

Ousted Murdoch Deputy Arrested In Scandal

LONDON (AP) — An intensifying voicemail hacking and police bribery scandal cut closer than ever to Rupert Murdoch and Scotland Yard on Sunday with the arrest of the media magnate's former British newspaper chief and the resignation of London's police commissioner.

Though the former executive, Rebekah Brooks, and the police chief, Paul Stephenson, have denied wrongdoing, both developments are ominous not only for Murdoch's News Corp., but for a British power structure that nurtured a cozy relationship with his papers for years.

Brooks, the ultimate social and political insider, dined at Christmas with Prime Minister David Cameron. His Conservative-led government is now facing increasing questions about its relationship with Murdoch's media empire.

The arrest of the 43-year-old Brooks, often described as a surrogate daughter to the 80-year-old Murdoch, brought the British police investigations into the media baron's inner circle for the first time. It raises the possibility that Murdoch's old friend Les Hinton, who resigned Friday as publisher of *The Wall Street Journal*, or his 38-year-old son and heir apparent, James, could be next.

Until her resignation Friday, Brooks was the defiant chief executive of News International, Murdoch's British newspaper arm, whose *News of the World* tabloid stands accused of hacking into the phones of celebrities, politicians, other journalists and even murder victims. In the tumultuous last two weeks, she had kept her job even as Murdoch shut down the 168-year-old *News of the World* and tossed 200 other journalists out of work.

Texas Governor Mulls 2012 White House Bid

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — Should Rick Perry conclude that voter discontent has left him an opening to enter the presidential race, the longtime Texas governor would be among the GOP field's most conservative candidates.

Primary voters would get a skilled politician with TV anchorman looks, a Southern preacher's oratory and a cowboy's swagger, matched by a disarming candor and sense of humor. The former cotton farmer from the village of Paint Creek in West Texas has never lost an election in nearly three decades as a politician.

What they wouldn't get is a candidate whose politics are positioned to unite a Republican electorate that stretches from moderate pro-business fiscal conservatives to evangelical social conservatives, with the tea party falling somewhere along the spectrum.

"Texans, God love them, have that bigger-than-life persona about politics and that doesn't necessarily play everywhere," said Christopher Nicholas, a Republican political consultant who has worked extensively in the Northeast and Midwest. "I haven't heard a lot of Republicans call Social Security a disease."

Perry has. He branded Social Security and other New Deal programs "the second big step in the march of socialism," according to a book published last year. The "first step" was a national income tax, which he has said stands alongside the direct election of U.S. senators as a major mistake among the amendments to the U.S. Constitution.

Chemotherapy Lets Chavez Keep Tight Control

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — In his monthlong fight against cancer, Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez has placed utmost importance on secrecy, carefully offering only scraps of information about his condition.

Now, as he begins planned chemotherapy in Cuba, Chavez appears to have found the perfect place where he can tightly guard details of his illness and keep the prying eyes of the news media far away.

The Venezuelan leader first underwent surgery in the island nation on June 20 to remove a cancerous tumor from his pelvic region. He returned Saturday night, saying he would be starting a "second phase of treatment."

Typical of the cone of silence Chavez has lowered over his health problems, he hasn't said how long the chemotherapy is likely to last, and there was no immediate confirmation from either Cuba or Venezuela that the treatments had in fact begun.

Chavez, 56, had said he would begin the treatments in Havana on Sunday to ensure cancer cells don't reappear. He has also said he has been open about the details of his medical condition.

NASA's Elite Astronaut Corps Shrinking Away

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — NASA's mighty astronaut corps has become a shadow of what it once was. And it's only going to get smaller.

It's down to 60 from an all-time high of 149 just a decade ago, with more departures coming once Atlantis returns this week from the very last space shuttle voyage.

With no replacement on the horizon for the shuttle, astronauts are bailing fast, even though the International Space Station will need crews for at least another decade.

The commander of Discovery's last flight back in March, Steven Lindsey? Gone to a company whose proposed commercial spacecraft resembles a mini-shuttle; his last day at NASA was Friday.

The skipper of Endeavour's last mission in May, Mark Kelly? Retiring in another few months to write a memoir with his wounded congresswoman wife, Gabrielle Giffords.

'Harry Potter' Takes Down Record \$168.6M

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The boy wizard has vanquished the dark knight and a band of pirates with a record-setting magic act at both the domestic and international box office.

Warner Bros. estimates that "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2" took in \$168.6 million domestically from Friday to Sunday. That beats the previous best opening weekend of \$158.4 million, also held by Warner Bros. for 2008's Batman blockbuster "The Dark Knight."

