &quot;Come on, we don't have</td>
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<td>20 least if there were legitimate doubts about it why</td>
<td>21 to go that far&quot; and we have tried to encourage a culture</td>
<td>21 to go that far&quot; and we have tried to encourage a culture</td>
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<td>21 didn't we, they seemed to be legitimate. It is actually</td>
<td>22 of editors honestly describing their mistakes because</td>
<td>22 of editors honestly describing their mistakes because</td>
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<td>22 on the second side of it that I am getting an even</td>
<td>23 having a trusting relationship with the audience by</td>
<td>23 having a trusting relationship with the audience by</td>
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<td>23 stronger concern about whether the BBC's position is</td>
<td>24 being clear and honest about error is important for us</td>
<td>24 being clear and honest about error is important for us</td>
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<td>24 an appropriate one because so much of the information</td>
<td>25 to do. It is important for us to have.</td>
<td>25 to do. It is important for us to have.</td>
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<td>25 that he has does contradict both the blog and also other</td>
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<td>26 inaccuracies that the BBC is committing itself to in</td>
<td>1 particular blog was to some extent subject to drafting</td>
<td>1 particular blog was to some extent subject to drafting</td>
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<td>2 public and it is that second aspect of it that becomes</td>
<td>2 by committee. Do you know who actually --</td>
<td>2 by committee. Do you know who actually --</td>
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<td>3 in many ways my strong concern in relation to the</td>
<td>3 PETER HORROCKS: I don't have any knowledge of that.</td>
<td>3 PETER HORROCKS: I don't have any knowledge of that.</td>
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<td>4 corporate position.</td>
<td>4 ALAN MACLEAN: What would you expect, would you expect the</td>
<td>4 ALAN MACLEAN: What would you expect, would you expect the</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 RICHARD SPAFFORD: What you are saying here is you think</td>
<td>5 editor himself to sit down and write it?</td>
<td>5 editor himself to sit down and write it?</td>
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<td>6 there is strength in the first point as well, is that</td>
<td>6 PETER HORROCKS: Yes, I would, yes, with input from whoever</td>
<td>6 PETER HORROCKS: Yes, I would, yes, with input from whoever</td>
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<td>7 right?</td>
<td>7 else has information and I would also expect the teams</td>
<td>7 else has information and I would also expect the teams</td>
</tr>
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<td>8 PETER HORROCKS: I do, I do. This is not to say the reasons</td>
<td>8 would have sight of it. In fact, I think there was</td>
<td>8 would have sight of it. In fact, I think there was</td>
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<td>9 Peter Rippon may have had in his mind were invalid,</td>
<td>9 something that was introduced in our first flush of</td>
<td>9 something that was introduced in our first flush of</td>
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<td>10 there could have been other reasons, but the questions</td>
<td>10 enthusiasm for transparency, I think blogs were written</td>
<td>10 enthusiasm for transparency, I think blogs were written</td>
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<td>11 Meliron is raising are legitimate ones that would lead</td>
<td>11 without the press team having sight of them and signing</td>
<td>11 without the press team having sight of them and signing</td>
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<td>12 me not to be so absolute the statements the BBC is</td>
<td>12 them off and when I was head of the newsroom, which</td>
<td>12 them off and when I was head of the newsroom, which</td>
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<td>13 currently making, in other words there is at least</td>
<td>13 included responsibility for online, digital and radio,</td>
<td>13 included responsibility for online, digital and radio,</td>
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<td>14 enough to create some doubt about the position the BBC</td>
<td>14 the comms team said, &quot;We need to see these in advance.&quot;</td>
<td>14 the comms team said, &quot;We need to see these in advance.&quot;</td>
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<td>15 is taking.</td>
<td>15 Exactly what happened in this case, whether there was</td>
<td>15 Exactly what happened in this case, whether there was</td>
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<td>16 NICK POLLAIRD: At around about this time you are getting</td>
<td>16 involvement, I don't know.</td>
<td>16 involvement, I don't know.</td>
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<td>17 increasingly exercised, I think, about the BBC's</td>
<td>17 ALAN MACLEAN: They need to see them so they can handle</td>
<td>17 ALAN MACLEAN: They need to see them so they can handle</td>
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<td>18 position. Just so I am clear, the blog, the blog has</td>
<td>18 questions --</td>
<td>18 questions --</td>
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<td>19 been up in its original form for how long by then?</td>
<td>19 PETER HORROCKS: Yes, yes, I am saying where we got to, the</td>
<td>19 PETER HORROCKS: Yes, yes, I am saying where we got to, the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 PETER HORROCKS: 2 October, I think.</td>
<td>20 editor needs to be able to express clearly and honestly</td>
<td>20 editor needs to be able to express clearly and honestly</td>
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<tr>
<td>21 ALAN MACLEAN: It is dated 2 October. When you were</td>
<td>21 the explanation for what it might be, positive or</td>
<td>21 the explanation for what it might be, positive or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 Newsnight editor when blogs were not around did you have</td>
<td>22 negative, but the comms team should know about that and</td>
<td>22 negative, but the comms team should know about that and</td>
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<td>23 one?</td>
<td>23 be able to handle follow up queries. Sometimes it would</td>
<td>23 be able to handle follow up queries. Sometimes it would</td>
</tr>
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<td>24 PETER HORROCKS: No, but I had responsibility --</td>
<td>24 be, in effect, have you thought about this, thought</td>
<td>24 be, in effect, have you thought about this, thought</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 ALAN MACLEAN: So it has been around for a while, has it?</td>
<td>25 about that, the comms team would say to look at that</td>
<td>25 about that, the comms team would say to look at that</td>
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Interview with Peter Horrocks

1. drafting, but the commitment is always to a transparent relationship with the audience.

2. ALAN MACLEAN: It is not supposed to be a lines to take document?

3. PETER HORROCKS: No, it is not. I have explained its origins and the intention of it. It was originally designed to open up the BBC's editorial processes. We thought it was something we might update two or three times a day, thinking about this, thinking about that, but that didn't happen. It became more of an alternative communications tool with the intention of it being, I suppose, not like a press release or a press statement. It is more in the authentic voice of the editor who is talking directly to the audience.

4. NICK POLLARD: This was clearly Peter's authentic voice, is that right?

5. PETER HORROCKS: In reading it I never thought it was in somebody else's hands, the questions you are asking, I have not heard second-hand about that either. I have not genuinely heard any discussion about that. That is partly because you need to speak to Meirion James and there is a key part of this, their view is they had very little knowledge themselves and most of my information has come from them rather than people in the corporate machine because by the time I was involved in it I was in a separate box from the corporate machine and they had not been telling me what was going on.

6. NICK POLLARD: Did you get the impression when you talked to him that as soon as this blog had gone up he had realised that it effectively ran counter to his view --

7. PETER HORROCKS: It is all in his communications with management about inaccuracies with BBC position. I think yesterday I sent it through to you, he quotes very clearly the number of efforts he makes. This is both before and after the publication of the blog to try and get that across, the meeting which was previously confidential with David Jordan, the email to George Entwistle and the attempted doorstep of the Director General within the building to alert him to it. 2 October, "Talk to George in the fourth floor lift."

8. ALAN MACLEAN: "Briefly".

9. PETER HORROCKS: So it is, you know.

10. NICK POLLARD: So there are two parallel things going on, you see. There is the blog which is there in print as the existing BBC view of why the thing was dropped and then, of course, there is a whole range of other statements being made, interviews given by David Jordan and the Director General --

11. PETER HORROCKS: Yes, yes.

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1. NICK POLLARD: -- and then you get involved in a fire fighting, as it were, of trying to make sure that the right version or a not quite as conspicuously wrong version takes precedence, is that right?

