

## CHAPTER 8 – MEDIA REPORTS ALLEGING THAT THE BBC KNEW OF SAVILE’S MISCONDUCT BUT HAD FAILED TO ACT

### *Introduction*

- 8.1 In the weeks following the disclosures about Savile’s sexual misconduct in October 2012, several reports appeared in the news media to the effect that various people had reported their knowledge of some form of sexual misconduct on Savile’s part to someone in a position of authority at the BBC. In some cases, the report included the allegation that the response of the BBC manager concerned had been to brush the report aside with words such as ‘That’s Jimmy’. At the time, the BBC was unable to refute these allegations; it could say only that it had so far found nothing to suggest any known wrongdoing by management.
- 8.2 As a result of these articles, it has been assumed by many that the allegations were true and statements have appeared in the press asserting that BBC staff culpably ignored such reports. These articles have helped to create an impression of knowledge about Savile’s sexual misconduct at high levels in the BBC, making it particularly important that the sources should be looked at with care. For example, in a piece taken from Richard Littlejohn’s column published by the *Mail Online* on 12 September 2013, it was stated that the Crown Prosecution Service seemed to be concerned only to prosecute “celebrity collars”. This piece dealt partly with a documentary disclosing an alleged cover-up of complaints about the late Sir Cyril Smith (unrelated to the BBC). Mr Littlejohn commented that the police had not prosecuted any NHS employee “nor has any senior BBC employee, past or present, been arrested, even though many stand accused of being complicit in Savile’s crimes on Corporation premises”. After two and a half years spent working on this Review, I have found no evidence that

any BBC employee above producer level could stand accused of complicity in Savile's crimes in connection with his work for the BBC. That is not to say that BBC employees are without fault but I found no evidence that a senior BBC employee was complicit in Savile's crimes.

- 8.3 At an early stage, the Savile investigation wished to contact the sources underlying the most important of these various articles as it appeared likely that they would know of people at the BBC who had been given specific information about Savile. However, on investigation, I found that most of these sources could provide very little reliable information about what the BBC knew. I eventually came to the conclusion that much of the material by which the public had been persuaded that the BBC knew about Savile's crimes was unreliable. In my view, the fault for this lies primarily with the individuals providing embellished accounts to the press, although on occasions, the press must bear some culpability for failing properly to investigate the information provided to it. In this chapter I describe the results of my investigations into those articles and their sources.

***The Sun – 12 October 2012 – Source David Nicolson***

- 8.4 On 12 October 2012, *The Sun* carried an article headed:

“Top Beeb director: I blew whistle on Jimmy Savile but BBC ignored me”

“A TOP TV director has revealed he blew the whistle on Jimmy Savile having sex with a young girl at the Beeb – but was IGNORED.

David Nicolson, now 67, caught the perv in his Jim'll Fix It dressing room with a girl aged “16 maybe 15”. He said bosses told him: “That's the way it goes.”

The BBC knew full well Savile had a sick lust for young girls but left victims at his mercy, David revealed to The Sun last night.

He said of the girl, who was in her mid-teens and may even have been at school: “She had long brown hair and looked very, very young.”

Horrified David, who worked as a director on Jim'll Fix It, claims he kept trying to blow the whistle – but the mantra from everybody he told at the Corporation was: “That’s Jimmy.”

He said: “I was revolted by his behaviour. They just shrugged it off, saying, ‘Yeah, yeah – that’s the way it goes’.”

Telly veteran David – who also worked on Top of the Pops during a decade at the BBC – blasted the Corporation’s claim it knew nothing about its star DJ preying on girls for decades.

He raged: “Everyone knew what was going on. That includes senior BBC people – chiefs at the highest levels.

“There were always girls in Jimmy’s dressing room. Everyone would have known about it – all the hair and makeup people, the wardrobe, show directors, producers.”

Married David, recalling his reaction when he walked in on Savile and the young girl, said: “I was shocked. I’d gone in to talk business — and quickly got out.”

He went on: “It was a bog-standard changing room in the basement. They both quickly pulled up their pants. “The girl could have been 16, maybe 15. But she was just one of many – he always had one in the room. He said: “What do you want young man?” and shouted at me to get out of the room.

They both looked embarrassed – but she was not distressed.”

Despite describing the Beeb as having a permissive “sex, drugs and rock and roll” culture at the time he did not hesitate to tell people

what he had seen in the hope action would be taken. But none was.

David said: "Savile always used to bring scruffy girls into the studios – all teenagers. But no questions were ever asked.

"In rehearsals for *Jim'll Fix It* they would be hanging around – and during breaks they would go with Jimmy back to his dressing room. Everyone knew what he was doing. It was talk of the town and talk of the BBC that Jimmy loved young girls."

8.5 The BBC was asked to comment on this report and said:

"We have found nothing at this stage to suggest any known wrongdoing was ignored by management."

8.6 This article may well be responsible in some measure for the impression which many members of the public seem to have accepted as true that senior BBC managers had been specifically told that Savile had had intercourse with a young girl in his dressing room at BBC Television Centre.

8.7 We interviewed Mr Nicolson. He said that he had contacted *The Sun* in October 2012 and had spoken to a journalist. He had then given an interview to a reporter who had come up to Scotland to see him.

8.8 He told us that he had described to *The Sun* reporter an incident he had witnessed which had taken place in 1988 or 1989, when he had seen Savile with a young girl in circumstances which gave rise to an inference that some kind of sexual activity had taken place between them. At the time, he had been working as a production manager on *Jim'll Fix It*, of which Roger Ordish was the producer.

8.9 He said that he had been angry at the way in which *The Sun* had reported his account. First, he said, he had not seen the couple having intercourse; nor had he told *The Sun* that he had.

He had seen them standing up, within a metre or two of each other, both clothed. He said that the girl, who he thought would have been about 16 or 17, was brushing down her clothing. She looked a little confused and embarrassed but not in any way distressed. He had not reported the incident to anyone in authority at the BBC; although he found Savile's conduct "*offensive and grubby*", there was nothing to report. The girl did not appear to be underage and was not in any distress. He believes that he may have mentioned the incident to one or two colleagues in a low-key way, saying something like "*I've just seen Jimmy in the dressing room with another girl*". He was under the impression that Savile was in his mid-forties at the time; in fact in 1988 he would have been 62 or 63. He said that he did not express the outrage attributed to him in *The Sun* article.

8.10 Mr Nicolson said that he had made it plain to the reporter of *The Sun* that he had not reported the incident to Mr Ordish or to anyone in authority at the BBC. He showed us an email addressed to the reporter which, taken in isolation, appeared to confirm that. Later, on further examination of his email account, Mr Nicolson found the email from the reporter which had prompted his reply. I will set out the content of both emails. The reporter's email to Mr Nicolson is timed at 17.56 on 11 October 2012 and reads:

"Hi David,

I need to speak to you, in what capacity did you work for the bbc [*sic*], were you staff?

Also did you ever mention to Ordish anything about Savile?"

8.11 Mr Nicolson's reply, timed at 19.22 on 11 October 2012 reads:

"I was on a series of one year contracts, paying PAYE at source. Therefore, I was on the staff.

