

How Sir Roger Scruton defended his name and secured reappointment

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We acted for renowned UK philosopher and academic Sir Roger Scruton in his high-profile battle against political and cultural magazine, The New Statesman. The dispute, which was discussed on BBC Radio 4 and featured in the national press over several weeks, was regarded as both a cultural and political barometer.

Following an interview given by Sir Roger, The New Statesman published an article which would become the centre of the media storm.

This controversy was heightened by a series of tweets published by the New Statesman's journalist which included words from Sir Roger's interview divorced from any context, with some of his remarks truncated and which accused him of making a series of 'outrageous' statements.

In a world where social media means the almost immediate spread of false news and uninformed opinion, it took only four hours before housing minister James Brokenshire MP chose to dismiss Sir Roger from his position as Chairman of the Government commission on housing – Building Better, Building Beautiful – with immediate effect due to The New Statesman coverage.

Upon Sir Roger's dismissal, The New Statesman journalist posted a now notorious picture of himself drinking champagne to celebrate with another caption describing Sir Roger in highly offensive terms. This intensified the debate considerably and it appeared that Sir Roger was the target, as he himself described the events, of a 'show trial.' To read more about the case, Sir Roger's own writings on how it felt to find himself 'fired for things he did not say and does not believe' can be found [here](#).

Following intervention from his many friends and supporters and our legal engagement with The New Statesman, it published a public apology as part of an agreed resolution. Sir Roger also received a [public apology](#) from James Brokenshire MP and was reinstated as co-head to the Commission as one of Theresa May's last acts as Prime Minister. In short, Sir Roger's reputation was restored.

Jo Sanders, Head of UK Media and Reputation team at Withers, says: *'Sir Roger was not enthusiastic about taking legal action, and was characteristically compassionate towards those responsible, but recognised that his life's work and reputation were in jeopardy. The main challenge of Sir Roger's case was how fast moving the story had become. He was very fortunate to have staunch defenders who came to his aid. We helped him to pick the right battle to fight, and when that had been won, it served as the platform for his vindication and reappointment by the Prime Minister.'*

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