2. PETER HORROCKS: It takes intellectual and emotional energy, that is how it feels after two weeks of this. There is difference between the Newsnight and Panorama teams, that is one of those, and then as I say --

3. ALAN MACLEAN: You, as it were, discovers -- this is 14 and 15 on the 19th, on the Friday.

4. PETER HORROCKS: Yes.

5. ALAN MACLEAN: There was a second. Jones had told you already there were two --

6. PETER HORROCKS: No, I don't think he had and at that stage I had not been cross-examining his story. What I had done was establish there was enough credible on him casting doubt on the BBC's account of events and I was asking him to write his account. It was a short meeting, it was sufficient to say he had doubts about the BBC was saying, I had not tested him about that. The testing starts when the information comes to me through different routes. On Thursday night, on the 18th, Newsnight do the Savile story for the first time and Liz MacKean appears on Newsnight and it is through the editorial process the so-called second interview is discovered. So there is turmoil on Newsnight.

7. ALAN MACLEAN: Discovered by Newsnight --

8. PETER HORROCKS: Yes.

9. ALAN MACLEAN: He stood down though --

10. PETER HORROCKS: No, no, not at this stage. I am going back to the previous. No, no. So, Thursday October 18, after the exposure has been transmitted more than a week earlier, Newsnight finally do an item on Savile and Meirion details this and debate in the programme whether it is appropriate. Peter says he does not want to do it. Eventually he is recused because of Pollard being set out. He makes that item, in making that item the second interview is discovered --

11. NICK POLLARD: Has it been lying somewhere --

12. PETER HORROCKS: I don't think Meirion is involved, he appears as the reporter on process.

13. ALAN MACLEAN: You say Mr Rippon has been recused by the time of this broadcast he is not --

14. PETER HORROCKS: I think that is right, I am not a direct witness to that, about the atmosphere within Newsnight.

15. As I understand, you will have to speak to people more directly involved. The interview with people who worked at the aunt's home in Surrey is used as part of, well, this is what Newsnight found out but somebody realises there is also a section in that interview which refers

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to possibility that the aunt has been complicit with
Savile. So a huge turnaround and Newsnight are now
saying they want to do on Friday evening the story of
how Meirion Jones withheld this interview but included
the information about the aunt. It is clearly a serious
allegation and it goes to the relationship between
Rippon and Meirion Jones.

Just to draw a line under it quickly, you can come
back to it at some other stage, what I established was
it was not germane to the issue of why Newsnight dropped
the film. It might have been wrong for Meirion Jones
not to disclose it, he said there were reasons: it was
done when the story was being killed, it was not
relevant. He says the fact of him doing this
investigation has been false.

He insists the fact Peter Rippon did not know
about it is nothing to do about why the story was
dropped. It has only come out on Thursday 18th, ages
after the issues that are in dispute.

So I work through and I think, okay, it might
be something Panorama might touch on if they feel the
chemistry between the producer and the editor is
relevant but in the end that is all far too intricate
inside BBC stuff and dismiss it. Fran says to

Liz Gibbons that Panorama will look into it, trust
Peter Horrocks to look into it, Newsnight is not going
to do that story on Friday night and two hours of a load
of nonsense to deal with that to get back to the more
important thing which is my perception of the position
has not properly taken into account the concerns -- has
not taken into account the possibility that things have
not been understood.

There is a conversation I have not included in this,
probably because I have been working off my email and
text account of things, I did have a conversation with
Jessica Cecil, chief of staff, and I say to her that
I think this is like Greg Dyke and Richard Sambrook
with the aftermath of the Alistair Campbell complaint.
The organisation has gone into a bunker mentality
because the stories are being run very, very hard,
especially by the Mail and The Times, and you are
rightly and understandably concerned about leaking
coming from some of the protagonists.

Those things are true and there is also the big
claim that the Newsnight was pulled because of the
Christmas schedules. Everybody who knows anything about
BBC News knows that is never likely to have happened.
People may have interpreted that, but BBC News is proud
of its independence and the director of BBC's News would

not lose a moment's sleep over the Christmas schedules
being disrupted if it was a sign of strength.

So all of those things, the stories the papers are
telling, makes people think it is all wrong in the words
used. What was not ridiculous is there were legitimate
concerns about how the decision had been reached and how
it had then subsequently been described. That is what
I say to the chief of staff, the Director General and
also on the Saturday morning --

ALAN MACLEAN: When was that conversation?
PETER HORROCKS: 5 o'clock, 6 o'clock on the Friday.

ALAN MACLEAN: Your concern was that the enemy is at the
gate in the form of the press, we must react because
they are throwing spears into the castle, we must throw
something out, without taking a step back and looking at
the underlying facts?
PETER HORROCKS: Correct.

NICK POLLARD: That is what got the BBC dug deeper and
deeper in a hole?
PETER HORROCKS: Yes. I was on the news board at that time,
I remember it well. I didn't have direct involvement
except, as I say, in producing Panorama which helped
create circumstances where -- I certainly had
an awareness of that, I certainly thought it is
happening again.
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<th>NICK POLLARD: Just a question about that list of questions</th>
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<td>sent to the Corporation. In what capacity were you</td>
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<td>doing that then? Is this, if you like, partly --</td>
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<td>PETER HORROCKS: Editorial, editorial, clearly editorial.</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>NICK POLLARD: Okay.</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>PETER HORROCKS: So the letter actually comes from</td>
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<td>Karen Wightman but the team is saying we have written</td>
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<td>these right to reply letters and I am saying I can see</td>
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<td>why the BBC is not going to respond to those individual</td>
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<td>letters because the position of the individuals about to</td>
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<td>be arranged in front of Pollard. But the Corporation</td>
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<td>should be asked whether it stands by the public</td>
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<td>statements of its employees and so I consolidate the</td>
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<td>right of replies into a set of questions for the</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>NICK POLLARD: Were you forming a view by this time that</td>
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<td>actually, well, I think you probably were because of the</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>way you express the previous day, that the BBC is wrong</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>in the public position it is taking and digging itself</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>a big hole? I think it probably is clear what you say.</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>PETER HORROCKS: If you look at 9.30, Sarah Jones general</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>council, I see a BBC person describes yesterday's Times</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>story as being ridiculous.</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>ALAN MACLEAN: Embattled, that is pure --</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>PETER HORROCKS: Exactly, exactly. I am deliberately using</td>
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<th>that language to try and get through the mindset that</th>
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<td>I am aware of. I do think, to be fair, that some of our</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>corporate mindset was already shifting -- and this is</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>speculative -- but my sense of it was that already</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>started and what I overheard the Director General saying</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>on Friday morning, this position needs to be nuanced,</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>different perspective, is starting to be understood. My</td>
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<td>sense of it is it is not being understood as rapidly as</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>I am understanding from the facts I have brought about</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>and the way I have tried to understand the conflicting</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>view.</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>NICK POLLARD: Is Lucy Adams a colleague of Sarah Jones?</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>PETER HORROCKS: She is the Director of Human Resources for</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>the BBC.</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>ALAN MACLEAN: By the middle of the night, Sunday morning by</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5.41, you decided the blog needs to be dealt with. That</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>is the conclusion you had come by then, is that right,</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>at this time you decide this it needs to be grappled</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>with?</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>PETER HORROCKS: Yes, so I wake up again -- what is also not</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>in this is all the stuff dealing with the Panorama, so</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>there is plenty of other activities going on through</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>this period, driving the Panorama and making sure the</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Panorama is in. I am talking to people about that,</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>leave that to one side, I had left that out of it.</td>
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<th>1</th>
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<th>There are streams and streams of emails, trying to find</th>
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<td>2</td>
<td>the ones germane to your interests. I am even more</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>anxious about it because I am aware the</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Director General is going to be appearing in front of</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Parliament on Tuesday and in terms of responses and lack</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>of responses I have had so far I am not sure the</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>organisation has properly understood the discrepancies,</td>
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<td>at least that are in existence. I have expressed that</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>concern through the course of Saturday, as it were,</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>wearing a corporate hat. Send the Corporation the</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>letter from Panorama and I am thinking, &quot;What more can</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>I do to try and get this through to people?&quot;</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Then it suddenly comes to me I have been asked to</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>take editorial responsibility for the BBC News Savile</td>
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<td>15</td>
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<td>coverage so I have the authority to decide: if it is</td>
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<td>inaccurate it should be taken down. That is why I say</td>
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<td>it should be taken down but I realise I can't take that</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>decision in my own right, not for editorial reasons</td>
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<td>because it would have implications for the BBC's</td>
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<td>corporate position which is why I ask for advice from</td>
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<td>the general council in relation to it. Because I don't</td>
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<td>get a response to that and I am also starting to realise</td>
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<td>other things, it is not just the blog, you see it at</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>06.18 I am beginning to realise the way the BBC is</td>
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<td>defining it -- no, that is not true. I am wrong to be</td>
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<th>focusing solely on the blog, that there are other</th>
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<td>statements that senior BBC people have made that are</td>
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<td>different from and could be construed as possibly more</td>
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<td>inaccurate than the blog itself.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>ALAN MACLEAN: So the blog is a symptom?</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>PETER HORROCKS: It is part of a set of BBC inaccuracies.</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>NICK POLLARD: At the very least, they are not following the</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>same line?</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>PETER HORROCKS: Not the same line. So the blog is</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>referring to two rationales, two motives for the</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>investigation: the nature of the allegations and the</td>
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<td>Surrey Police. The statements by the</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Director General and Lord Patten, although I had not</td>
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<td>spotted it at this stage, and -- those are more</td>
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<td>inaccurate than the blog. I am thinking to myself,</td>
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<td>&quot;I need to get a response to this for Panorama&quot; which is</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>one responsibility but I also, as a senior BBC person,</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>want the organisation to understand that if 48 hours</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>before going before Parliament that is the mindset it is</td>
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<td>important to get that across.</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>That is what leads me to the view that it is</td>
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<td>legitimate to write a letter to Lord Patten from</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>Panorama because of his role in holding the</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>Director General in particular accountable for the</td>
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<td>accuracy of his statements and the BBC's and that is</td>
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a way of trying to jog the organisation. I draft it,
talk about it with the Panorama team, say, "Do you want
to send the letter?" They say, "No, we would rather you
sent it." I talk to Tim Davie, director of audio music,
reporting line to the executive who has kept those two
things a Chinese wall in his own mind. He says that is
an editorially correct thing to do, so I send that
email. Not to the Chairman, I don't have his email
address, but Nicholas Kroll, director of trust and the
(inaudible) the person I ranked with for world service.
Then I wait to see what happened.