My contractual designation was Production Manager but all my credits show I was actually a film director. No, I did not mention the dressing room incident to Ordish or anyone senior. I did not witness a girl under stress, pressure, coercion or anything like that. She looked to be 16 or so. I had no cause to mention it to anyone except in passing "Oh, I see Jimmy's got a new girl", that sort of thing. I did, however, find the incident offensive and grubby and resolved never to attend the studio again, always ensuring that I was off receiving, researching or filming. Is this okay? Do you actually need to speak to me? If so, reply now telling me and I will go out in the rain to get a signal. I can't *[sic]* discuss it on the phone here".

It appears that the reporter replied at 20.37 that evening saying:

"No that's great thanks davia *[sic]*"

- 8.12 The Savile investigation wrote to *The Sun* to tell them that the evidence it had received from Mr Nicolson did not tally with their report of 12 October 2012 and giving details of the discrepancies alleged by Mr Nicolson. On 4 October 2013, solicitors instructed by News Group Newspapers Ltd (NGN), publishers of *The Sun*, replied that *The Sun* stood by the accuracy of its report, asserting that Mr Nicolson's words had either been taken from recorded conversations with him, notes written and given to *The Sun* by Mr Nicolson, notes prepared by *The Sun*'s journalists during interviews and conversations with Mr Nicolson or set down from the reporter's "clear recollection" of statements made by Mr Nicolson to him during the face to face interview. Several extracts from this material were provided as part of NGN's solicitors' letter. One such extract, said to have been taken from a summary prepared by one of the journalists using his own notes taken during an interview with Mr Nicolson, stated that, after witnessing Savile having sex with the young girl, he had reported it to a senior member of staff who laughed it off, saying "yeah yeah, that's the way it

goes". The letter stated that the phrase "reported it" reflected Mr Nicolson's statements to *The Sun* that he had spoken to senior members of BBC staff about what he had witnessed. The letter added that Mr Nicolson had told *The Sun* during his face-to-face interview that, when he told people about the incident, BBC employees and executives would say "That's Jimmy". Further extracts provided by *The Sun* suggested that Mr Nicolson had told the reporter that, whilst it was very difficult to tell how old the girl was and he could not say for certain that she was underage, she could have been 14, 15 or 16.

- 8.13 In the same letter, it was said that Mr Nicolson had told *The Sun* that "It is ridiculous for the BBC to claim that very senior execs were unaware of JS's activities with young girls". The letter also quoted a passage which, as it seems to me, did not relate to Savile. This was "it was absolutely common knowledge at the BBC that [name redacted] was taking these sorts of [pornographic] photographs of members of the audience". It appears to me that that passage probably relates to the activities of Harry Goodwin, a stills photographer on *Top of the Pops* in the mid and late 1960s and early 1970s about whom I have written in Chapter 9. His practice of photographing young members of the audience was not connected with Savile. Immediately after that quotation, there was a quotation as follows "... the highest level possible...Not quite sure about Director-General but certainly ....the controller of BBC One would have known it, yeah". It is not clear whether it is being said that the Controller of BBC One would have known about the activities of Mr Goodwin taking pornographic pictures or whether it is supposed to refer back to what the BBC knew about Savile's activities. I accept that the then Controller of BBC One did know about Mr Goodwin's activities or at least about the allegations made against him.

- 8.14 On 10 October 2013, we provided a copy of Mr Nicolson's email to the reporter dated 11 October 2012 to NGN's solicitors and, with the consent of Mr Nicolson, asked to see the journalist's contemporaneous notes and listen to the recordings of the conversations between Mr Nicolson and the reporter. By letter dated 18 October 2013, NGN's solicitors conveyed their client's refusal to disclose any notes or recordings on the grounds that the request fell outside the Review's Terms of Reference. Neither that letter, nor any subsequent correspondence received from NGN's solicitors, has offered any comment on the email exchange of 11 October 2012. By letter dated 25 October 2013, we explained how the verification of Mr Nicolson's evidence fell within the Terms of Reference and again invited *The Sun* to assist us in resolving the issue by disclosing the journalist's notes and recordings. On 8 November 2013, NGN's solicitors declined the request on behalf of their client. The solicitors asked to be notified in advance of any proposed criticism of *The Sun*, a request with which we have, of course, complied.
- 8.15 I have two main concerns arising from this matter. First, I want to form as reliable a view as I can about what Mr Nicolson saw in Savile's dressing room and whether he reported what he had seen to anyone in authority at the BBC. Second, I am concerned to discover whether the report in *The Sun* may have misled the public when it claims that the BBC knew about Savile's sexual misconduct and turned a blind eye.
- 8.16 In respect of my first concern, *The Sun* says that Mr Nicolson told them on one occasion that he had seen Savile having intercourse in his dressing room with a girl whose age was difficult to determine but could have been 14, 15 or 16. *The Sun* emphasised that Mr Nicolson claimed that he had informed senior members of BBC staff about the incident who had

laughed it off. However, Mr Nicolson told the Savile investigation that he did not see the couple having intercourse or make a report to senior BBC personnel; nor did he tell *The Sun* that he had done so. In his email of 11 October 2012 Mr Nicolson described the girl as “16 or so” whereas in evidence to me he said he thought she would have been about 16 or 17.

8.17 Clearly, it would have been helpful to me to be able to see the notes and transcripts in *The Sun's* possession and, given that Mr Nicolson had given his permission for their disclosure, I find it hard to understand why I have not been allowed to see them. Another newspaper to which a request for information was submitted volunteered its original notes without even being asked. However, whilst *The Sun* did not provide copies of the journalist's notes and recordings, it has provided extracts from this material as described at paragraphs 8.12-8.13 above. Although these are only extracts, they have been of some assistance and I have no reason to doubt their authenticity.

8.18 I am minded to accept, in part on the basis of the extracts provided from the journalist's notes and recordings, that Mr Nicolson probably did initially inform *The Sun* that he had reported the dressing room incident to a senior person at the BBC. I think it may well be that, when Mr Nicolson spoke to *The Sun* initially, he gave an exaggerated account of the incident and his reaction to it. The extracts from *The Sun's* notes and recordings suggest that Mr Nicolson said that, whilst it was difficult to tell, the girl could have been under 16. I think it is also likely that he said that he had seen the couple actually having intercourse, as opposed to seeing them in circumstances from which he had inferred that that is what they had been doing. In reaching this conclusion, I have placed some reliance on the evidence set out at paragraphs 10.69-10.71 which suggests that Mr Nicolson provided a similar

(although not identical) version of the dressing room incident to Robin Smith. There is also a further example of Mr Nicolson seemingly rehearsing an exaggerated account of a different story at (see paragraph 10.76). I have the impression that, in his bid to tell a good story, Mr Nicolson is prone to some exaggeration.

