

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE

CHANCERY DIVISION

13 MAY 2016

BETWEEN:

HILARY PERRIN

Claimant

and

MGN LIMITED

Defendant

STATEMENT IN OPEN COURT

Solicitor for the Claimant (Henry Fox)

1. In this action for misuse of private information, I appear for the Claimant. My learned friend, [], appears for the Defendant.
2. During 2000 to 2006, the Claimant was Director of Regional Organisation for the Labour Party and, at all relevant times, the Director of the London Labour Party. In this role, she was in frequent communication with senior members of the Labour party, Labour Members of Parliament and numerous Government Ministers. For example, she arranged and coordinated visits and meetings in London for senior Government ministers such as the Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister and Home Secretary.
3. The Defendant is the publisher of the Mirror, Sunday Mirror and the People newspapers, which all have considerable readerships in this jurisdiction, and which also publish their content online.

4. In September 2013, the journalist Dan Evans pleaded guilty at the Old Bailey to voicemail interception whilst he was working as a journalist at the Sunday Mirror and also whilst he was at the News of the World. In the course of his interviews with the Metropolitan Police Service he made extensive admissions about his activities. As a result of various disclosure orders, these admissions have been disclosed to claimants making legal claims against the Defendant.
5. In late 2014, the Claimant was notified by the Metropolitan Police Service that she may have been targeted by the Defendant in about 2002 to 2004.
6. As a result of this notification, the Claimant sought and obtained disclosure of evidence from the Metropolitan Police Service. After analysing this evidence with her lawyers, in March 2015, she issued proceedings against the Defendant. In order that she could understand better what had happened, the Claimant through her lawyers, requested early disclosure from the Defendant in respect of call data and private investigator invoices in relation to both her and her associates, with whom she was in contact at the time.
7. In September 2015 the Claimant analysed the various pieces of evidence that she had obtained, including the early disclosure, which revealed some of the unlawful activity to which she was subjected.
8. The documents disclosed to the Claimant show that the Claimant was specifically targeted by the Defendant's journalists and her voicemails were hacked in February, March and April 2004.
9. As well as voicemail interception, the Defendant also instructed independent private investigators to target the Claimant on 2 occasions once in 2004 and once in 2005.

10. The Claimant was very concerned to learn that her privacy has been invaded in this manner. She is appalled that the Defendant sought to target the Claimant and her colleagues.
11. The Claimant has never sought publicity in her working life and has never spoken to any journalists by telephone. She is most distressed to think that the Defendant potentially jeopardised her distinguished political career by intercepting private messages left on her voicemail left by those who had placed their trust in her. The Claimant is also sickened by the thought that the Defendant had targeted her, in a speculative attempt to obtain information in the hope that it would result in the publishing of a story about her private life and/or that of anyone else close to the Claimant.
12. I am here today to announce that in September 2015 the Defendant offered to resolve the Claimant's claim; an offer that the Claimant accepted. The Defendant has agreed to pay appropriate damages to the Claimant plus her reasonable legal costs and agreed to join in this statement. Furthermore, the Defendant has also undertaken not to access the Claimant's voicemail messages.

Counsel for the Defendant

13. My Lord, on behalf of the Defendant, I confirm everything my Friend, Mr Thomson, has said.
14. The Defendant is here today through me to offer its sincere apologies to the Claimant for the damage, as well as the distress, caused to her by placing her under surveillance, blagging her confidential information, and the accessing of her voicemail messages. The Defendant acknowledges that the Claimant's information should never have been obtained or used in the manner it was.

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- and -

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