ALAN MACLEAN: If this was done in studied calm, which
clearly it was not for obvious reasons, you would expect
Mr Kroll and the Director General -- and Lord Patten,
indeed -- to be singing in public from the same
hymn sheet that it had been prepared and agreed. One of
the things you spot is they are not saying the same
things and not saying the same things, they are not
taking the blog and saying, "This is our position, we
will say that." I mean, Lord Patten presumably is not
going to be producing the document he speaks to in
interview. So who would you expect to provide the
information to those people who have been put out in
public and --

PETER HORROCKS: I don't know, I don't want to speculate too

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much in this area. There is a communications team in
the BBC and a communications team within the BBC trust,
that would be one route of communication or it would be,
as it were, between the principals.

NICK POLLARD: It is clear to you by that point, if not
earlier, this whole process is severely dysfunctional?
Without putting words into your mouth.

PETER HORROCKS: I think you are putting words into my
mouth. I was aware there were discrepancies and I was
trying to alert the Corporation to them.

NICK POLLARD: Yes, yes. Am I right in thinking that by
this Sunday morning you are aware of the criticism about
the blog's accuracy? Has that criticism gone further up
the chain? I mean, is David Jordan aware of the
criticisms of the blog and, if necessary,
George Entwistle as well?

PETER HORROCKS: Yes, this is all in the timeline, that is
probably the best thing to refer to.

NICK POLLARD: That is the source?

PETER HORROCKS: All those things have happened well before
I get involved. I don't know about all of those things
and there is one confidential meeting which only gets
disclosed, you know, quite a lot later on the media show
and then leads to the ruckus in the Panorama office, the
meeting of 4 October.

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All I would observe from those facts is at the time
Panorama was asking the questions the organisation was
not in a position to provide a timely single accurate
account of what had happened.

ALAN MACLEAN: One of those questions was about the witness
to the Barden/Entwistle conversation at this lunch.

PETER HORROCKS: What --

ALAN MACLEAN: 1305.

PETER HORROCKS: Yes.

ALAN MACLEAN: Who was that witness?

PETER HORROCKS: I can't say. I know who it was but I can't
say. Peter Rippon was at the lunch with Helen Boaden
and George Entwistle.

ALAN MACLEAN: And overheard the conversation?

PETER HORROCKS: No. As I understand it, he was next to
Helen Boaden. Helen Boaden went around to the other
side of the table, had a rapid conversation and
whispered in George Entwistle's ear and then returned to
sit down next to it.

ALAN MACLEAN: So you mean saw it, literally? He was
a spectator?

PETER HORROCKS: Yes. But having established that through
someone else, you know, I asked that it be checked, and
you also see that I -- no, this is later, is it not?

No, that is not right. I have already established that

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14 (Pages 53 to 56)
Interview with Peter Horrocks  Reed Smith Meeting  30 October 2012

1 with Helen Boaden about the location and then
2 subsequently this information about the duration of the
3 conversation comes from another source.
4 NICK POLLARD: On that, there is quite significant
5 developments, it seems to me, whereby you are thinking
6 you will take the blog down but Milrea suggests it
7 should be corrected rather than taken down. Is that
8 right?
9 PETER HORROCKS: Quite a lot of this was through phone
10 conversations, I have not been able to go back and
11 establish the date of all of those because what is saved
12 on my phone does not go back that far because there have
13 been so many calls recently. There is to-ing and
14 fro-ing about it. I brought the News Online senior
15 editors in to prepare to destroy the blog, something we
16 had never done before --
17 NICK POLLARD: The dynamite.
18 PETER HORROCKS: It was technically difficult, they were
19 finding it difficult to get a blog out of the system.
20 They tried it out. There was the first approach we were
21 going to take and then I heard there was likely to be
22 a correction. There was some to-ing and fro-ing over
23 Peter Rippon correcting the blog in his own name which
24 was an earlier version of the BBC statement and the
25 wording of that is given to me, I reply to that at

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1 15.56. The wording of that is not the wording
2 subsequently used. Not that I am saying it was, you
3 know --
4 NICK POLLARD: That correction sort of appears via
5 Paul Milrea. We will ask him where that came from but
6 it is a, sort of, slightly strange osmotic process, is
7 it not?
8 PETER HORROCKS: The first strange thing about it is the
9 person who is asking for the clarification from the BBC
10 through the editorial process I am also, in effect,
11 being asked to provide the clarification because I know
12 more about what is going on than the organisation does.
13 I say that I am not going to do that. Then there is,
14 well, is Peter Rippon going to write it or not and
15 I can't remember, I think I picked up from somebody
16 close to Peter Rippon he was considering doing that, or
17 perhaps that was Monday I picked up on that. There is
18 clearly some to-ing and fro-ing. I have not unpicked
19 this and I do not have complete state of knowledge to
20 draw inference on the information I have available to
21 me.
22 It seems there was discussion about an agreed
23 approach with Peter Rippon which would have been about
24 reaching some agreed statement about his employment
25 status and him putting his name to the blog correction.