8.19 However, it seems to me that, whatever Mr Nicolson had said to *The Sun* initially, in his email exchange with the reporter on 11 October 2012, the day before publication, he was quite clearly setting the record straight in at least one key respect by stating that he had not told Mr Ordish or anyone senior at the BBC about the dressing room incident. *The Sun* has never suggested that the email exchange did not take place. Yet that clarification is not reflected in the article published by *The Sun* the following day which states that Mr Nicolson told BBC “bosses” about the incident who replied “that’s the way it goes”. Accepting, as I am prepared to do, that Mr Nicolson probably had on one occasion told *The Sun* that he **had** told senior people at the BBC about the dressing room incident and then that he subsequently (by email) told them that he had **not** told anyone senior about it, it seems surprising to me that *The Sun* would publish the article as it did without at least checking with Mr Nicolson which version was correct.

8.20 On the information available to me, my conclusion on the balance of probabilities is that Mr Nicolson did not report what he had seen in the dressing room to anyone in authority at the BBC and that he did not do so for the reasons he gave both in evidence to me and in his email to *The Sun* reporter. It follows that the public should not rely on this article as evidence that the BBC was told about the dressing room incident and turned a blind eye.

8.21 I must mention for completeness that there are other aspects of this article which Mr Nicolson claims do not reflect what he told *The Sun*. *The Sun* says that they have reported him accurately but, without the notes and tapes of Mr Nicolson's original interviews with *The Sun*, I cannot form a view as to who is right about these other aspects. These matters are, in any case, less important for my purposes than the central issue of determining what happened in the dressing room and whether Mr Nicolson reported it to anyone in authority at the BBC.

**The Daily Mail – 1 October 2012 – Source Anonymous 'A1'**

8.22 On 1 October 2012, the *Mail Online* carried an article headed "We were victims of Jimmy Savile". Within it was an account given to the *Mail* by a man described as "a former BBC chauffeur". His story, as reported, was that staff members had previously been fired for talking about Savile's reputation and that he had said that the BBC even employed chaperones to prevent girls from being lured into Savile's dressing room. A specific incident was recounted. It was said that he had once driven home a hysterical 12-year old girl who claimed that she had been sexually assaulted by Savile after appearing on *Jim'll Fix It*. The report continued:

"The girl 'sobbed her heart out all the way home' after she was allegedly abused by the presenter after the show during the mid-1970s. When she reached her front door, she collapsed into her mother's arms in tears, telling her: 'I'm sorry. It wasn't my fault. Jimmy grabbed me. He attacked me'.

The driver, who worked as a chauffeur for the BBC for 16 years, said staff members had previously been fired for talking about Savile's reputation, and he feared he would lose his job if he reported it.

He said the show's chiefs 'knew very well' that he [*Savile*] had a reputation for sexually

assaulting young contestants, and had even begun to employ chaperones to make sure girls could not be lured into his dressing room.”

- 8.23 With the assistance of the *Mail*, we were able to locate the source of this article and the source gave evidence. He wished to remain anonymous and I shall refer to him as A1. When we spoke to A1 he was 84 years old and repeatedly said that he regretted that his recollection of events in the 1970s is now imperfect in some respects.
- 8.24 When initially interviewed in March 2013, A1 said that he had worked for many years as a driver for a private hire company which contracted to provide chauffeur-driven cars for the BBC. He was not directly employed by the BBC. As he was regularly sent on jobs for the BBC, he had a pass and could enter various BBC buildings as and when he needed. He often had to wait for the person he was going to drive; he would sometimes sit in a canteen or wait in the corridor outside a dressing room. He often chatted to other chauffeurs and also to members of BBC staff; receptionists, waitresses, make-up girls, dressers, dancers and young actresses. I interpose to say that the actresses may not have been members of staff. He said that, among many of those people, Savile’s reputation was that of being a “*dirty old man*” who “*was perverted where young girls were concerned*”. That, he said, was Savile’s reputation throughout the many years he worked in connection with the BBC. A1 also said that a friend of his, who worked in the Art Department of the BBC, had told him that Savile interfered with young girls. A1 did not suggest that he had heard such rumours in the presence of any member of management or among staff of producer or director level.
- 8.25 A1 recounted one particular episode which occurred, he believed, in about 1975 or 1976. He was summoned to Television Centre and, when he had pulled up in the car park, a

young man, who he thought was an assistant director on *Jim'll Fix It*, brought a young girl to the car with instructions to take her straight home.

8.26 When the girl got into the car, she was very quiet and tearful. She hardly spoke during the journey. A1 asked her what was the matter but she just choked up; she was "*monosyllabic*". He asked her if she had been performing and she said "*A little bit*". He asked her if she had been in any programmes and she said "*I'm only 14*". He got the impression she had been one of the 'fixees' on *Jim'll Fix It* but agreed in his interview with the Savile investigation that that was only an impression or assumption. I interpose that it seems to me to be most unlikely that the girl had been a fixee on *Jim'll Fix It* because the families of fixees were usually invited to be in the audience during the recording of the programme and this girl was plainly alone. Also, in the 1970s, *Jim'll Fix It* was generally recorded at the BBC Theatre at Shepherd's Bush and not at Television Centre. When I suggested to A1 that it sounded more likely that she had been a member of the audience on *Top of the Pops*, he agreed that that might well have been the case. However, it matters not what programme she had been involved in.

8.27 A1 told us that he drove the girl to her home in Esher, a semi-detached house in a quiet residential road. They arrived there between 10pm and 11pm. He drew up with the offside of the car against the pavement in front of the driveway of the house. He tooted his horn and immediately a woman (presumed to be the girl's mother) came out to the car. A1 reached over and opened the offside rear door. The girl scrambled out straight into her mother's arms; she was sobbing. A1 could hear what was said between the two although he cannot now be sure of the detail. The mother asked the girl "*What's the matter, darling?*" The girl said

something like, “*It was Jimmy Savile*” and was sobbing. She seemed to be saying something about him having done something which had made her cry. A1 thought he had told the girl’s mother that he did not know what had happened but that, whatever it was, it had happened at the BBC before she got into his car. He said he was anxious that the mother should not think that whatever had happened had anything to do with him. He remembers asking the mother if it was all right for him to leave and she said it was. He left.

8.28 He told us that the only report he made about this incident was to his manager at the private hire company by which he was employed. He did not report it to anyone at the BBC.

8.29 He was asked about how he came to speak to journalists at the *Mail*. He said that initially a man had telephoned him; then later he had had a longer telephone interview with a woman. When he read the article which included material about him, he had felt that it was inaccurate in some respects and he had not had the opportunity to challenge it. First, he said that he had never said that the girl he took home was 12. He believed that she was 14. His present recollection was that she had told him she was 14 but, if he was wrong about that, he certainly had the impression she was about 14. He felt he could tell the difference between a girl of 12 and one of 14 and this one did not look 12.

8.30 Second, A1 told us that he had not told the *Mail* that he had heard the girl in the car tell her mother that Savile had grabbed her or attacked her. The conversation had not been so clear; all he could say was that he had the impression that Savile had done something which had made her cry. He was quite sure that he had not told the *Mail* that the girl had said that Savile had attacked her.

