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How did Rupert Murdoch perform? Experts give their verdict

London, England (CNN) – News Corp. founder Rupert Murdoch, his son James and former News International chief executive Rebekah Brooks went before lawmakers Tuesday to answer questions about the phone hacking scandal that has gripped the UK and beyond.

While they were not under oath, the select committee appearance was an opportunity to put three of the company's most powerful players - from the time of the hacking scandal -- on the spot.

So, did politicians draw blood from what has been called the "Wapping Three?" -- a reference to the company's London base. Three experts give their verdict and explain what it means for the beleaguered organization.

THE LAWYER

Media law expert Geoffrey Robertson is a founder and head of Doughty Street Chambers, the UK's leading human rights practice. He has argued many landmark cases in media law and has represented, among others, Salman Rushdie, Mike Tyson and Julian Assange.

On the Murdoch's approach: "The strategy of the Murdochs was clearly to let James do all the talking."

On the politicians's line of questioning: "The select committee did badly in cross-examination, they were feckless, they didn't get at much truth."

On James Murdoch admitting to paying convicted private detective Glen Mulcaire's legal fees: "Another interesting (question), which had both Murdochs on the run, asked by (MP) Paul Farrelly was, 'Have you paid Glen Mulcaire's legal fees?' Well, the Murdochs didn't know where to look. It was obvious they had paid them."

[The phone hacking scandal: The figures at the center of it](#)

On Murdoch's response to being asked if NOTW hacked 9/11 victims' relatives phones: "Their strategy today, Rupert Murdoch's strategy was to say: I saw no evil, I heard no evil. Everyone lied to me. I was kept in the dark. This is just 1% of my vast corporation. I'm not responsible. Everyone else is responsible.

"The question becomes now, did Glen Mulcaire -- who hacked into the relatives' phones of sons killed in Afghanistan, killed in terrorist operations -- it would seem at this time, logically, he might well have hacked into the 9/11 relatives, or at least the British relatives or 9/11 (victims) to get a grief story -- not a public interest story -- but a grief story."

THE POLITICAL EXPERT

Broadcaster Michael Cockerell is the British Broadcasting Corporation's most established political documentary maker. Starting as a reporter on the flagship current affairs program, Panorama, he now specializes in in-depth portraits of the powerbrokers in UK politics.

On politicians getting their own back: "There's a huge level and well of resentment among British MPs against the media (following the expenses scandal broken by British daily newspaper The Daily Telegraph). This was a chance for them to get their pound of flesh, to get their own back, to get revenge."

On select committees: "The problem with select committees is that it is quite difficult to nail people, partly because there are 12 members or more, which makes it difficult follow a line of questioning.

On how the Murdochs fared: "... It was a defensive display. I don't think the MPs really managed to nail the Murdochs. On the other hand I do (think) that the rather imperial approach that Murdoch has ... the Sun King that successive British prime ministers have worshipped, was showing signs of mortality."

On Rebekah Brooks: "Rebekah Brooks knows more than anyone. She knows where the bodies are buried. She was editor of The News of the World when Andy Coulson was her deputy. She then became editor of the Sun, she then became chief executive of News International. So she knows how journalism works.

[Hacking row: Who is Rebecca Brooks?](#)

On the Murdochs' corporate speak: "There has been an extraordinary disconnect going on for the past two and a half hours in terms of what we know of journalism, what we know of tabloid journalism, and this rather corporate speak that's been going on."

"There was no mention in this meeting today of how journalism works on the front line and how it works as far as the editor is concerned --

what the editor really knows of his or her staff is up to. Those kind of questions will need to be asked of Rebekah Brooks but she may say that because she has been arrested, that because there is an ongoing police investigation that she can't answer them as fully as she would like."

THE CORPORATE EXPERT

Allyson L. Stewart-Allen is an international marketing and corporate diplomacy expert. She is the founder and director of International Marketing Partners a consultancy specializing in corporate diplomacy and transatlantic business.

On how the Murdochs came across: "If you look at all of the comments they made over the course of the past three hours, what comes out loud and clear to me are two executives who appear profoundly out of touch."

On News International using private investigators: "Some of the statements that we heard earlier (from Rupert Murdoch) ... "All news organizations use private investigators," as if that legitimizes the practice. "No, I'm not responsible for the fiasco. I trusted people." Well, excuse me, the chief executive of a company is responsible, so Mr. Murdoch, both Mr. Murdochs, need to own what has happened in their organization. The culture is clearly broken."

On enforcing good corporate governance: "It's one of the things that's interesting about this situation -- if you think about Mrs. Brooks' history, she is born and bred within the stable of News International and so in terms of promulgating a culture that is abiding by these codes of ethics we've heard about countless times over the past few hours ... there are processes, there are codes of conduct, there are rules but interestingly where has the enforcement actually been made to make sure those rules are actually abided by by senior leaders in this business and from what I've heard today I can't actually say that the company is showing evidence of that."

On whether they've contained the infection: "I think that there's still many more weeks to run of this. It's so monumental: the scale, the scope. They hope that by retiring the News of the World brand, that the infection has been contained. I believe it's much more widespread - it perhaps is an industry-wide practice."

On whether the News Corp. can come back from the scandal: "They can come back from this but it will take 20 years, 20 years of good practice."

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