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1 That eventually does not happen, late on the Sunday
2 The Daily Mail is clearly briefed in a certain way with
3 something that is corrected with his employment status,
4 it is eventually clarified, I am not sure what "standing
5 aside" means.
6 The long and short of it is eventually the blog is
7 corrected via BBC statement rather than via Peter Rippon
8 and he has not been able to do what I, wearing
9 a managerial hat, suggested to an intermediary that once
10 I know that there were inaccuracies -- I think it must
11 have been through a phone conversation so I don't
12 remember when it was, I remember saying Peter must
13 realise some of this blog is not right and would it not
14 be better for him to correct it in his own name as soon
15 as possible, and I will make that happen as soon as
16 possible.
17 It is all getting tangled up in lawyers, so the
18 moment is lost for Peter Rippon, which I think would
19 have been the best thing for his own editorial and
20 professional status: to correct something in his own
21 name once he realised it was inaccurate, which is after
22 all the BBC's policy as referred to in another document
23 about timely corrections. You know, it is something the
24 editorial policy has responsibility for, the BBC's
25 editorial guidelines, policy guidelines and that is

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1 about correcting things as soon as possible. That is
2 something that I don't think we corrected as the BBC did
3 not correct its position as soon as it might have done.
4 We come to the later correction, if you wish, later on.
5 NICK POLLARD: So Sunday passes without the blog actually
6 being changed, is that right?
7 PETER HORROCKS: Yes, I personally have regrets about not
8 pushing things harder. I did feel quite exposed on
9 Sunday, particularly after writing the letter to the
10 Chairman. I kept being told the blog was going to be
11 collected.
12 NICK POLLARD: Told by?
13 PETER HORROCKS: Paul Milrea, I think. Then in the evening
14 I am told -- I don't think I put it in the timeline the
15 right way. No, by late afternoon he tells me the blog
16 corrections will not happen until Monday morning. That
17 must have been 5.30, I remember talking about the news
18 editor best placed to do it was ending shift, Paul said
19 it will be after that and it won't be until morning.
20 Should I have put something up but, of course, it would
21 have been even more chaos. Anyway, I didn't, I didn't.
22 NICK POLLARD: Yes. Okay, Monday Liz sends to the
23 Director General --
24 PETER HORROCKS: And it has already gone in by this point so
25 the organisation has a reasonably full account. It is

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Interview with Peter Horrocks

Reed Smith Meeting

30 October 2012

1. not a massive timeline, but key things. That went in on
2. Sunday afternoon and --
3. ALAN MACLEAN: That is the day before the Director General
goes to Parliament?
4. PETER HORROCKS: So Meirion's brief comes on Sunday evening,
5. I send it at 7.45 and then as Liz MacKen sends it to me
6. I think I forward it on at lunchtime. So by 7.45
7. Meirion's brief is with the Corporation and
8. Liz MacKen is by lunchtime. They broadly cover the
9. same thing so it is not really material.
10. NICK POLLARD: When you see the corrected blog on Monday
11. morning, were you pleased to see that at that time?
12. PETER HORROCKS: There was a timing thing, get on and look
13. at it. I must admit some of the things that I read into
14. the personality and comparisons with the blog,
15. particularly when I have the Panorama statement and the
16. additional statement by the BBC that is published at
17. 08.07 on the Tuesday morning, I don't see at all the
18. significance at that stage, some of it I do, but
19. I suppose I am thinking the blog has been corrected.
20. But then Meirion emails me at 12.05 which I refer to as
21. being -- describing the blog correction as "half-hearted
22. and grudging" and I start to try and get my head around
23. all of that.
24. I am also starting to realise that it is also
25. Page 61

1. Lord Patten's interview, I went back to listen to the
2. media show. I am trying to juggle, this is the thing
3. not coming through with this, producing an hour long
4. Panorama and keeping the editorial control and legal
5. judgments around that is the thing preoccupying me.
6. That is what I am paid to do, not to be pursuing all
7. this stuff and contextual analysis. So I realise that
8. Patten interview is also part of it, although in the end
9. that does not form part of the Panorama. It is part of
10. the picture of broader inaccuracies of Peter Rippon's
11. blog.
12. So I start to realise that is, you know, part of the
13. picture as well as dealing with David Jordan about
14. whether he is going to be interviewed by Panorama which
15. is initially on the cards and then the team say they
16. don't want to, to-ing and fro-ing and, then
17. Jeremy Paxman moved having interviewed Conrad Black and
18. then Caroline Hawley, back from Baghdad, wants to know
19. if she put it to Mark Thompson. So some of this stuff
20. about the differences between the corrections, it became
21. known to me but not with significance because there was
22. so much else going on.
23. NICK POLLARD: Yes.
24. PETER HORROCKS: By the way, if you want any of these
25. specific emails -- and you may not need them at all --
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1. then I can make sure you get them at the end of this.
2. You may feel this is sufficient for your purposes.
3. NICK POLLARD: Halfway through the Monday, that text to
4. Sarah Jones really, sort of, crystallises --
5. PETER HORROCKS: Sorry, what time?
6. NICK POLLARD: 13.58, October 22nd.
7. PETER HORROCKS: Hang on. I think actually we should go to
8. the second document, because I think what I did with
9. completing this, I put that text in, I dropped the text,
10. the Sarah Jones one and Phil Harrold one, those are
11. anti-chronologicales. It is better to use the second
12. timeline from October 22nd.
13. NICK POLLARD: Okay, fine, I have that.
14. PETER HORROCKS: In fact, I mean, for the purposes of the
15. documentation I think everything in relation
16. to October 22nd in what I originally sent you was
17. Pollard's statement, should be excised, so
18. Rosie Taylor (?) sends final script to Panorama --
19. NICK POLLARD: Yes.
20. ALAN MACLEAN: I have read your text as well and, as you
21. say, reading through you dropped those in --
22. PETER HORROCKS: Not all of them because they are not
23. germane, I thought it would be useful.
24. ALAN MACLEAN: The Panorama was actually broadcast on --
25. that is the 22nd?
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1. PETER HORROCKS: Yes.
2. ALAN MACLEAN: That was broadcast late at night, Newsnight
3. came on and said, "If you switch over you will see
4. Panorama."
5. PETER HORROCKS: Yes, yes.
6. ALAN MACLEAN: Which is what I did.
7. NICK POLLARD: Yes. So the the text to Sarah Jones really
8. crystallises your view of the problems that the BBC are
9. -- it is 13.58.
10. PETER HORROCKS: Yes, that is right. Yes, yes. So that is
11. really my bringing it all together and letting the
12. committee unpick all that. It was in control of the
13. information in front of it but some of where this gets
14. to is in particular in relation to the subsequent
15. statement to the Panorama, IE the one that goes out at
16. 08.07 the next morning.
17. NICK POLLARD: Yes.
18. PETER HORROCKS: This is a separate statement that relates
19. to the BBC's other inaccuracies, that is not clear but
20. you can see from that text I am understanding how we
21. corrected our inaccuracies and the timings of those is
22. something --
23. NICK POLLARD: Sorry, the 08.07?
24. PETER HORROCKS: Sorry, I am jumping about.
25. NICK POLLARD: Where is that, sorry?
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Interview with Peter Horrocks