- 8.31 A1 accepted that he had told the *Mail* that he believed that the girl had been appearing on *Jim'll Fix It*. He is now doubtful about whether he was right about that. It was only ever an assumption and he has now accepted from me that, in the 1970s, that programme was generally made at the BBC Theatre at Shepherd's Bush and not at Television Centre. He now thinks the girl may well have been in the audience of *Top of the Pops*. Here again, the difference does not matter in itself, although to my mind it suggests that A1 has been prepared to assert as fact that which he has assumed to be so.
- 8.32 There were two aspects of A1's evidence which the Savile investigation was particularly anxious to investigate. These were, first, his assertions that senior BBC staff were aware that Savile was a danger to young girls and second, that BBC drivers had been dismissed for talking about Savile's sexual misconduct.
- 8.33 A1 denied that he told the *Mail* that some of the drivers at the BBC had previously been fired for talking about Savile's reputation. He explained to us that chauffeurs were not supposed to gossip about their passengers. I have the impression that he thought that the BBC took this very seriously, although, from his evidence, it seems that many of the chauffeurs did gossip about their passengers, many of whom were celebrities.
- 8.34 A1 accepted that he might well have told the *Mail* that there was a great deal of talk in the canteen and that some people would say "*Don't mention anything about Jimmy Savile*". He agreed that he might well have said that he feared that he might lose his job if he said anything about Savile. However, he did not, on this occasion, tell the Savile investigation of any specific example of anyone losing his job. He had, of course, reported to his boss at the private hire company what had happened so

far as the young girl was concerned and had not suffered any ill consequence. He told the Savile investigation that he would have been concerned that, if anyone had reported this to the BBC, he might not have worked for the BBC again. The BBC would not tolerate any gossip or scandal concerning anybody in the BBC. They would sack a chauffeur for gossiping. This was not specifically in connection with Savile; it was general.

- 8.35 A1 agreed that he might well have said to the *Mail* that the BBC 'chiefs' in charge of the show (which he thought was *Jim'll Fix It*) knew very well that Savile had a reputation for assaulting young contestants. In fact, he said that "producers" knew "all about it". Indeed at one stage he asserted that he himself had told an "independent producer working on the programme" about "it". When asked why he believed that BBC producers knew about Savile's misconduct, he said that it was because the man who had brought the young girl out to his car (who he thought was an assistant director) had told him not to let the young girl out of his sight. It appears to me that A1 must have assumed that this man knew that Savile had assaulted the girl and therefore the show's producer must also have known. Such an assumption does not seem unreasonable in the circumstances although it is not necessarily right. From what I have learned of the operation of the programmes on which Savile worked, it seems to me that, if the girl had been on *Jim'll Fix It*, the producer would probably have known about any incident affecting Savile; the team was very small and close-knit. If, however, the girl had been in the audience of *Top of the Pops*, it is less likely that the producer would have known. The producer would almost certainly have been up in the gallery and any decision about sending a girl home in a taxi might well have been taken by a floor manager, an assistant director or another member of the studio staff.

- 8.36 Moreover, I regret to say that I think it quite likely that studio staff would not have reported the incident as it should have been. I have heard of two other incidents on *Top of the Pops* where a complaint was made to studio staff about Savile but the complaint was not logged or reported as it should have been. My conclusion on this issue is that A1 had no direct knowledge that the chiefs on any show knew about the event involving the girl or indeed about any misconduct by Savile. His statement on that topic was based on assumption which, although not unreasonable, may well have been wrong.
- 8.37 A1 also accepted that he probably told the *Mail* that the young people on the show had to be escorted and chaperoned. However, on questioning by the Savile investigation, it was clear that he had no personal knowledge of this and what he had told the *Mail* was based on rumour and gossip. I entirely accept that A1 believed this to be true because of Savile's bad reputation. However, the assertion that the BBC had started using chaperones to protect young girls from Savile and to prevent him from luring them to his dressing room is without evidential foundation.
- 8.38 When I discussed with him what I understand (from other evidence) to have been the BBC's practice in respect of chaperones, he agreed that the BBC would obviously have to ensure that young people taking part in shows were accompanied while on the premises; they could not be let loose to roam around the building. But he said that that did not apply on *Top of the Pops*; young people in that audience came without their parents and would make their own way home after the show. He said that after *Top of the Pops* there would be a "sort of a free-for-all". I can understand why he said that. From other evidence I have heard, it appears that the young people who came to *Top of the Pops* were not individually

accompanied or chaperoned; they were supposed to be shown off the premises as a group but the evidence suggests that that did not always happen as it should. But I have heard no evidence that any special rules of chaperoning were laid down by the BBC in connection with Savile and A1 did not provide any such evidence.

8.39 In due course, we informed the *Mail* that A1 had told us that some aspects of their article were inaccurate. The *Mail* immediately provided the shorthand notes of the conversation one of their journalists had had with A1. The *Mail* provided a transcript of the notes. We commissioned another transcript which showed that the *Mail's* transcript was accurate. The *Mail* also provided a brief attendance note which recorded how A1 had contacted the *Mail* to volunteer his story.

8.40 First, it appears from the notes that A1 did indeed tell the *Mail* that the girl was 12. It also appears that he did say that he heard the girl tell her mother that Savile had attacked her. The notes also suggest that A1 did say that he knew of a driver who had been dismissed for gossiping. Whether that was gossiping about Savile is not clear. It is clear from the notes that A1 did say something about drivers talking amongst themselves, suggesting that, if you mentioned anything about Savile, you would get the sack. It also appears from the notes that A1 had told the *Mail* something to the effect that the BBC chiefs on the show knew that Savile had a reputation for assaulting young contestants.

8.41 In the light of the conflicts between what A1 had told the Savile investigation and what he appeared to have told the *Mail*, we have interviewed A1 on two further occasions. On these occasions, A1 was adamant that he had not contacted the *Mail* to offer his story. He asserted that they had contacted him first and had telephoned him several times, putting various things to

him. Later he suggested that, because, many years ago, he had provided a *Mail* journalist with information, the newspaper had his telephone number somewhere. I am sorry to say that I think A1's memory is playing tricks with him. The *Mail's* transcribed notes have every appearance of authenticity. So does the attendance note of A1's first telephone contact. I am sure that it was A1 who first got in touch. A1's suggestions as to why the *Mail* contacted him tend to confirm the view that I had earlier formed that A1 is prone to make assumptions and reconstructions and then to assert them as facts.

8.42 As for saying that the girl was 12, A1 again asserted that he had not said that. He was adamant that he told the *Mail* that the girl was 14. He proffered by way of justification of his view that he would not have had a 12-year old girl in his car because a 12-year old would have had a mother or a guardian with her. I think he is wrong and that he did say that the girl was 12. The notes are clear. I have no reason to doubt them.

8.43 In the most recent conversation with A1, he asserted again that he had never told the *Mail* that he had heard the girl say that Savile had grabbed her or attacked her. The note of what he had been recorded as saying by the *Mail* was read out to him and he was asked to think back very carefully. After a few moments, he said that he thought that was what he might have said. After a few more moments thought, he said that he was sure he had heard the girl use the word 'attacked', adding that she was very hysterical. So, within a few minutes, A1 had changed his evidence from asserting one thing to being sure that the contrary was true.

