UNELECTED

THE INSIDIOUS INFLUENCE OF RUPERT MURDOCH AT THE HEART OF GOVERNMENT
FOR MANY YEARS, RUPERT MURDOCH’S NEWS UK HAS BEEN RIDDLE WITH CRIMINALITY.

ILLEGALITY AND COVER-UP HAS GONE ON FOR DECADES.

YOU PROBABLY ALREADY KNOW ABOUT THE PHONE HACKING SCANDAL - THE EDITOR WHO WAS JAILED, THE LEVESON INQUIRY, AND THE PARLIAMENTARY SELECT COMMITTEES.

REMEMBER WHEN TOM WATSON MP COMPARED MURDOCH’S PUBLISHER NEWS INTERNATIONAL TO THE MAFIA – TO HIS SON JAMES’ FACE?

BUT WHAT IS NOT WIDELY KNOWN, IS THAT SINCE THE PHONE HACKING SCANDAL ERUPTED, NEW, DARKER REVELATIONS HAVE EMERGED.

GO DOWN TO THE HIGH COURT, AND LISTEN TO ALLEGATIONS MADE IN THE ESTIMATED £500 MILLION PHONE HACKING LITIGATION, WHICH IS SO HUGE IN ITSELF, THAT IT’S STILL GOING ON, EVEN AFTER A DECADE.

THE EVIDENCE WILL MAKE YOUR TOES CURL, INCLUDING ALLEGATIONS ABOUT:

- THE SCALE OF CRIMES ALLEGEDLY COMMITTED (THOUSANDS).
- THE NUMBER OF SUSPECTS AND VICTIMS INVOLVED (THOUSANDS).
- THE EXTENSIVE TIMELINE OVER WHICH ALLEGED CRIMINALITY SPANNED (DECADES)
- REPEATED, SYSTEMATIC NATURE OF THE ALLEGED ILLEGALITY.
- THE Secrecy and Cover Ups. (TOM WATSON CALLED IT ‘OMERTA.’)

A CORPORATION IN WHICH ILLEGALITY WAS ALLEGEDLY SECOND NATURE.

THE REASON MOST PEOPLE DON’T KNOW ABOUT THIS BOMB SHELL, HUGELY SIGNIFICANT LITIGATION IS THAT THE MAINSTREAM PAPERS (OTHER THAN THE GUARDIAN AND BBC) VERY OCCASIONALLY WON’T WRITE A SINGLE WORD ABOUT IT.

BUT THERE’S A MORE SINISTER TWIST.

I DON’T KNOW OF ANY OTHER OUTFIT IN THE UK - WHICH IS SAID TO BE INVOLVED IN THIS LEVEL OF ILLEGALITY - WITH DIRECT, FREGUENT ACCESS TO THE PRIME MINISTER.

AFTER THE PHONE HACKING SCANDAL IN 2011, MANY OF US ASSUMED THAT THE POLITICIANS WOULD RUN FOR COVER, AND THAT MURDOCH’S PULL IN THE CORRIDORS OF POWER WOULD BE DIMINISHED.

BUT THIS REPORT BY HACKED OFF, ENTITLED ‘UNELECTED: THE INSIDIOUS INFLUENCE OF RUPERT MURDOCH AT THE HEART OF GOVERNMENT’, REVEALS THE EXACT OPPOSITE.

WITHIN 72 HOURS OF BEING ELECTED A YEAR AGO, BORIS JOHNSON WAS ON A POW-WOW WITH HIS UNELECTED BOSS OF BOSSES.

RUPERT MURDOCH HAS HAD FIVE FACE-TO-FACE MEETINGS WITH GOVERNMENT IN THE LAST TWO YEARS, PERSONALLY.

SURE, THE WHEELER-DEALING THESE DAYS IS NOT AS BRAZEN AS IT USED TO BE, WHEN HIS CHIEF EXECUTIVE REBEKAH BROOKS WAS DISCO DANCING AROUND NUMBER TEN, WITH DAVID CAMERON.

THE CONTACT HAS GONE A BIT MORE UNDERGROUND.