1 RICHARD SPAFFORD: Is it 37 you are talking about?
2 NICK POLLARD: On the 22nd?
3 PETER HORROCKS: No, on the 23rd. We will get to that when
4 we get to that, actually.
5 Sorry, we are nearly there. What happens is that
6 Panorama has had -- this is me going and looking back on
7 it now as opposed to what I was aware of at the time --
8 Panorama has the statement from the BBC in the morning
9 of the 22nd, that is at 10.49 in the timeline on the
10 22nd, which includes the statement, "The BBC is
11 accepting the investigation did not start out as the
12 investigation Surrey Police is handling." Only Panorama
13 has that at that time. I don't clock, as it were, that
14 should be in addition to the blog and that has been
15 communicated to Panorama.
16 Then what happens is that the film has finished
17 transmission and Paul Millea emails the BBC media
18 correspondent with a specific statement, we accept --
19 the reason I mentioned 08.07 was that was when that
20 statement was put live on BBC press office site.
21 NICK POLLARD: So that is Tuesday?
22 ALAN MACLEAN: So that is the BBC catching up with what
23 Panorama is already saying and broadcast the night
24 before?
25 PETER HORROCKS: Yes, I say this section is not attributing
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1 inaccuracies to anybody, they largely get ignored. If
2 you look back at that statement, the preamble is all
3 about the Newsnight and then there is the sentence at
4 the end, "We also accept that" but it does not say who
5 has previously expressed the view. That was the BBC's
6 characterisation. You could be forgiven for not
7 noticing that was a correction of a broader set of BBC
8 inaccuracies as opposed to the ones that relate to the
9 blog and that is what leads, I think, a number of people
10 rather than instinct more than textual analysis
11 Peter Rippon is receiving the (inaudible) of the
12 responsibility here and in the DCS committee it is all
13 about inaccuracies from the blog.
14 Of course, I understand an important perspective is
15 the inaccuracies stemmed from the inaccuracies from the
16 blog, as we have already discussed. The way the BBC's
17 other statements investigated the reasons for dropping
18 it are different from the blog itself.
19 NICK POLLARD: The point you make is that actually in at
20 least two of them they are harder, they are more, shall
21 we say, more anti-Meliron and Liz MacKean than the blog
22 was? More critical?
23 PETER HORROCKS: I would not necessarily say that, I would
24 say -- this is somewhat speculative -- but there are
25 clearly two statements in Peter Rippon's blog, one that
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1 if you feel, to those who see his position as being
2 unfairly produced by this statement. Is this right?
3 I am trying to understand why you say people saw this as
4 being dumping on him, not your word. Whoever said that
5 it did start?
6 PETER HORROCKS: Statements by -- well, the blog talks about
7 two things. The blog talks about "the nature of the
8 abuse" I think is the phrase that it uses, and the
9 Surrey Police's handling.
10 ALAN MACLEAN: Do you have the blog to hand?
11 BEN SUMMERFIELD: Yes, I have it here.
12 PETER HORROCKS: Yes, because of the nature of the
13 allegations and because the police investigated the
14 claims and dropped on the basis he was too old. That is
15 abbreviated, the language I am using about the
16 Surrey Police's handling. So he refers to the nature of the
17 allegations, IE the abuse itself, and the police
18 issues. The simpler explanations given in the
19 Director General's email to all staff, the explanation
20 alluded to or happened in his interviews and most
21 strongly in the way the controller of policy described
22 it when he said, "It started as an investigation into
23 Surrey Police." They may be considered to be important
24 because Surrey Police, there was a legitimate reason for
25 not going ahead, if that was the only reason. If you
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<tr>
<td>1. accept that the only reason for the investigation was</td>
<td>1. the grant received was along those lines. It becomes</td>
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<td>2. the Surrey Police then the fact that the CPS’s</td>
<td>2. a clearly explicable way of people explaining something</td>
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<td>3. explanation for the investigation, the prosecution not</td>
<td>3. which otherwise, in the context of the exposure document</td>
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<td>4. having proceeded, even if you think it is a bad reason</td>
<td>4. having gone out, why didn’t the BBC broadcast this? If</td>
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<td>5. for not going ahead it is a good knockdown because they</td>
<td>5. you define the reason for the investigation in a certain</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. gave information --</td>
<td>6. way, people may say that is an odd thing to have</td>
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<td>7. NICK POLLARD: Yes.</td>
<td>7. decided, at least it has an internal logico to it. If it</td>
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<td>8. PETER HORROCKS: So that matters an enormous amount because</td>
<td>8. was not the case in the first place that is not what it</td>
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<td>9. if you are offering an explanation from Newsnight not</td>
<td>9. was about that undermines it and that is where we are in</td>
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<td>10. having gone ahead, which is demonstrably the case, then</td>
<td>10. terms of the information we have in front of us at the</td>
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<td>11. you have a strong explanation for something which</td>
<td>11. moment.</td>
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<td>12. otherwise is embarrassing for the BBC. If the real</td>
<td>12. NICK POLLARD: Meirion Jones and Liz MacKean line, of</td>
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<td>13. nature of the investigation was a two pronged one, IE if</td>
<td>14. course, is that the police thing was pretty much</td>
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<td>14. was about the abuse itself, then if you are stuck with</td>
<td>15. irrelevant. The evidence they had was strong enough on</td>
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<td>15. that people will say, &quot;Hang on, did you not believe the</td>
<td>16. its own, the evidence of abuse was a justifiable --</td>
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<td>16. abuse you were told about? What about the witnesses and</td>
<td>16. PETER HORROCKS: Of course, of course. But in a way, even</td>
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<td>17. all those things?&quot; So the simplification to a single</td>
<td>17. if you accept -- and I think it is legitimate to accept</td>
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<td>18. reason helps you if it is true that it started off being</td>
<td>18. that Peter Rippon as editor had the right to define what</td>
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<td>19. about the Surrey Police. If that is not the case, the</td>
<td>19. he thought was an appropriate story for Newsnight</td>
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<td>20. thing is more a house of cards.</td>
<td>20. without playing mind games what might or might not have</td>
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<td>21. ALAN MACLEAN: Your point is actually more sophisticated</td>
<td>21. been the case in terms of editorial judgment -- if he</td>
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<td>22. than that. When you look at the blog, the second reason</td>
<td>22. thought it was the two things as described in the blog</td>
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<td>23. given in the blog is not that it started out as</td>
<td>23. that is fair enough. It is only if you then knock away</td>
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<td>24. an investigation into Surrey Police, it explicitly says,</td>
<td>24. the first of those and you are only left with the</td>
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<tr>
<td>25. &quot;The key witness told us.&quot;</td>
<td>25. Surrey Police handling as being the rationale if that</td>
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<td>1. was the case, because it was never the starting point of</td>
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<td>2. it. That makes the justification being offered a less</td>
<td>2.</td>
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<td>3. easily defensible one. That is, I think, where we get</td>
<td>3.</td>
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<td>4. to.</td>
<td>4.</td>
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<td>5. NICK POLLARD: Just to remind you what the 08.37 was,</td>
<td>5.</td>
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<td>6. because --</td>
<td>6.</td>
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<td>7. PETER HORROCKS: Yes, in effect it is a repetition,</td>
<td>7.</td>
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<td>8. a re-publication, a broader publication of the email</td>
<td>8.</td>
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<td>9. Torin Douglas had received eight hours earlier. For</td>
<td>9.</td>
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<td>10. other media correspondents or people not picked up on</td>
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<td>11. Panorama, the first they know about it is two hours</td>
<td>11.</td>
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<td>12. before the Director General appears. The statement --</td>
<td>12.</td>
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<td>13. it does not call itself a correction -- it says, &quot;We</td>
<td>13.</td>
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<td>14. also accept that&quot; without alluding to what that was</td>
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<td>15. about. So by the time that the Director General and the</td>
<td>15.</td>
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<td>16. controller appeared in front of the committee, the thing</td>
<td>16.</td>
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<td>17. very much in people's minds is the blog inaccuracies and</td>
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<td>18. one of the things I suggest to people that we need to do</td>
<td>18.</td>
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<td>19. through the course of the coverage of this is to refer</td>
<td>19.</td>
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<td>20. to the BBC inaccuracies rather than the blog</td>
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<td>21. inaccuracies because it is not -- there clearly are</td>
<td>21.</td>
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<td>22. inaccuracies in the blog, I am not at all in the</td>
<td>22.</td>
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<td>23. position of thinking the blog is no longer a problem</td>
<td>23.</td>
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<tr>
<td>24. because there are things that are significant</td>
<td>24.</td>
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<tr>
<td>25. inaccuracies and those are things that need to be looked</td>
<td>25.</td>
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1 at. In terms of what is material for the investigation,
2 it is a wider set of inaccuracies than just the blog
3 itself, but the blog inaccuracies is the way in which it
4 has been described at this stage.
5 NICK POLLARD: What seems to be particularly opaque, and you
6 don't seem to have any involvement in it, is the way
7 that the lines taken by the Chairman, by David Jordan
8 and the Director General in his email, how those lines
9 emerged. We will probably be able to ask them.
10 PETER HORROCKS: I have no knowledge of that at all, I am
11 afraid. Quite a lot of it was happening before I even
12 had any knowledge of it at all.
13 ALAN MACLEAN: The question I asked earlier, your answer
14 was, "I don't know" but you speculated. That might be
15 what Mr Meirion was, a corporate --
16 PETER HORROCKS: I really don't know. I don't know in terms
17 of the different stages of it. I am not sure at what
18 stage it became an incident that will be managed in that
19 way. It might be in the early stages it was being
20 managed through the normal corporate communications,
21 public affairs processes. At some stage I imagine it
22 became defined as being a serious incident, the
23 different structures put in place. Again, all I can say
24 is that is what would happen in terms of the system.
25 ALAN MACLEAN: One of the supporting walls of the structure