8.44 A1 was then asked about the statement in the *Mail* that one of the drivers had been sacked for talking about Savile. He said that he had never said that. What he had said was that there was an attitude that if you quoted anything to the media you

would be in serious trouble. He then said that a driver in the canteen had told him that he had been suspended for gossiping, not about Savile but about another artist. Then when the notes were read to him, he asserted that it was correct that someone had been fired and escorted off the premises for talking about Savile and he had said so to the *Mail*. Asked how he knew this, he confirmed that one of the drivers in the canteen had told him that someone he knew had been dismissed for talking about Savile being over-fond of young girls.

8.45 Finally, A1 was asked again about his assertion to the *Mail* that Savile was an out and out pervert and everyone knew about it; all the producers knew what was happening. He said that that was right. They definitely knew. Asked if he meant producers or assistant producers he said that, if the assistant knew, the producer also knew because they were close. Anyone connected with the production would have known of Savile's habit. Asked how he knew this, he said that the people he had spoken to in the canteen all knew of Savile's reputation. When reminded that he appeared to have said that all the producers knew what was happening, he said that he would never have said that because producers were "*the higher ups*". It was the assistant producers who were bound to know. When reminded that he appeared to have told the *Mail* that he had spoken to an independent producer about Savile, and the reply had been that "we know all about that", A1 said that that was correct. Asked who the producer was, he said he could not remember names. Then he said that he had told this producer about the incident with the young girl. But he could not remember who it was he had told.

8.46 I am satisfied that A1 is an honest man who has tried his best to remember events going back to the 1970s. But he has great

difficulty in distinguishing between true memory and reconstruction and assumption. I think his memory has played tricks with him, not only as to what happened in the 1970s but also as to what happened in 2012 when he spoke to a journalist from the *Mail*. I can only conclude that his evidence is unreliable in many respects. I do appreciate the difficulty he has been in. When he spoke to us he was 84 years old. I think that A1 probably did take a young girl home from Television Centre in a state of distress caused by something done by Savile. It is unfortunate that this victim has not come forward.

8.47 It seems to me that the *Mail's* article, although firmly based on what A1 said to their journalist, is nonetheless unreliable. No doubt the story sounded plausible and I do not criticise the *Mail* for running it. However, close questioning of A1 as to why he has made his various assertions, shows that they are based on rumour, gossip and assumption. Such information as A1 had about Savile's reputation within the BBC came from gossip in the canteen and corridors with people such as other drivers, receptionists, waitresses, make-up girls, dressers, dancers and young actresses. There is no reliable evidence that he had contact with any member of BBC staff who was in any position of authority.

8.48 It is no part of my function to criticise an elderly man whose account turns out to be unreliable. But my overall conclusion in respect of this article is that the public should not rely on it as amounting to evidence that the BBC chiefs knew of Savile's reputation for sexually assaulting 'young contestants', that the BBC had ever dismissed anyone for talking about Savile's reputation or that the BBC employed chaperones to ensure that girls could not be lured into Savile's dressing room.

***Daily Telegraph – Source – David Hardwick***

8.49 The Savile investigation is aware of three articles of which David Hardwick is the source. On 8 November 2012, *The Daily Telegraph* published a piece headed “Pundit claims sex allegation hushed up; BBC.”

8.50 The text reported:

“A radio show pundit lost his spot on the BBC after reporting Jimmy Savile’s abuse of young girls to his bosses, he claimed yesterday. David Hardwick was becoming a regular guest on Savile’s Speakeasy radio show in the early 1970s but he said that came to an abrupt end after he told the BBC he witnessed girls, possibly as young as 13, leaving Savile’s motor home in an isolated area of a service station in Leicester more than 40 years ago. Mr Hardwick claims he was told by BBC executives never to mention the allegation again through fear that “we could all lose our jobs”. Mr Hardwick, 67, from Alfreton, Notts, and now an author, said: “The Beeb certainly can’t say they didn’t know about his abuse because I told them. When it all came out last month I just thought ‘told you so’. “I was always suspicious of him after that. I could see those characteristics when he was around kids on shows like Jim’ll Fix It”.

8.51 On the same day, *The Sun* carried a similar story, headed “*What does Ripper know about Savile?*” The text of the piece reported:

“A radio guest of Savile has told how BBC bosses ignored his warning about the vile DJ 40 years ago. David Hardwick, 67, was a Radio 1 regular with Savile’s Speakeasy in the early 1970s. He recalled getting a lift from the pervert, who parked his motorhome in a remote part of an M1 service station. David went for a meal – and returned to find Savile with three girls. “They were only 13-15 and I don’t know where they came from,” he said. “I can only think it was pre-arranged. I asked him who they were and he just replied, ‘It happens

everywhere I go, I have fans after me'. "I reported my suspicions but the BBC never asked me back again."

8.52 The *Daily Mirror* carried a similar piece at about the same time. I will not set it all out as in many respects it is the same as the other two pieces, but it gave a little more detail about the report to the BBC. It was said that Mr Hardwick had told a BBC boss he had witnessed young teenage girls leaving the motorhome. It continued:

"He told them how shocked he was to see the youngsters appear looking "dishevelled" after the murky service station rendezvous in the early 1970s. Talking about his attempt to alert Savile's bosses, he explained: "I told my friend and producer Roy Trevivian who passed it up. I was called by Roy, who has since died, a few days after the allegation. I was told 'we will not be looking into this because they are only suspicions and because it is Jimmy Savile, it would be dangerous to do so, as we could all lose our jobs'. That to me says Savile could do what he wanted while at the Beeb but they certainly can't say they did not know about his abuse because I told them."

The article also includes more detail about his journey with Savile.

8.53 The Savile investigation has interviewed Mr Hardwick. He gave an account which, on first hearing, I found entirely plausible and which tallied very closely indeed with what he had reportedly told the press.

8.54 Mr Hardwick told me that, in 1971, he was working as a freelance journalist and was interested in breaking into radio journalism. He was a born-again Christian and thought his story might be of interest to the BBC. He wrote to the BBC and his letter was channelled to the Religious Broadcasting department and in particular to a producer named Reverend Roy Trevivian. In due course, Reverend Trevivian and Mr

Hardwick recorded a programme together. According to Mr Hardwick, the two men got on well and, on completion of the recording, agreed to stay in touch. Mr Hardwick says that, about two weeks later, he was invited to go to London to take part in *Speakeasy*, which was produced by Reverend Trevivian. It was a discussion programme aimed at a teenage audience and was hosted by Savile. According to Mr Hardwick, the programme went out live on a Sunday afternoon from the basement studio at Broadcasting House. Mr Hardwick had to travel from Mansfield to London and back by train.

8.55 Mr Hardwick said that he was invited back to take part in two more *Speakeasy* programmes in London and also met Savile at a recording of *Savile's Travels* in Nottingham. On the third visit to London, which Mr Hardwick said would have been in March 1971, Savile asked how he was travelling back to the North and offered him a lift home after the show. The show finished at about 3pm but Savile had to attend a meeting and offered to collect Mr Hardwick from the canteen when he was ready to leave. They left London at about 4:15 - 4.30pm. As they were driving past Watford Gap Services, Savile said that he was feeling a bit tired and asked Mr Hardwick if he would mind if they took a break at the next service station, which was Leicester Forest East. Mr Hardwick readily agreed. When they reached there, Savile drove onto the service area and stopped at the end of the commercial vehicle park, furthest from the cafeteria. He explained that if he were parked any nearer, there would be pandemonium. Savile told Mr Hardwick that he wanted a short rest and was going to put his head down.