Overseas, the film added \$307 million in 59 countries since it began rolling out Wednesday, topping the previous best international debut of \$260.4 million set in May by Disney's "Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides."

International results for "Deathly Hallows: Part 2" included record openings in Great Britain at \$36.6 million and Australia at \$26.7 million, according to Warner Bros.

Worldwide, "Deathly Hallows: Part 2" topped \$475 million in a matter of days, putting it on course to become the franchise's first billion-dollar worldwide hit.

Cordray Tabbed For Consumer Post

BY JIM KUHNHENN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Reigniting a partisan fight over banking regulations, President Barack Obama intends to nominate former Ohio Attorney General Richard Cordray to lead a consumer protection bureau that was a central feature of a law overhauling the rules that govern the financial sector.

Obama plans to announce the nomination formally on Monday, the White House said Sunday. Republicans immediately threatened to block Cordray's Senate confirmation.

In choosing Cordray, Obama bypassed Elizabeth Warren, a favorite of consumer groups, who has been assembling the agency as a special adviser to the White House and to Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner.

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau will officially begin its oversight and regulatory work on July 21. Its role is to be a government watchdog

over mortgages, credit cards and other forms of lending.

"Richard Cordray has spent his career advocating for middle-class families, from his tenure as Ohio's attorney general, to his most recent role as heading up the enforcement division at the CFPB and looking out for ordinary people in our financial system," Obama said in a statement.

Sen. Tim Johnson, D-S.D., chairman of the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs, promised Sunday, "I will move Mr. Cordray's nomination forward in the Banking Committee as quickly as possible."

Warren, who is considered the architect of the consumer bureau, faced stiff Republican opposition in the Senate and would have had a difficult time winning confirmation.

The financial industry lined up against Warren.



Cordray

Bankers said a Warren-run agency would restrict new products just when companies are seeking to replace profits squeezed by the new financial rules.

Sen. Richard Shelby of Alabama, the top Republican on the Banking committee, said Republicans would block Cordray as well unless Obama seeks changes in the agency.

Cordray's elevation from enforcement chief to director raises a separate concern for the industry: Some fear the agency will launch early enforcement actions designed to raise its public profile. Treasury officials said that's unlikely, because the agency's enforcement division still is making key decisions about policy and procedure.

Cordray, 52, is considered a Warren ally and has been working with her as director of enforcement for the agency.

"He will make a stellar director," Warren said of Cordray.



Attorney Jose Baez escorts Casey Anthony, as she leaves the Orange County Corrections Facility on Sunday in Orlando, Fla.

Anthony Faces Hurdles After Jail Release

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) — This is what freedom looks like for Casey Anthony: \$537.68 from her jail account, no job, estranged parents, a criminal record, lawsuits pending against her and the scorn of multitudes who think she got away with murder.

She quickly gave reporters the slip after walking out of jail Sunday, but whatever life she manages to build for herself will be lived under a media microscope and the shadow of countless threats.

Experts who have helped other notorious defendants through rough times say she will have opportunities as well, but it won't be easy for the

25-year-old, who was found not guilty of killing her 2-year-old daughter, Caylee, but convicted of lying to investigators.

With her hair in a bun, Casey Anthony walked out the front door of an Orlando-area jail shortly after midnight, wearing a pink T-shirt, blue jeans and sneakers, and escorted by sheriff's deputies holding semi-automatic rifles. Protesters shouted "baby killer" and "you suck" as she climbed into an SUV.

The vehicle sped away and darted into a parking garage at a building where one of her attorneys has offices. Where she went next is unknown.

International AIDS Summit Opens In Rome

ROME (AP) — The head of the United Nations AIDS program called Sunday for an increase in access to drugs that help treat or prevent the spread of the disease, saying it is "morally wrong" to keep millions of people off lifesaving medication.

Michael Sidibe, executive director of UNAIDS, said the gap in access to HIV treatment should be closed both within and between countries.

Sidibe called for better delivery on the ground, a reduction in the number of years it now takes to turn scientific discoveries into actual progress for the poor, and increased cooperation among states, pharmaceutical companies and international organizations. "We must use innovation to overcome social division and inequity," he said at the opening of an international AIDS conference in Rome.

In Africa, the hardest hit continent, 6.6 million people are now on AIDS medication, but 9 million people eligible for treatment are on waiting lists, according to the World Health Organization. In the United States, many state assistance programs that help people access AIDS medications also have waiting lists.

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By Bob Karolevitz

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