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was evolving despite the fact that it probably should
have been clear that there were people within the
Corporation who would vehemently object to the way that
decision was being portrayed?
5 PETER HORROCKS: Well, you have the information
6 Meirion Jones and Liz MacKean made available during that
7 period and exactly how the different expressions evolved
8 and how that interaction worked between the information
9 they had made available. There is obviously the meeting
10 that Ken MacQuarrie, director of BBC Scotland, has
11 during this period. I am sure they say similar things
12 to him as were said to me. The meeting on the 9th, the
13 Tuesday, the Director General's press conference on the
14 Friday evening, he was asked, I think by Dan Sabbath of
15 The Guardian, about what the reporters say and he said,
16 "Well, that is something which we will have to wait for
17 the inquiry to look into." We know that at least
18 a doubt about that had been lodged with the
19 Director General and also with the controller of
20 standards at that stage. It is possibly perfect they
21 didn't believe what Meirion and Liz were saying, I think
22 the question is when doubt was cast whether the
23 corporate position and uncertainty of corporate position
24 was adjusted. I think the right way would be
25 a legitimate question to ask for.

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1 NICK POLLARD: You obviously had no involvement in the
2 MacQuarrie meeting and we will pursue that separately.
3 PETER HORROCKS: I had one meeting with him, that was on the
4 Friday morning. I think what happened was I did not
5 know I had been passed the ball, I was on a meeting
6 about something completely different. He said, "Did you
7 speak to Meirion and Liz?" I said yes and I wrote
8 a file note. That was the only direct contact I had
9 with Ken MacQuarrie.
10 NICK POLLARD: Yes, we will see that file. You had the
11 meeting on a Tuesday obviously with George to express
12 some pretty serious concerns about the lack of
13 coordination throughout, really?
14 PETER HORROCKS: Yes. I mean, this may not be much of a
15 direct concern to you, but it was in my mind the
16 question of how BBC News was going to operate following
17 the Director General's testimony when clearly the least
18 significant questions were being posed about the
19 information that had been available to him, when clearly
20 that information was the responsibility of BBC News. So
21 I was anxious to make sure BBC News was in a position to
22 discuss that in its News Group and I attempted to get
23 some clarity about whether there would be the space to
24 be able to do that. That was last Thursday.
25 But, anyway, on Tuesday afternoon at that stage
Interview with Peter Horrocks

1. I had not been able to get people to realise I thought
2. things had changed significantly and some space needs to
3. be created for people not directly involved in this
4. episode to discuss it. I was making that point and it
5. was coming up through a variety of incidents where
6. I felt what was Savile editorial and what was Savile
7. related, the way that Savile was influencing a variety
8. of things across the organisation was becoming very
9. significant and I felt it was important for the future
10. credential management of BBC News to create some space
11. for those not directly involved to talk about it. That
12. is what I was trying to pursue.

13. NICK POLLARD: With those editorial board meetings coming
14. up?

15. PETER HORROCKS: Yes, we were Tuesday afternoon, this very
16. significant thing happened with the committee and
17. various things started to happen like the handling of
18. Liz MacKean, whether she was talking to the press or
19. not, and who was responsible for that. Then more
20. personal incidents, the news room the next day, the
21. issue around the disagreement in the Panorama office, et cetera, that I felt was important to put in place
22. a clarity of responsibility and some space for those
23. people who needed to be able to discuss it and given
24. that some people were recused and had not had

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1. involvement with the inquiry. It was important and I
2. was making those points quite forcibly. I felt the
3. organisation was moving off the correction of the
4. inaccuracies and more about how the organisation was
5. starting to respond to the public --
6. NICK POLLARD: You made those views known to George, both in
7. that chat you had at 5 o'clock and the email you had the
8. following morning?
9. PETER HORROCKS: Exactly.

10. NICK POLLARD: You did not have, in the end, responsibility
11. for talking to Liz MacKean about leaking to the press,
12. did you?

13. PETER HORROCKS: It was never clarified until the last gasp,
14. until I spoke to and she came to the conclusion -- it
15. was not right professionally for her to continue to be
16. a protagonist here. She had withdrawn.

17. NICK POLLARD: That was not on that day?

18. PETER HORROCKS: Um -- I can't remember.

19. ALAN MACLEAN: It is really in the process now, after the
20. corrections, the Director General, the committee and
21. Panorama, that is more or less it, is it not? In terms
22. of the, kind of, key facts?

23. NICK POLLARD: You could well take that view, I would
24. understand why you might. I suppose my email to
25. Sarah Jones pulls together quite a lot of things that I

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1. have already talked through with you but --
2. ALAN MACLEAN: Which one is that?

3. NICK POLLARD: The 30602 one.

4. ALAN MACLEAN: Which day are we on now?

5. PETER HORROCKS: October 23, I think we are.

6. ALAN MACLEAN: Yes, okay.

7. NICK POLLARD: October 24, after the long email to George.

8. PETER HORROCKS: So I am reiterating some of the concerns
about the speed and accuracy of the blog. There is also
something that connects to, we have not talked about
anything that is about my view about why some of these
various different miscommunications might have happened
and I suppose what I am alluding to here is even after
all of this has come out the way that the organisation
is gripping it and providing clarity to BBC News to be
able to be managed effectively, there are clearly some
individual dynamics that are going on. So I was raising
issues which in my mind I was connecting together
because -- and this is about perception, my personal
perception, I think it is relevant -- I came to the
view, as expressed in one of these emails, that the
ability to be able to challenge differing views within
the organisation was one of the things that was a thread
through the story as a whole.

So whether was the discussion that Helen Boaden and

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1. Peter Rippon had about the evidential standard to be
2. applied during the investigation or Meirion Jones
3. concerns about the decision and not to go ahead with it,
4. possibly some of the things about the interchange
5. between George Entwistle and Helen Boaden or
6. Mark Thompson and Helen Boaden and various other things.