8.56 Mr Hardwick went off to find something to eat. He returned about one hour and 15 minutes later. He knocked on the door of the camper-van but there was no response. Eventually, Savile appeared from within and opened the passenger door.

At that moment, the side door opened and two young girls stepped out. (It should be noted that *The Sun* had reported that Mr Hardwick had said that three girls came out.) Both appeared rather dishevelled. Savile appeared to blush and made a remark to the effect that they were fans and he often got them coming to see him. The two girls walked to the service road – away from the service area. Savile and Mr Hardwick then resumed their journey. Savile barely spoke, in sharp contrast to the earlier part of the journey when he had been very talkative.

8.57 Mr Hardwick claimed that he was disturbed by what he had seen; it appeared to him that Savile had had some form of sexual encounter with the girls. The following day, he telephoned Reverend Trevivian and told him what he had seen. Reverend Trevivian was astounded and said he would discuss the issue with Mr Penry Jones, Head of Religious Broadcasting. Mr Hardwick claimed that, on the Wednesday (that is two days later), Reverend Trevivian called him back and told him that he had discussed the matter with Mr Jones. Mr Jones had found the story incredible and had added that the BBC would not be able to take it further because it was only suspicion and also because the BBC would have a lot to lose by upsetting Savile. Mr Hardwick said that, although he contacted Reverend Trevivian again on a couple of occasions, he was never again invited to take part in a BBC programme. He summed up his attitude by saying that it appeared to him that celebrity was more important to the BBC than reality. When the Savile story broke in 2012, Mr Hardwick was contacted by various newspapers who had been alerted to the fact that he had a story to tell by friends to whom he had disclosed these events. Although reluctant, he eventually agreed to tell his story to the *Mansfield Chad*.

8.58 If this story is true, it demonstrates that a BBC Head of Department had been made aware of conduct which appeared to be highly improper and which most certainly called for some investigation. It would mean that the Head of Religious Broadcasting, Radio, at the time, decided to turn a blind eye to apparently improper (although not necessarily unlawful) conduct for commercial reasons. As I have said, I began by thinking that Mr Hardwick was a reliable witness and that the story was true. However, on further investigation, I have come to the conclusion, for several reasons, that I cannot accept the story as true or accurate. In short, there is no part of it on which I can rely.

8.59 First, our further investigations into contemporaneous BBC records revealed that *Speakeasy* did not go out live at 2pm on a Sunday afternoon. It was always recorded. The contemporaneous records show that, in 1971, the programme was always recorded on a weekday, usually on a Thursday or Friday evening. The recording generally ended at about 7.30pm or 8pm. Witness after witness who had been involved in the production of *Speakeasy* confirmed that that was so. One or two were prepared to concede that there might have been an odd occasion when a programme had gone out live, possibly if an important guest were only able to attend on the Sunday. The written records do not support even that. The evidence points overwhelmingly to a recording on a weekday evening. When this was put to Mr Hardwick by telephone some weeks after the first interview, he asserted that the suggestion was nonsense. There was no way in practical terms that he could have attended anything in London at that time; he would not have been able to get back home afterwards. He would not have been prepared even to contemplate such a journey. He then suggested that the other witnesses were not being truthful.

He was adamant that the programme went out live on a Sunday and that he had attended as he had previously stated.

8.60 A further difficulty was that the contemporaneous records showed (and the other witnesses recalled) that, when made in London, the programme was almost always recorded at the Paris Theatre in Lower Regent Street and not at Broadcasting House. Mr Hardwick asserted that he had never been to the Paris Theatre. In fact, records show that in March 1971, when Mr Hardwick claims to have been driven back from London by Savile, all four programmes were recorded in the provinces, namely at Broadmoor, Glasgow, Bristol and Birmingham. However, I do not regard that discrepancy as very significant as Mr Hardwick could easily be mistaken as to the date of the event.

8.61 It was put to Mr Hardwick that the nub of his original story (that he had seen two girls get out of Savile's camper-van) appeared unreliable. If the recording had not finished until 7.30pm or 8pm and had been followed by a meeting lasting over an hour (as Mr Hardwick had claimed), the two men could not have left London until about 9pm. Mr Hardwick agreed that that was so and asserted that he would never have agreed to go to London at all if it had meant returning home so late in the evening. He was adamant that the programme had gone out live and he had left London in the late afternoon.

8.62 There seems to be no room for mistake or misunderstanding in the evidence. Either Mr Hardwick is wrong or all the BBC records and the recollections of other witnesses are wrong. I have not until now mentioned that it has transpired that Mr Hardwick has a long record of offences of dishonesty. I was not aware of that when he was first interviewed. After that had been discovered, he was asked about his criminal record and agreed that, as an adult, he had served several terms of

imprisonment for offences of deception. Now that I am aware of that, I feel bound to take it into account when making my assessment of Mr Hardwick's credibility. I have come to the conclusion that his account cannot be accepted. Whether he ever attended *Speakeasy* I do not know but I am quite satisfied that his account relating to the journey north, his sighting of the young girls and his reporting of these matters to the BBC cannot be relied upon.

8.63 Mr Hardwick is aware of my conclusion about his evidence. Given this, I was surprised that he was prepared to let Channel 5 include an interview with him in its programme *Crimes That Shook Britain: Jimmy Savile*, which was broadcast on 12 March 2015.

8.64 I do not for a moment criticise Channel 5 or the producers of its programme or the newspapers who printed this story. Mr Hardwick is a most plausible raconteur and they broadcast or printed the story as he told it to them. But I do not believe it to be accurate.

***The Mirror – Source – Alan Hardwick***

8.65 Alan Hardwick (who has no connection with David Hardwick mentioned above) was a newsreader for ITV for some years. He also worked for other companies including the BBC.

8.66 On 26 October 2012, the *Mirror's* website carried an article headed:

"I told BBC Jimmy Savile groped a girl .... and they laughed it off": Former newsreader still 'haunted' by scene 20 years on."

The article continued:

"He said other staff told him: "Don't you know Savile likes them young?" A former newsreader claims he was "laughed at" when he told BBC

staff Jimmy Savile groped a girl in a ITV studio. Journalist Alan Hardwick, 63, said he saw Savile put his arm around a girl of about 13 before pinching her bottom. Alan complained to a manager at Yorkshire Television, who told him Savile “was just being friendly” and she was probably a relative. He said other staff told him: “Don’t you know Savile likes them young?” Alan, who worked on the local news show *Calendar* from 1973 to 2002, said: “The thing that’s always stayed with me was the look on the girl’s face. “It wasn’t quite horror but it was hard to describe. “He turned towards her and gave her a huge grin. It was haunting, it has haunted me for 20 years. “It did not occur to me at the time to take the matter further.”