BUT BEHIND CLOSED DOORS, THERE WERE STILL 206 MEETINGS BETWEEN MURDOCH INTERESTS AND GOVERNMENT DURING 2018 – 19.

I WORKED AT THE NEWS OF THE WORLD, AND FREELANCED FOR THE SUN, FOR YEARS – IRONICALLY AS A CRIME REPORTER.

THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT MURDOCH HAS MANY VIRTUES: HE PROVIDES JOBS. HE PAYS HIS JOURNALISTS WELL, WHICH IS IMPORTANT IN THIS NOTORIOUSLY ROUGH-AND-TUMBLE GAME.

BREAKING BIG, EXCLUSIVE STORIES STILL TOPS THE NEWS LIST, DESPITE THE TREND TO CUT ‘N’ PASTE THE WORK OF OTHERS, OR OPINIONATE ON IT. (BECAUSE PAPER TALK IS CHEAP.)

THE SUN STILL SPENDS MONEY ON EDITORIAL – READ THE GUARDIAN OR THE INDEPENDENT TO FIND OUT WHAT SHOE-STRING JOURNALISM LOOKS LIKE.

MANY REPORTERS AT THE NOTW AND THE SUN WERE/ARE HARDWORKING, REASONABLE PEOPLE WHO WANT TO GET ON, AND PAY THEIR RENT/MORTGAGE.

BUT MURDOCH HAS GOT MANY DANGEROUS VICES, TOO.

HIS POOR CHOICE IN EDITORS AND MANAGERS, WHO BLINDLY SUCK-UP TO HIM.

HIS COMPANIES EMPLOYED RUTHLESS BULLIES AND LIARS, DESTROYERS OF LIVES, PRACTITIONERS OF BLACKMAIL MODEL JOURNALISM, AND THE FOCUS OF SOME SERIOUSLY ‘ON TOP’ ALLEGATIONS (TO USE THE CRIMINAL VERNACULAR) IN THE HIGH COURT, STRAIGHT TALKERS THEY ARE NOT, THEY SERVE MURDOCH, AND NOT THE COMMON GOOD.

THE SAME OLD FACES ARE STILL IN CHARGE AT NEWS UK’S BABY SHARD HQ. (E.G. CEO REBEKAH BROOKS, SUN EDITOR VICTORIA NEWTON.)

MANY THAT ARE PROHIBITED FROM WORKING FRONT-OF-HOUSE HAVE NOW STEPPED-BACK INTO PR, FROM WHERE THEY FEED THE PAPERS WITH FAKE NEWS, BASED ON MONKEYED-UP POLLING DATA.

FOOT SOLDIERS ARE KEPT ON THE PAYROLL, SO THEY DON’T BREAK RANKS.

IF RUPERT, 89, LIVES AS LONG AS HIS MUM (SHE DIED AGED 103), HE’S GOT ANOTHER 14 YEARS LEFT IN HIM. SOURCES, CLOSE TO THE TOP, TELL ME HE WANTS TO CARRY-ON WORKING.

THAT MEANS A WHOLE LOAD MORE MEETINGS – BASED ON THE FINDINGS OF THIS REPORT – WITH THE GOVERNMENT THAT YOU PAY FOR, BUT HE TELLS WHAT TO DO.

GRAHAM JOHNSON IS THE EDITOR OF BYLINE INVESTIGATES AND THE AUTHOR OF HACK: SEX, DRUGS, AND SCANDAL FROM INSIDE THE TABLOID JUNGLE.

FOREWORD: GRAHAM JOHNSON
Through a series of six revealing and alarming findings, this publication sets out hacked off research exposing the extent of Rupert Murdoch’s access to the UK government over the calendar years 2018 & 2019, as well as the extraordinary number of British citizens Mr Murdoch reaches through his media interests in the UK.

These are followed by three findings which expose how close the Johnson administration and Mr Murdoch became in the first six months of the Johnson administration alone.