7. Then in the aftermath of the committee evidence I was
8. trying to ensure that BBC News had the space to be able
to discuss these things and so I needed to challenge my
own boss in relation to that and that was not
successful, so I needed to go to the

12. Director General about it. I suppose my perception was

13. --

14. NICK POLLARD: Your own boss being?

15. PETER HORROCKS: Helen Boaden.

16. NICK POLLARD: She had recused herself from this, or is that
17. the point you are alluding to?

18. PETER HORROCKS: I think that is the point I am trying to
19. make. She had recused editorial control in relation to
20. Savile --

21. ALAN MACLEAN: Your point is what was going to happen the
day after tomorrow.

22. PETER HORROCKS: Yes, we are going to sit down, the agenda
is the linked and the update and we need to have

23. a discussion about this and the editorial and the
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1. consequences to BBC News. The reply was, "Well, I am responsible for management of BBC News and you have responsibility for editorial coverage in respect of Savile." I took that to mean there would not be space.
2. I escalated to the Director General, it was 24 hours later IE on the Wednesday evening, a few hours before the board meeting we had, where alteration was put in place which meant it was okay.
3. ALAN MACLEAN: What was okay?
4. PETER HORROCKS: What happened on Thursday morning was there was a brief agenda Helen shared and then a subsequent meeting which I chaired --
5. ALAN MACLEAN: Which Helen Boaden was not at?
6. PETER HORROCKS: She stepped aside, made comments before we went into the session which she and Steve Mitchell did not intend. They may sound -- you can dismiss it as being my personal perspective in the aftermath of all of this -- but I feel it is relevant because the ability to be able to get into a conversation and express a differing point of view in my perception of somebody who has been at the BBC News Group and tables programmes in question, I think that did not happen in a multiplicity of ways throughout this story and even after the Director General had made it clear he had concerns about the system and the way the BBC News had provided information to him, it was still not immediately possible without taking quite a drastic step and something, again, one felt quite exposed in doing that in order to get an organisational change that I thought was important. That is the only reason why I am taking this.

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7. NICK POLLARD: Just so I am clear, in that session after Helen Boaden and Steve Mitchell had cleared themselves, you were not necessarily, as I understand it, from what you have said, just talking about pure Savile-related developments, you were talking about a wider issue within news? People being able to speak freely and challenge decisions --
8. PETER HORROCKS: That was the context I wanted that discussion to happen. We talked about what you would expect a management board to talk about following a corporate crisis. We could not talk about some of the things you are talking about, I invited the legal reps from Global News to come along and give advice about what might or might not be appropriate. We talked about personal reactions, doorstep colleagues, having to consider whether Helen Boaden's photograph with Jimmy Savile would form part of the news coverage. It was not the simplest meeting to have on a Wednesday morning, et cetera, et cetera.

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9. Then we talked about what went wrong, the programme list I told you about earlier. We went around the table and asked everybody to identify the risks BBC News needs to manage currently because we can't wait for all of you to take however long it will take to wind through all of this and tell us what we have to do. We have to create the space for that to happen, I needed to push in the way I have described.
10. ALAN MACLEAN: Can I ask, I meant to ask you earlier but the moment had passed. You mentioned the Helen Boaden discussion with Peter Rippon which --
11. PETER HORROCKS: The Rippon one or the Entwistle one?
12. ALAN MACLEAN: The Rippon one. In your timeline you got this from her and not from him, I think?
13. PETER HORROCKS: Yes, although I do also have some of this indirectly from Peter as well.
14. ALAN MACLEAN: Taking the timeline from her account, she gave him a view about the importance of evidence even though he was dead. I remember you saying Helen speculating whether Peter may have taken too strong a state, she may have been forceful in her view. Do you remember what she says and how --
15. PETER HORROCKS: I don't, if I had remembered it more clearly I would have tried to recall that and put that in the statement. I don't think that the accounts that Helen gave me herself and I subsequently heard indirectly from a representative of Peter Rippon were necessarily at odds with each other and in the description I heard of Peter Rippon's view of it, certainly at the time that was given to me, the time it was given to me it was a proper editorial conversation that he did not regard it as being inappropriate. It was possible for him to have interpreted as an instruction or a very strong recommendation in terms of an editorial course of action and I don't know whether Peter absolutely feels it was the right thing to do or it was something he wanted to subsequently challenge.

I would simply observe, as I said, with Meirion Jones not being spoken to by BBC management, I don't know what further conversation happened about the significance of that and the ability to discuss and challenge openly is something I think could be part of that. I explained he was an editor, he was not in a strong position and as confident as he might have been, that was a factor, plus Helen has a clear and strong personality and she acknowledged herself she expressed herself forcefully.
18. ALAN MACLEAN: You don't find that even surprising or improper?
Interview with Peter Horrocks

Reed Smith Meeting
30 October 2012

PETER HORROCKS: No, I don't think it is improper but I think it is a factor, you know, to be looked into in terms of how people saw those conversations and there was, I think, possibly for me a greater relevance to the issue of the conversation between George Entwistle and Helen Boaden.

RICHARD SPAFFORD: Can you just say how you think it is possible it was interpreted?

PETER HORROCKS: This is through my understanding of Peter Rippon's understanding --

RICHARD SPAFFORD: That would be consistent with the way Helen described it as well.

PETER HORROCKS: As far as you are aware, both Helen and Peter take the view that is how it could have been seen? Yes, and again neither of them suggested it was improper at all.

RICHARD SPAFFORD: As

I understand it, after she returns to the table she says, "I told him about Savile" or something to that effect. So the issue, the fact that Christmas schedules have been alluded to in some way, I assume must have been part of his understanding of why she had had that conversation.

ALAN MACLEAN: Have you come across in the past the problem about doing a story about somebody alive, like Maxwell, they did write things but from a legal point of view, you had to grapple with a story you wanted to put consideration. If it looks as if it is flimsy or sordid or something like that you can imagine why that might be part of it and how close it is to the death might be a factor you would additionally take into account. I don't know if that was taken into account in the significant range of factors, the reliability, how the research was done --

ALAN MACLEAN: But Newsnight would not do a story about football or something because that is not -- this was a BBC personality, that was at the heart of it, from the beginning.

PETER HORROCKS: Yes, yes, I agree.

NICK POLLARD: With access to BBC premises.

PETER HORROCKS: Yes. I appeared on our accountability programme NewsWatch and talked about feeling embarrassed by it. I do feel embarrassed the programme did not get that story to air. I do not think it is subject to a single explanation of why that happened.

