



*From the Chairman*

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*Dear Chris,*

Thank you for your letter of 25<sup>th</sup> March. It was good to hear from you.

The relationship between national newspapers (TV is beyond our remit) and national politicians is one of endless controversy. My experience of many politicians is that they consider themselves distorted, trivialised and hounded by publications with a hostile agenda. Many journalists, on the other hand, take – not surprisingly – a contrary view: that they have to be aggressive, cynical and probing because politicians will not play it straight. The current polemic around the Freedom of Information Act epitomises this endless dialectic.

I deduce from your letter that we don't see the matter in quite the same way; and I have to say that I would be reluctant to take the course of action you suggest, because a) it is not my job; and b) in my experience journalists latch on pretty fast to when they are being spun. There are plenty of examples around right now.

Two things have struck me forcefully since I returned to Britain four years ago, which you may find to be of some consolation. Firstly, that outside the M25 (as I said in our interview) people don't pay much mind to political reporting by the nationals, certainly not to such a degree that it affects their voting choices. Secondly, there is invariably payback with press and public for those politicians who are economical with the truth.

So, we must agree to differ. On the whole I find British journalism more alive to the danger of "exploitation" than their counterparts in many other countries.

*Yours ever,  
Christopher*

Sir Christopher Meyer

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