



5 November 2014

David Stewart MSP
Convener
Public Petitions Committee
c/o Public Petitions Clerks
Room T3.40
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

Dear David,

PE:1521: No More Page 3 in The Scottish Sun and Scottish Parliament

Thanks for writing to me about the petitions lodged with regards to Page 3 in The Scottish Sun.

First of all, please accept my apologies for taking so long to respond. As we both know only too well, this has been a year like no other for Scotland. We have only just returned to some form of normality after a hectic spell covering the referendum and the Commonwealth Games before that.

I have already received correspondence this year from Jackie Baillie MSP. Please find a copy of my reply enclosed with this letter.

Since writing to Ms Baillie, Rupert Murdoch has mentioned on social media that he is considering the future of Page 3. As of yet, no decision has been made. As I mentioned in my previous letter, the decision is not devolved to Scotland, and would lie with our national editor David Dinsmore.

I do feel it is necessary however, to respond to some of the remarks made with regard to the Scottish Parliament's Equalities Framework. The Presiding Officer states, 'people from all walks of life have the opportunity to engage, freely without discrimination, with its Members and staff.'

I firmly believe, by banning the sale of The Scottish Sun, you would be discriminating against Scottish people who have the right, in a free and liberal society, to purchase and read whichever newspaper they choose.

May I also direct The Public Petitions Committee to Scottish Conservative Leader Ruth Davidson who refused to back the motion tabled at Holyrood earlier this year. Ms Davidson has made her opinion known to us that she thinks politicians' time could be better spent at such an important time for Scotland.

I also refer you to the note in my correspondence with Ms Baillie about the good work our Check 'Em Tuesday campaign is doing. Last month we had our first Scottish life saved thanks to the awareness raised by our campaign. I have enclosed the article for your information.

In your submission, the petitioners argued that Page 3 is, 'an objectification of women which a majority of people do not support.' You then draw a link between Page 3 and, 'gender stereotyping, negative attitudes towards women and acts of domestic and sexual violence'.

/...

Guildhall, 57 Queen Street, Glasgow G1 3EN

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Addressing the second, very serious accusation, I find it very difficult to believe Page 3 is responsible for such extreme behaviour, particularly in the digital era with a proliferation of far more sinister material available at the click of a button on the internet.

On the first point, from extensive research, our readers (on average 800,000 per day) have no issue whatsoever with Page 3. These people are our constituents and we have to listen to what they want. It would be helpful to have some clarification of who 'the majority of people' you are referring to are?

Fabulous magazine editor Rachel Richardson, who pioneered The Sun's Check 'Em Tuesday partnership with charity Coppafeel, would be more than happy to discuss the subject in more detail if you were interested in arranging a meeting.

Former Page 3 girl Peta Todd has debated the merits of her career with The Sun at the Oxford University Union. Peta is a successful young mother who has gone on to great success as an ambassador for Help 4 Heroes, amongst other worthwhile causes, and would happily debate the issue with Jackie Baillie and the committee.

At some point in the future we may decide to change our plans in Scotland. This will not be down to any form of political pressure, purely a decision we make internally after careful consultation with our readers.

Yours sincerely,

Gordon Smart
EDITOR

Encs.

THE SCOTTISH Sun

Tuesday, July 8, 2014

40p

thescottishsun.co.uk

JUST 40p

15 DAYS TO GLASGOW 2014

570K BRILLIANT BREAKS

319 PARKS IN UK AND EUROPE

TOKEN 4: SEE PAGE 22

HOLS FROM £9.50



MUM'S STORY OF HOPE



Dismay... Mr Pearson

Cocaine shame of Scots

By CHRISTINE LAVELLE

SCOTLAND was last night named as the world's cocaine capital. MSP Graeme Pearson branded the UN findings "very disappointing".

Full Story - Page Nine



I'll be a Del Bhoj
SEE BACK PAGE



Pledge... Theresa May

M15 files opened on perts

By STEVE HAWKES

HOME Secretary Theresa May yesterday vowed to unlock M15 files as she launched a review into alleged child sex abuse in Westminster. Her pledge

Continued on Page Six

PAGE 3 SAVED MY LIFE

By CHRISTINA EARLE

MUM-of-four Wendy Bush today reveals how Page 3's Check 'em Tuesday breast cancer awareness campaign saved her life.

Wendy, 42, right, found a small rash on her left breast that she would have normally ignored.

But because she had read our advice she went for a check-up — which revealed she had cancer.

Wendy has now had successful surgery. She said: "I thought I was being paranoid — but The Sun saved my life."

Full Story - Pages Two and Three



CoppaFeel!



CANCER BATTLE'S SO UPLIFTING..

Wife's op after trucker sees tip



Warning . . . worried Paul showed Marion our story

PAUL GIVES MISSUS OUR PAIN WARNING

EXCLUSIVE by DAVID WYNN

LORRY driver Paul Wright told how his wife's breast cancer was caught in time — thanks to The Scottish Sun's Check 'Em Tuesday campaign.

He urged mum-of-four Marion, 52, to see docs after reading in his favourite paper that her pain could be a symptom.

She had emergency surgery after hospital tests revealed tumours in her breast and lymph nodes.

Danger

Paul, 49, of Baillieston, Glasgow, said: "When I read the paper, I knew I had to tell Marion to get checked out. If the condition had gone unchecked, she would have been in danger."

Marion, who is having chemotherapy, said: "The Scottish Sun story was about a woman of 23 whose breast pain turned out to be cancer. I didn't know that was a symptom so I ignored mine."

"But it made me act. The doctors said catching it early boosted my chances of beating it."

Marion is the third woman to spot cancer early thanks to our breast-checking campaign, launched with charity CoppaFeel! in March.

david.wynn@the-sun.co.uk



COPY

Dear Jackie,

RE: Page 3 letters dated February and March, 2014

Thanks for your letters requesting a meeting to discuss Page 3.

Firstly, please accept my apologies for taking so long to reply. It has been a hectic time settling in to my new job since I moved back to Scotland from London.

I now have my feet well and truly under the table with the biggest year in our history gathering pace. In response to your letter, I was aware of the Members' Debate in the Scottish Parliament in November backing the "No More Page 3" campaign. In such an important year for the future of this country, I have to admit I was surprised to hear MSPs discussing the contents of Page 3.

As you have a responsibility to your constituents, I have a responsibility to my readers. We regularly conduct insight with our customers and Page 3 remains a very popular destination in the newspaper.

My colleague in London, Rachel Richardson, has spent a year working with our insight teams and recently launched our "Check 'Em Tuesday" campaign with the impressive breast cancer awareness charity Coppafeel. I would encourage you to write to Rachel, who will happily discuss the results of our research with you.

The campaign picked up two Change Opinion Awards last week, including Campaign of The Year. Judges called the campaign "life-saving, brash, bold and not afraid to be cheeky".

The decision to publish Page 3 is not devolved to the Scottish Editor in Glasgow. The Editor of the national edition, David Dinsmore, holds that responsibility in consultation with the News UK executive.

David has made the newspaper's position on Page 3 very clear in a series of high profile interviews this year. As you know, his decision is to continue publishing Page 3 delivering content our readers know and love.

Hopefully this explains our position clearly.

Thank you very much for the kind invitation for lunch at parliament, but I'm afraid I will decline. I will be visiting Tricia Marwick soon – perhaps we could be introduced formally then?

I look forward to meeting you soon.

Yours sincerely,

Gordon Smart
EDITOR

Guildhall, 57 Queen Street, Glasgow G1 3EN