

David Cameron and the Murdoch Affair

What did he know and when did he know it? Cameron, Coulson and those pesky emails

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Global Research, July 20, 2011

williambowles.info 20 July 2011

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The political/corporate class must be ruing the day email arrived, it is proving to be the undoing of many a powerful individual and perhaps even the downfall of the government? But only if the media do the job they claim to be doing, investigating malfeasance at every level.

For anybody with enough patience to sit through the televised committee hearings on the l'affaire Murdoch, at the end of it all, you would have learnt very little about the relationship between the political class, the police and the media, aside that is from the fact that they stick together like glue.

Craig Murray put it this way:

"I find it hard to believe that anybody can watch today's clutch of Select Committee hearings without coming away with one overwhelming impression; the extraordinarily low quality of the UK's Members of Parliament.

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The Murdochs could bat away these pompous blunderers all day. Even the dull transatlantic management speak of James Murdoch baffles them. It is humiliating for this country that these dullards are our representatives. — ['Murdoch Circus'](#) by Craig Murray, 19 July 2011

In fact the entire proceedings came across like a carefully orchestrated dance. At one point during its coverage the BBC asked whether it was now time 'to draw a line under [it] and move on'? Move on, or is it a call for a move back to business as usual? After all why would the BBC ask this question in the first place? It's outrageous that with only the surface of Murdoch's criminal empire's connection to political power scratched that the BBC thought it worthwhile to ask this question.

What it reveals of course is that the BBC's relationship with corporate power is just as corrupt as that of the political class and desperate to get back to the traditional relationship between the rulers and the ruled. The BBC is well aware that this is yet another scandal that further undermines the legitimacy of government.

Those pesky Downing Street emails

Timing is everything with these events, spread as they are over a period of at least nine

years and made all the more complex by the revolving door relationship between the media and the political class. Thus who knew what and when is critical to assigning responsibility/culpability for this scandal.

Specifically, did David Cameron know about Andy Coulson's involvement with the hacking/bribery scandal when he hired him?

One event did emerge yesterday that potentially shone a light on the hidden relationship between News Corp, via Andy Coulson and the Met police's commissioner Sir Paul Stephenson and 10 Downing Street. Thus every effort had to be expended to make sure that there was no connection between Cameron and News Corp, though in doing so, they have revealed a direct connection to Downing Street and Cameron's posse of advisors:

"The Met had hired the paper's former deputy editor Wallis for PR work but the home affairs select committee was told of the plan to keep it secret from Mr Cameron. An email exchange released by Downing Street reveals how Mr Yates offered to have a conversation in the margins before Mr Llewellyn replied: 'I don't think it would really be appropriate for the PM, or anyone else at No.10, to discuss this issue with you and would be grateful if it were not raised please.' — '[John Yates was told to keep Neil Wallis secret from David Cameron](#)', Metro 19 July 2011

In fact, within the emails released by 10 Downing Street, the issue is not actually mentioned at all, it's all 'nudge-nudge, wink-wink'. What emerges is that the 'issue' itself should not be committed to print as it would reveal a direct connection between Cameron and News Corp's criminal activities. But why keep it secret? This from the *Guardian*:

Sir Paul Stephenson, the outgoing Metropolitan police commissioner, has told MPs he was advised by a senior Downing Street official not to risk "compromising" the prime minister by disclosing to him information related to the phone-hacking scandal.

"Stephenson said he was unable to name the No 10 aide but that outgoing Met assistant commissioner, John Yates, who also resigned over the phone-hacking scandal, would know. Yates later told the same home affairs select committee that it was No 10 chief of staff Ed Llewellyn who turned down his offer to brief Downing Street on the "nuances" of the hacking investigation after the New York Times story in September 2010.

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To the surprise of MPs, he [Sir Paul Stephenson] added: "Actually a senior official at No 10 guided us that actually we should not compromise the prime minister, and it seems to me to be entirely sensible." — '[Paul Stephenson: No 10 aide warned me not to compromise Cameron](#)', The Guardian , 19 July 2011.

'Nuances'? 'Guided us'? You see what I'm getting at here, it's 'plausible deniability' all round. 10 Downing Street knew that News Corp was conducting criminal activities and colluding with the Met police and employing people with a direct connection to News Corp's criminal enterprise and yet did nothing about it, more concerned with 'protecting the pm' (because of his hiring of Andy Coulson) than with investigating the criminal actions of News Corp and the police, even colluding with the man in charge of the investigation, John Yates to make sure the scandal was hidden, at least in recorded form from Cameron.

It gets worse. At yesterday's committee meeting with Stephenson it was revealed that Stephenson tried to get the *Guardian* to halt its investigations into the scandal two years ago:

Stephenson was also asked about a meeting he had with the *Guardian* in December 2009 to try to persuade the newspaper that its coverage of phone hacking was exaggerated and incorrect.

Asked whether he had looked back "over the evidence and over the case" before going to see them and tell them they were getting it wrong, he said: "I am the commissioner of the Met, I have many people assisting me and I have senior grade chief constables like Mr Yates. Mr Yates gave me assurances there was nothing new to the *Guardian* article. I think I have a right to rely on those assurances."

He went to the *Guardian* because the paper continued to run the campaign, he said – something for which he has now acknowledged "we should be grateful".

He denied he had taken advice from Wallis – who he said had not worked directly for him as an adviser – before the *Guardian* meeting. — (ibid)

It's a self-referential system with Yates backing Stephenson and Stephenson backing Yates, there is no independent evidence except perhaps these crucial Downing street emails that indicate the complete opposite, namely that at the highest levels there was collusion between Downing Street and Commissioner Stephenson and deputy Commissioner Yates to cover up Coulson's involvement in criminal activities.

And remember that this relationship between transnational corporate power and the political class is not new, it extends back thirty-two years, to 1979 and the election of the Thatcher government, the Dirty Digger's first triumph in shaping the British political process, a process consummated with the eventual election of the Labour government in 1997 when Murdoch switched sides and backed Labour and its corporatist agenda.

The question is: will this story be pursued to its conclusion by a corporate/state press that seems more concerned with 'drawing a line' under the events and is most definitely *not* interested in pursuing the incestuous and utterly corrupt relationship between the media, the police and the state.

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