The government does not disclose what is discussed at meetings with Mr Murdoch.
Over 2018 and 2019, employees of Murdoch’s News UK publisher met with Government Ministers or their advisors a staggering 206 times. This includes editors and executives working for The Times, Sunday Times, Sun and Sun on Sunday newspapers.

The fact that these meetings happen is recorded - but neither the minutes, nor the details of what was discussed, are published.

Part 1 of the Leveson Report recommended that the detail of any media policy matters discussed at these meetings should be published, but the government refused to accept his recommendation.

Instead, Mr Murdoch’s employees are able to lobby the Government for favours - on media policy, but also in other policy areas - in secrecy.

206 meetings between Murdoch-owned company employees and representatives in that time works out at an average of 2.8 meetings every sitting week.

In comparison, the Cabinet usually only meet once per week.

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UNELECTED: THE INSIDIOUS INFLUENCE OF
RUPERT MURDOCH AT THE HEART OF GOVERNMENT

How many times a week Murdoch reps meet with the Government when Parliament is in session

On average there were 2.8 meetings between representatives and employees of Murdoch-owned companies and Government Ministers and advisors for every week Parliament sat 2018-19.
Across 2018 and 2019, Mr Murdoch met personally with Boris Johnson three times, former Chancellor Sajid Javid once, and Michael Gove as Environment Secretary once.

Of the meetings between Murdoch and Johnson, one dates from when Mr Johnson was Foreign Secretary and two were after he became Prime Minister. Conservative Party Chairman James Cleverly was also present for one such meeting.

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**UNELECTED: THE INSIDIOUS INFLUENCE OF RUPERT MURDOCH AT THE HEART OF GOVERNMENT**

**HOW MANY MEETINGS RUPERT MURDOCH PERSONALLY HAD WITH THE GOVERNMENT IN THE LAST 2 YEARS**

Rupert Murdoch personally met with Government Ministers on five occasions in 2018 and 2019, including three occasions with Boris Johnson.
MORE PEOPLE READ MURDOCH’S NEWSPAPERS TODAY THAN EVER BEFORE - THEY ARE JUST READING THEM IN DIFFERENT WAYS.

ALTHOUGH PHYSICAL NEWSPAPER CIRCULATIONS HAVE FALLEN IN RECENT YEARS, ONLINE READERSHIPS HAVE INCREASED SIGNIFICANTLY.

THE RESULT IS THAT MURDOCH’S NEWS PUBLISHERS REACH 72% OF THE ADULT POPULATION EVERY MONTH - ACROSS PRINT NEWSPAPERS AND THE INTERNET ON COMPUTERS AND MOBILES.

TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY ARE CRITICAL WHEN ONE MAN’S MEDIA EMPIRE HAS SUCH EXTRAORDINARY REACH.
For all his access to 10 Downing Street and his employees’ familiarity with the corridors of power, Mr Murdoch won fewer votes at the last General Election than Count Binface’s campaign to unseat the Prime Minister.

Mr Murdoch is not accountable to the British public. He cannot be voted out of office. Yet he continues to benefit from an unhealthily close relationship with senior lawmakers.

As long as the Prime Minister and the Government continue to meet with him and his representatives in secrecy, the integrity of our democracy will be under threat.
Leveson Part Two was established to investigate evidence of corruption in the police and the press and of further wrongdoing, and the hacking cover-up. It was also intended to recommend reforms to prevent the hacking scandal from repeating, and the culture of illegality at some newspaper titles from returning.

All of the newspapers within the Murdoch stable would have had questions to answer. After years of stating and restating their commitment to completing the Inquiry, the Government announced in 2016 that it would consult on whether the Inquiry should be completed.

The Government then announced it would cancel the Inquiry, and implied that a majority of respondents to the consultation calling for it to be completed. Inquiry Chair Sir Brian Leveson, the National Union of Journalists and leading free speech advocates like Article 19 were among those calling for it to be completed. Mr Murdoch’s newspapers, who would have been the subject of investigation, opposed it.