ALAN MACLEAN: Have you come across in the past the problem about doing a story about somebody alive, like Maxwell, they did write things but from a legal point of view, you had to grapple with a story you wanted to put...
| 1 | difficult thing to say. My approach is to try and get stories on the air and other people may not necessarily have pushed Panorama in the way I did in order to make sure it is as strong as possible, that is my approach. People approach things in different ways, there are different views that could be taken. |
| 2 | ALAN MACLEAN: But what is missing from the blog -- tell me if this is a fair characterisation of what you are saying -- what is missing, on the face of it, is an awareness of the fact that this was a BBC story because this guy was a BBC personality and that is what made him different from some expose of some other criminal or celebrity that had done something cruel or unpleasant. |
| 3 | PETER HORROCKS: I think that is true, but something the production team or editor as a whole had not fully appreciated. I think that my starting point was the home, you know, it was his aunt's home and Savile and obviously the abuse, clearly information came to light in relation to BBC premises which they didn't act on and that is why I say I have questions about the reporter and producer as well as the editors because they didn't do enough: they didn't go to the police, they didn't act on it and didn't raise it in a way the BBC could examine it the potential implications of what happened on BBC's premises. I think it was a broadcasting issue and an issue of a particular Savile in the home rather than all the knowledge that we now have. I think it was wrong, but it was understandable. |
| 4 | NICK POLLARD: You slightly touched on this, and this is very much a question for Meirion, but as an editor, senior editor, did it seem a bit odd to you that when the story was effectively put on ice nobody ever seemed to think of having another go at it or just finding one more -- the question of the second interviewee I think is a really odd one and I don't understand it, whether this was Rachel(?) isn't it? |
| 5 | PETER HORROCKS: Yes, yes. |
| 6 | NICK POLLARD: Because you would have thought that at the time the story was stood down the fact that you had a second interviewee supporting the first would be a huge factor. One interview on camera -- |
| 7 | PETER HORROCKS: I think the way it had been redefined and, as I said, in a funny way accepted, reluctantly his editor's view of how it could be defined and that second interview did not change the hurdle that Peter Rippon had put in its place. But, I agree, in the cold light of day clearly it was an important extra element and it should have been kept going and that is something: why was it not kept going and why were all the facts not brought together and people spoken to about it and all those sorts of things, which I am sure you will look into. |
| 8 | I do want to briefly turn, because I have touched on it a couple of times without having an opportunity to say a bit more, the conversation, I can shed some light on this -- |
| 9 | NICK POLLARD: Please, please, yes. |
| 10 | PETER HORROCKS: I think the main thing I would serve is the exchange of information on stories at a senior level at BBC is not at all ruled out. I have had plenty of instances of sensitive stories of BBC nature where there has been an exchange of information with the director of television or BBC1. |
| 11 | PETER HORROCKS: Well, I don't know -- he has not been clear about this in his statement. |

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| 1 | equally there are questions on his side: why it was done by the committee, why show curiosity or why he felt inhibited asking a senior person of BBC News about the story? It may be the context, he had a terrible cold I understand, it might be those sorts of factors. I think it is at least questionable whether the demarcation between the divisions needs to be anything like as clear as the Director General has explained it recently. That is how I see it. |
| 2 | That is why I refer to the managed programme's list, it aggregates the BBC's sensitive stories across the piste. Occasionally they might be alluded to by more general descriptions of them more than spelling out what the story is, but that is exchanged at a high level, that information. Members of the BBC executive have overall management of the BBC and sensitive information is exchanging regularly and for some reason the director did not ask, having not given the very helpful opportunity to ask questions because of the way the information was passed over. He then chose not to ask the Director of News more about it when even without intruding into the editorial responsibilities of... |
Interview with Peter Horrocks

1 BBC News, questions such as, well, when will you be able
to tell me more about it so I can make my judgment, or
anything. You may not want to tell me what the nature
of the investigation is but can you indicate whether it
was substantiated, whether it would invalidate a tribute
programme due to go out in time? So there is something
I have not understood yet, from the explanations given
about why -- it is not, why some curiosity was not
exercised without infringing on the obstacle that
George Entwistle seems to feel there was about
intruding.

12 ALAN MACLEAN:

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We don't know what that was.

17 PETER HORROCKS: I understand that.

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22 ALAN MACLEAN:

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24 PETER HORROCKS: There were ways he could have phrased it
without it being seen intruding into editorial
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1 sensitivity not to influence Newsnight obviously, but in
order for the judgments for the tribute programmes to be
made properly and there may be other reasons in terms of
the personal interaction where he may not have asked
a question or elicited a particular response which may
have been difficult.

7 RICHARD SPAFFORD: Can you think of other situations where
this may have arisen, in the parameters you talked about
greater steps to talk about --

10 PETER HORROCKS: Panorama is always doing programmes about
great problems for the BBC, famously about football and
IRC, corruption. For the people negotiating BBC's
sports rights it is not so good if Panorama is going off
on one again. That has to be talked about and somebody
has to take the decision of will the programme be
scheduled ten days before the tournament kicked off or
whenever. That information has been changed in the past
without it compromising the BBC's journalistic
credibility.

20 NICK POLLARD: Because at the time of that conversation the
Newsnight investigation was a live one, was it not?

22 ALAN MACLEAN: It was half alive.

23 PETER HORROCKS: Helen, from my understanding, Helen may
have thought it was completely live. I am not sure.

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1 ALAN MACLEAN: Is she pushing it across the table to
a colleague or up the chimney to somebody above her?

3 PETER HORROCKS: Well, she is -- I don't know. I don't
know. Clearly the information is being conveyed in
a way which means that there is a separation between
whatever BBC Vision is going to decide and BBC News is
going to decide. So depending --

8 ALAN MACLEAN: How did they, just trying to get my head
around it, BBC News is a subset of BBC Vision?

10 PETER HORROCKS: They are separate, there are content
divisions; audio, visual and news.

12 ALAN MACLEAN: So she is not pushing it up, she is moving it
across? So here is something, George, which I am giving
you a heads-up about in my department?

15 PETER HORROCKS: Yes.

16 NICK POLLARD: Your point, which I think is a very
interesting one, is from your own personal point of view
there is, or should be, no Chinese walls which stop that
conversation taking place because if there was, just to
exaggerate it I suppose, and if the Savile inquiry had
carried on, in theory Helen Boaden would not have been
able to tell George Entwistle about it, would she?

23 PETER HORROCKS: Absolutely, I think that is something that
the Director of Television needed to know and should
done. Would have gone further than an early
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of it is about people imagining how other people will react if they say or ask something which the other person will find uncomfortable and there are threads or consistency through that which might form part of the explanation.

NICK POLLARD: Yes. Absolutely. Can I just ask you one specific thing, just briefly. This rather odd issue of Sarah Jones saying when he was talking, just after the blog was going to be taken down, we decided to do that before you did. Did you get any sense of who supposedly had taken that decision?

PETER HORROCKS: No, I didn’t. It was also quite curious because we didn’t think we could tell you because you were looking after the Panorama, that might give the clue. I don’t see why that was relevant because the Panorama was not going out until afterwards and it does not seem when you identify an inaccuracy you would not correct it as soon as possible. I genuinely don’t understand the reason offered there.

NICK POLLARD: And it was not taken down until the following day anyway, the Monday?

PETER HORROCKS: Yes. Either it may not be correct or the reason why it was not done, if it was known at that time, was for other reasons which I can’t quite work my way through.

of the biggest editorial problem that we had probably ever had.

So that seemed to me to be a common thread lasting up until a few days ago, but it was difficult to have that kind of conversation in a sufficiently open and clear cut way. So I don’t know if cultural or personal aspects come into your remit and the recommendations you make or anything you make, but understanding what has gone on here and why people were not having conversations with each other and what they assumed other people would say if they were to have that conversation, my understanding of it from my knowledge of the divisions involved is that something that is at least worth asking about.

NICK POLLARD: Yes. Certainly the issue of the wider cultural aspects, whether they want programme or across the news department is something that we are thinking hard about and we have not quite decided, I think it is fair to say, how much fits precisely within the terms of reference. It is clearly there in front of us.

PETER HORROCKS: I imagine you use the word “robust editorial culture” where people can go and disagree with each other and have a pint after and it is okay. That is just how it is. All along the lines, different ways for different reasons, as I say, and I think quite a lot
this as soon as possible is hugely important because --
not saying it off the record, as it were, private
comments not germane to what you are looking into --
because of this uncertain situation we are in, how
difficult that has been over the past few days,
everybody says we have to wait for Pollard and we don't
want to. There is stuff we can get on with but quite
a lot we can't because your view is determinative for
the future of BBC News. That is why I was keen to give
you whatever you could to get you going. The sooner we
get through this the better.
NICK POLLARD: Peter, thank you very much.
PETER HORROCKS: Thank you.
NICK POLLARD: I appreciate the time you have given us this
afternoon.
(4.41 pm)