

Street OF Shame

HACKING UPDATE

THE *Eye* may have spoken too soon when a fortnight ago it predicted that "the not guilty verdict in Neil Wallis's case may make any criminal trials of *Mirror* journalists for conspiracy to hack phones a remoter prospect". Precisely seven days after we went on sale, police arrived at the *Mirror*'s offices, arrested long-serving senior journalist Lee Harpin and confiscated his computer equipment.

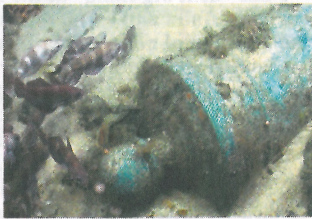
Harpin, recently appointed "agenda editor" across all three of the publisher's national titles, first worked for the company back in 1999, when he was recruited as showbiz columnist on the *People*, then edited by none other than Neil Wallis. He later, like so many other *Mirror* group staff, jumped ship to the *News of the World* before returning to his former employer.

The judgment in May in the test case brought by seven sample phone-hacking victims from the dozens who are taking civil action against the *Mirror* group also makes for interesting re-reading in the light of the Wallis verdict. In addition to the 25 articles published in the *Daily Mirror* under Piers Morgan's leadership which the publishers admitted were the result of illegal methods (see *Eye* 1393), two articles "now admitted by the defendant as being articles that would not have been published but for unlawful activities" appeared in the *People* while Wallis was editor.

The *Eye* has also learned that alongside Operation Golding, the police probe into the *Mirror* group, the police investigation into phone-hacking on the features desk at the *News of the World*, Operation Pinetree, is still ongoing. Despite former *NotW* features editor Jules Stenson pleading guilty and being sentenced this month, and a number of his former colleagues being told a year ago that there was "insufficient evidence for a realistic prospect of conviction", officers are continuing to pursue the investigation, with potential victims being questioned as recently as a fortnight ago.

FISHY TALE

Fish marvel at several of the heavy bronze cannons that contributed to the sinking of the HMS *Victory*



- Caption in Mail Online story about sunken artefacts from HMS *Victory*, 16 July

NUMBER CRUNCHING

29 Actors and broadcasters whose open letter last week condemning plans for the BBC was dismissed by Daily Mail as 'eye-popping self-regard... well, they would say that, wouldn't they?'

120 'Business chiefs' whose open letter in April suggesting people should vote Conservative was greeted by Daily Mail as 'sending shockwaves through the election campaign'

HEIL WATCH

"THE first big thing to say about the newly-published pictures is to remember when they were taken," clucked Sir Max Hastings over the footage of the Queen giving a nazi salute in 1933, as his paper the *Daily Mail* roared about a "hunt for the traitor" who had revealed them.

"In those days there had as yet been no Second World War, no Holocaust... It is overwhelmingly likely that the royals uplifting their arms at Balmoral were playing what seemed a harmless game."

The *Mirror*, equally cross at being scooped (surely "outraged on behalf of Her Majesty"? - Ed) approvingly quoted the Queen's cousin Margaret Rhodes pointing out that the fuss was "absolute nonsense... It was long before there were any intimations that this new government in Germany proved to be as nasty as they did prove to be."

Indeed it was. It even appears to have been before the *Mail* printed its famous pro-fascist column "Hurrah for the Blackshirts!" by its proprietor Lord Rothermere, great-grandfather of the current owner of the *Mail* and big-time Führer-fan (he particularly admired the way Hitler was saving Germany from "alien elements... Israelites of international attachments"), in January 1934.

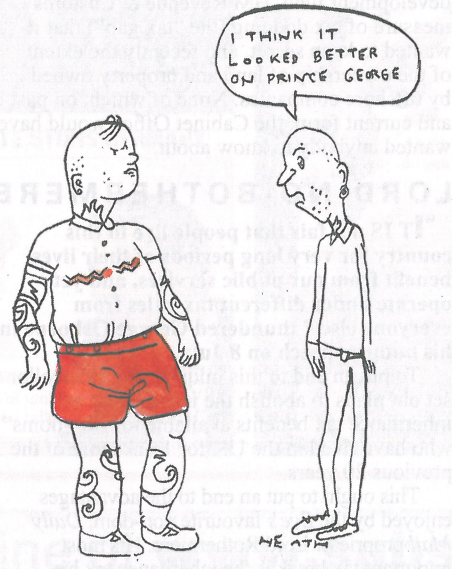
It was certainly considerably earlier than February 1936, when the *Mirror* presented an interview with Hitler himself on its front page in a manner the paper's official history describes



as "like a fan basking in reflected glory after obtaining the autograph of a star".

Not to mention many years before Hitler's invasion of Czechoslovakia in September 1938, on which he was congratulated personally by the first Rothermere in a telegram: "I salute your excellency's star which rises higher and higher." And way, way before the year that the Second World War actually broke out, which was greeted with a "happy 1939" greeting from the *Mail* proprietor: "May I tender to you Fuhrer und Reichskanzler my heartiest good wishes for another successful year of your wonderful regime... I am most hopeful that in this new year a long stride will be taken to meet Germany's just demands."

Talk about embarrassing relatives!



ALTHOUGH hacks on the *Guardian*'s "Professional Networks" section produce copy for the newspaper and website, they come within the company's commercial section rather than editorial because their work includes sponsored content from the likes of NatWest, Coca-Cola, Mastercard and Serco. This means the young, non-unionised hacks can be given far worse pay and conditions than their counterparts in the newsroom, despite being on the same floor.

A recent staff satisfaction survey reveals that more than half the team feel they are over-worked and underpaid. Employees quoted in the survey are unremittingly glum: "Pay is way below industry averages... an almost total lack of respect from editorial towards the work of commercial teams... It's at best demoralising and at worst hazardous to the business's future." Oh, and just 17 percent think senior *Guardian* executives are open and honest with them.

So what are executives planning to do about it? Er, not a lot. If there were so many complaints

about pay discrepancies from the editorial side, union reps and managers would have to discuss it. Exiled to the commercial section, the Professional Networks hacks can be happily ignored.

But their editorial neighbours won't be able to ignore them forever. Almost unnoticed, the *Guardian* is stealthily handing more and more jobs from editorial to commercial precisely so it can build up a cheaper, more dispensable workforce. It's not that hacks themselves are being moved from one section to the other - editorial is far too unionised for that to happen - but roles and responsibilities are shifting. Things that a few years ago would have been written by editorial staff are produced by reporters on the commercial side. The majority of younger hacks taken on by the *Grauniad* now go to Professional Networks - and very few will ever escape to the sunlit uplands along the corridor.

STAFF at the *Guardian* received their first communication from new CEO David Pemsel last week, detailing how "the appointment of a new editor-in-chief and a CEO at the same time is a rare opportunity for us to develop a new plan for the *Guardian*".

What that plan might be is apparently yet to be decided. But things are kicking off with "a review of our current operations and a detailed market analysis, based on frank discussion and challenge. We're open-minded about where it will all end up."

However, the recent opening of a third *Guardian* office in America, the launch of an international homepage and the appointment of international director Tony Danker to the team heading the review all suggest it is likely to end up somewhere a long way from a boring old dead-tree paper delivered to UK doormats.

But then, given the unique quality of Pemsel's prose, it is quite hard to make any guesses as to what the hell is actually going on. He continued: "As part of this process, they will put together a cross-functional data group from across Data Insight & Science, UX, Audience Development, Audience Insight, Marketing, CRM, Monetisation & Optimisation, and finance, to support and inform their work and to establish a holistic view on our key-metrics."