*Calendar* was filmed at studios in Leeds, where Savile was a regular guest as a local celebrity and fundraiser.

An ITV spokesman said the network took such allegations “very seriously” and pledged to investigate”.

8.67 On reading this article, I was puzzled as to why an incident which appeared to have taken place at the studios of Yorkshire Television, which was part of ITV, had been reported to people at the BBC. On contacting Mr Hardwick, he confirmed that he had indeed witnessed an incident involving Savile but said that any reference to the BBC in the article must be a mistake by the newspaper. However, with the assistance of the *Mirror*, the Savile investigation was able to trace the source of their article back to an article published in the *Lincolnshire Echo*, whose journalist had interviewed Mr Hardwick. It then became clear that Mr Hardwick had told the journalist: “I mentioned it to other people in the industry and at the BBC and I was laughed at because they all said, ‘Don’t you know that Savile likes them young?’ I felt a bit of a fool.”

8.68 When reminded about the article in the *Lincolnshire Echo*, Mr Hardwick told us “*I think a misunderstanding may have crept in. Possibly my fault*”. He added:

*“For clarity, the only people at the beeb who may have talked to me about anything that concerned Savile would be news crews. As you can imagine, over the years I met many of them. The specific incident would have been mentioned”.*

8.69 I am grateful to the *Mirror* for telling us the source of the information on which it relied for its article. The substance of the article follows closely what had been published in the *Lincolnshire Echo*, namely that Mr Hardwick had told staff at the BBC about the incident he had witnessed to which the response had been “Don’t you know that Savile likes them young?”

8.70 As I have said, the content of this article is entirely in accordance with what Mr Hardwick had told the journalist concerned. Anyone reading the whole article would not be in any way misled by it. However, in my experience, many people do not read articles carefully and thoroughly. They often only look at the headline. This headline gives the impression that a report had been made to “the BBC” which, to my mind, implies that it was made to someone senior and that the response of “laughing it off” was the response of someone in authority at the BBC. All I wish to point out is that it should not be inferred from this headline that Mr Hardwick told anyone senior in the BBC what he had seen or that the response came from an authoritative BBC voice.

8.71 For the sake of completeness, I mention that *The Express* also ran a short piece about Mr Hardwick with a photograph of him said to have been taken while he was giving evidence at ‘the inquiry’. This report makes it plain that what he had seen took place at ITV studios and was reported to an ITV ‘boss’. Then there is a quote from Mr Hardwick as follows, “I mentioned it to others in the industry and at the BBC. They all said, ‘Don’t you know that Savile likes them young?’” This article does not carry

any implication that anyone senior in the BBC had been told of this incident.

***Express – 7 October 2012 – Source – Christopher Biggins***

8.72 *The Express* published a piece on 7 October 2012 of which the headline stated that BBC managers knew that Savile was abusing children in its studios. Below that it said “Christopher Biggins believes the BBC should be “held to account” over the Jimmy Savile scandal, calling it the “worst kept secret” in showbusiness”. Mr Biggins was quoted as saying:

“The trouble with the Jimmy Savile thing is that we’ve known about it for years.

The BBC are the real culprits because they covered it up because of the two big [TV] series they had with him and they were very, very out of order. That’s absolutely true.

There were heads of department [at the BBC] who should be held to account and I think it will come out who they were. The other thing is that they didn’t want Stoke Mandeville [Hospital] to suffer, but I think they were wrong. Stoke Mandeville wouldn’t have suffered.”

The quotation then continued with reference to the press and why they had had such a soft approach to Savile; Mr Biggins gave his opinion about Savile as being “strange” and “dirty”. Then, finally, he returned to the BBC, and is reported to have said:

“The BBC should care for the people that are on their premises. There must have been heads of department who were trying to protect their programmes. He [Savile] believed he was above it all, he believed he could do anything, that is the terrifying thing.”

8.73 The Savile investigation has contacted Mr Biggins as I wished to know whether he would be able to contribute any factual evidence about what the BBC knew about Savile. However, he

said that he did not know anything of his own knowledge; all he had said was based on the gossip that was going round at the time. He agreed that he probably had said words very like those he was reported to have said. Mr Biggins also said that he could not remember where the interview had taken place. He thought that it might have taken place on a social occasion, in which case he might have been caught off guard and have said things that he would not have said in a more formal environment.

8.74 While I do not criticise the *Express* for publishing its piece, it is unfortunate that the article and in particular the headline gives the impression that Mr Biggins had actual knowledge of the matters of which he was speaking. He has assured us that he did not.

**Contactmusic.com website – 17 October 2012 – Source – John Simpson**

8.75 On 17 October 2012, a post appeared on this website under the heading “Jimmy Savile – More Claims That The BBC Knew of Jimmy Savile’s Sexual Acts”. It included the (inaccurate) allegation that *The Guardian* had reported that “veteran Beeb journalist John Simpson had claimed that top executives at the broadcaster were fully aware of Savile’s actions throughout the 1950s and 1960s, saying that even the Director-General knew of what the apparent paedophile was up to”. Then, quoting a passage from John Simpson’s book *Strange Places, Questionable People*<sup>84</sup>, the article continued:

“Week after week, children from all over the country could win competitions to visit the BBC and meet Uncle Dick. ... He would welcome them, show them around, give them lunch, then take them to the gents and interfere with them.

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<sup>84</sup> J. Simpson, *Strange Places, Questionable People*, Pan, 2008. The passage appears at p. 80.

If parents complained, the director general's office would write saying the nation wouldn't understand such an accusation against a much-loved figure."

- 8.76 Two things must be noted about this. The first is that this post appears to have been based on a misreading or misunderstanding of an article which appeared in *The Guardian* on 17 October 2012. That article was headed "Jimmy Savile row deepens after claims of abuse by another BBC presenter". The subheading stated "Journalist John Simpson wrote in autobiography that top executives knew of allegations against star in 50s and 60s". The article was accompanied by a photograph of Savile. The real gist of *The Guardian* article was that Mr Simpson had claimed in his autobiography that BBC executives had been aware of sexual abuse by "another star presenter" in the 1950s and 1960s. This other star presenter who was referred to as "Uncle Dick", had been a household name in the 1920s and until his death in 1967. Clearly Mr Simpson was not referring to Savile and had said nothing in his book about Savile or the BBC's knowledge of anything that he did. Yet the post on the *contactmusic.com* website claimed that Mr Simpson had asserted that executives were aware of Savile's sexual misconduct. This was wholly inaccurate and misleading.
- 8.77 Without in any way criticising *The Guardian*, I must say, however, that I can see how the website's error came to be made. On a cursory reading of the headlines of *The Guardian* article and with a glance at the photograph of Savile, one might pick up the impression that Mr Simpson was writing about allegations against Savile (viz 'the star'). On a more careful reading, it was clear that he was not.
- 8.78 Second, in the passage from Mr Simpson's book quoted in *The Guardian* article, Mr Simpson was not speaking of matters

which he himself knew about; he was quoting the words spoken to him by an elderly, allegedly “gin–sodden” former BBC presenter who had worked with a man known on air as Uncle Dick, who was involved with children’s programmes prior to 1950. Mr Simpson was not in any way vouching for the truth or accuracy of the account he had been given. In any event, it was obvious that Mr Simpson’s elderly informant was not talking about Savile; she was talking about “Uncle Dick”. From the quotation itself it is obvious that this could not have been Savile. Savile was not involved in children’s programmes in the relevant period.