In 2018, the Government cancelled Leveson Part Two despite a majority of respondents to their own consultation calling for it to be completed. Inquiry Chair Sir Brian Leveson, the National Union of Journalists and leading free speech advocates like Article 19 were among those calling for it to be completed. Mr Murdoch’s newspapers, who would have been the subject of investigation, opposed it.

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It later emerged that 221,396 respondents were in favour of completing the Inquiry, which was in fact a majority of over a hundred thousand, while Sir Brian Leveson was clear it should be finished and said he “fundamentally disagreed” with the decision to cancel. The Government were accused of giving a misleading picture of Sir Brian Leveson’s position, and of the balance of public responses.

Mr Murdoch’s newspapers were among the minority calling for cancellation.
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS: MURDOCH AND THE GOVERNMENT

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**Unelected: The Insidious Influence of Rupert Murdoch at the Heart of Government**

**206 Meetings Between Murdoch Interests and the Government 2018-2019**
A total of 206 meetings took place between staff at Murdoch newspapers and government ministers and advisors, official data shows.

**How Many Times a Week Murdoch Reps Meet with the Government When Parliament is in Session**
On average there were 2.8 meetings between representatives and employees of Murdoch-owned companies and Government Ministers and advisors for every week Parliament sat 2018-19.

**How Many Meetings Rupert Murdoch Personally Had with the Government in the Last 2 Years**
Rupert Murdoch personally met with Government Ministers on five occasions in 2018 and 2019, including three occasions with Boris Johnson.

**Proportion of UK Adults Murdoch Reaches Through His Newspapers and News Websites Every Month**
Exact figure of 72% is higher than the turnout in most General Elections.

**How Many Votes Mr Murdoch Won at the Last Election**

**Citizens Ignored by the Government When Leveson Pt 2 Was Cancelled to Let Murdoch Papers Off the Hook**
In 2018, the Government cancelled Leveson Part 2 despite a majority of respondents to their own consultation calling for it to be completed. Inquiry Chair Sir Brian Leveson, the National Union of Journalists and leading free speech advocates like Article 19 were among those calling for it to be completed. Mr Murdoch’s newspapers, who would have been the subject of investigation, opposed it.
MURDOCH AND JOHNSON GOVT

MURDOCH COMPANY STAFF AND THE GOVERNMENT PACKED AT LEAST 41 MEETINGS INTO THE FIRST SIX MONTHS OF JOHNSON’S TIME AS PRIME MINISTER, DESPITE A GENERAL ELECTION TAKING PLACE OVER THAT TIME.

PART TWO: MURDOCH AND JOHNSON

UNELECTED: THE INSIDIOUS INFLUENCE OF
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MEETINGS BETWEEN MURDOCH PEOPLE AND JOHNSON’S GOVERNMENT IN HIS FIRST SIX MONTHS AS PM

At least 41 meetings took place between Murdoch company employees and the Government in the first six months after Boris Johnson became Prime Minister.
In just the first six months that Johnson was Prime Minister, Mr Murdoch met three times with the Government.

The minutes of those meetings have never been published.
IT TOOK ONLY THREE DAYS FOR MR JOHNSON AND MR MURDOCH TO MEET AFTER THE 2019 GENERAL ELECTION RESULT WAS ANNOUNCED, AT WHAT IS RECORDED AS A “SOCIAL” OCCASION.

NO FURTHER DETAILS, OR RECORD OF THE DISCUSSION, HAVE BEEN DISCLOSED.
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MEETINGS BETWEEN MURDOCH AND
THE GOVERNMENT IN JOHNSON’S FIRST
SIX MONTHS AS PM
Murdoch met with Johnson twice in his first six months as Prime Minister, and once with former Chancellor Sajid Javid.

HOURS PASSED AFTER THE ELECTION RESULT
WAS ANNOUNCED BEFORE MURDOCH
AND JOHNSON MET
The 2019 General Election result was confirmed on Friday December 13th. The Prime Minister met with Rupert Murdoch only three days later.
Research by Rebecca Lawson on behalf of the Hacked Off Campaign

Design by Mr Gresty

These findings are based on government transparency data which can be downloaded from Gov.UK, and is reproduced here. News UK reach is sourced here.