- 8.79 This article or post is inaccurate and misleading; it is just plain wrong. When we pointed this out to the Director of *contactmusic.com*, he immediately acknowledged the mistake. He offered to take it down and has done so. It had been available on the site for several months and I have no idea how many people might, as a result, have been misled into thinking that the BBC (up to and including the Director–General) had ‘known’ about Savile’s misconduct even in the 1950s and 1960s.

### ***Reports the Savile Investigation Has Been Unable to Investigate***

- 8.80 An article appeared on the *Mail Online* on 3 October 2012, headed “BBC Radio 1 boss ‘knew about Jimmy Savile sex abuse allegations in the 1970s but was only worried that they would emerge in the Press’”. The article makes reference to an actress and model who appeared as a dancer on *Top of the Pops* between 1964 and 1966. The article states that the woman complained to the show’s producer about Savile’s inappropriate conduct but that no action was taken. We wished to investigate this allegation but have been unable to do so. We asked the *Daily Mail* to see whether this woman would be prepared to be interviewed, on the basis that we would not

reveal her identity. We have been told that she has declined to speak to us. We know who was the producer of *Top of the Pops* in the 1960s but cannot interview him as he is dead.

8.81 On 6 November 2013, the *Mirror* published a piece headed: “Pervert Jimmy Savile manipulated BBC security staff so they would allow girls into his dressing room”. It continued:

“Handwritten message reveals how the twisted celebrity deliberately cultivated a phony friendship with doormen at the corporation.

Serial pervert Jimmy Savile frequently manipulated BBC security staff so they would allow girls into his dressing room.

A handwritten message, published by the *Mirror* today, reveals how the twisted celebrity deliberately cultivated a phony friendship with doormen at the corporation so they would never question his requests.

The sickeningly chummy note, addressed to “BBC security friends” ...was scrawled on notepaper from Stoke Mandeville hospital where he was a fundraiser.

*[A facsimile of the note was shown.]* It said “Please admit these three ladies to my room. Tickets inside. Ta. Jimmy Savile”

A BBC insider said:

“It perfectly illustrates the position of power Savile had.

He flattered and made friends with security staff and this enabled him to carry out his horrendous attacks.”

...

Savile used BBC studios to abuse dozens of girls and young women.

....

Ironically the note printed here was not one intended to lure young victims to his lair at the

BBC. It is instead believed to apply to three women members of his staff.”

- 8.82 The *Mail Online* picked up this story and also published a copy of the note.
- 8.83 The Savile investigation very much wished to interview the *Mirror's* source, who is described only as a “BBC insider”. We asked the *Mirror* to ask the source whether he or she would be willing to speak to us but we have now been told that the source is not willing to do so.
- 8.84 Prior to receiving the *Mirror's* response, purely by chance, the Savile investigation has been able to establish how the note came to the attention of the Press. Janet Cope, who was for many years a member of staff at Stoke Mandeville Hospital and was also a longstanding friend and personal assistant to Savile, told us that she had given the note to a man from a news agency in Reading and she thinks he must have passed it on to other members of the press. She said that, following an article in a newspaper (she cannot remember which one) about security at BBC premises, a reporter had asked her how she used to get into the BBC. She told him that it was easy; she would have a piece of paper. My understanding is that Savile used to give her a note asking for admission. She said that she went to the BBC quite often and did not always have a piece of paper and just walked in. Sometimes the commissionaires would know that Savile was in the building and would let her through. But, the piece of paper she had given to the press was one she had used when she and two colleagues from Stoke Mandeville had gone in to see a show.
- 8.85 This note tells one absolutely nothing about unlawful or inappropriate conduct on BBC premises. Given the BBC's policy of permitting members of the Talent to invite guests to come in to watch shows and to entertain them in their dressing

rooms, I do not see anything improper about Savile arranging for tickets for Stoke Mandeville staff to see a show in which he was performing and to ask security officers to admit the women to his room where their tickets would await them. The article implies a great deal more, which may be true and justified but which I cannot investigate as the 'BBC insider' source is unwilling to speak to me.

### ***Other Reports***

- 8.86 The reader may have noticed that there have been some particular media stories alleging that the BBC was aware of Savile's misconduct many years ago to which I have not yet referred in this chapter. That is because I have been able to look into them in detail, have found them to be of substance and have reported on them elsewhere.
- 8.87 One concerns Derek Chinnery who, in an interview with BBC reporter Sima Kotecha for the BBC Radio 4 *Broadcasting House* show said that, in the 1970s he had asked Savile "what's all this, these rumours we hear about you, Jimmy?" Savile had denied any wrongdoing and Mr Chinnery had not taken matters further. A full account of that incident will be found in Chapter 11. Related to this and also in Chapter 11, is to be found the result of my investigation into the evidence of Rodney Collins, a BBC publicity officer, whose interview with the BBC provided the source material for a piece which appeared in the *Daily Mail* on 3 October 2012.
- 8.88 Another story arises from information given to *Channel 4 News* by Mr Richard Pearson, a former BBC employee, who stated that, in the late 1970s, he had heard Savile say that he had 'had' three 14-year old girls in his caravan that morning. He said that that had been said in the hearing of Canon David

Winter, the producer of a BBC Radio 1 programme *Speakeasy*. A full account of that incident is also to be found in Chapter 11.

- 8.89 On 6 June 2013, *The Daily Telegraph* published an article headlined “BBC was told 40 years ago of risk to young girls on *Top of the Pops*”. The article appears to be accurate and I discuss the issues it raises in Chapter 9.

### **Conclusions**

- 8.90 It is unfortunate that the public has gathered the impression that the BBC had been told time and time again about Savile’s misconduct. It has become received wisdom that that was so. Examination of the facts relating to the reports I have discussed in this chapter demonstrates that this impression is misleading. In some cases, it is easy to see how the misleading impressions have come about. In one case, David Hardwick’s account is so riddled with inaccuracy that I have concluded that it is untrue and that he has misled the newspaper. In another, the misquoted extract from Mr Simpson’s book appears to me to arise from carelessness on the part of the website.
- 8.91 The report based on information from Mr Nicolson has been the most difficult to resolve. Mr Nicolson is adamant that he did not tell anyone in authority that he had seen Savile in a dressing room with a young girl. *The Sun* is adamant that he told them that he did. For the reasons explained above, my conclusion is that this piece should not be relied upon to support a belief that senior managers at the BBC had been told about Savile’s activities.
- 8.92 It does not follow from this analysis of some of the media reports that I am saying that nobody in the BBC was aware of Savile’s misconduct. Some people were. I have investigated the extent of their awareness in as much depth as has been possible and will report upon it in the following chapters. This

chapter seeks only to clarify and where necessary correct the misleading impressions which have been given as a result of some of these reports.

