

Britain's Broken System

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It is a truth universally acknowledged that the system is broken. In so many ways, it doesn't work anymore. But perhaps the most blatant proof of all is from the IOPC - until this year called the IPCC; the body meant to be overseeing police conduct.

Back in 2015, on the 9th of September, 86 year old Deniz Corday of Walton-on-Thames, in the safe and leafy county of Surrey, was woken by armed police smashing down his front door. His house was searched and he was arrested, handcuffed and dragged to Woking police station.

There he was told that he was accused of historical sexual behaviour with two men, dating back many decades.

What he was NOT told was that neither of the two men had made any allegations. More than that, at the same time as Deniz was being arrested, the two men were woken by other armed officers, asking them, for the first time, whether Deniz had abused them. Both men denied the absurd claims and sent the officers away with fleas in their ears.

Deniz was still interviewed - after Surrey Police knew the allegations were false. He was released on bail, with strict conditions that he could not contact either man - the "victims" who had denied being victims.

Eventually the conditions were dropped. Both men described the horror of the experience - one, a paraplegic, had been rushed to hospital after the police invasion and, some weeks later, died, aged 56. At the Coroner's Inquest the police involvement was not mentioned.

But when I complained to the IOPC about the police behaviour towards Deniz, they sent the complaint back to Surrey Police, who, as expected, rejected it because it was not Deniz who had complained. He, by then, had also died. They were not interested in investigating whether Surrey Police officers had broken the law and abused Corday's Human Rights - because it was not him who had made the complaint. It was his friend, myself, and I was not even related to him.

So I appealed to the IOPC. Surely the body set up to examine police conduct would investigate whether officers were breaking the law?

No. They, too, said I did not "fit the criteria for a complainant as per the Police Reform Act 2002".

So, if I complained that armed police had shot and murdered several children, my complaint would be rejected without investigation because I was not a parent or relative of the dead.

No wonder Hillsborough took so long to emerge. But the IPCC, now the IOPC, was set up to avoid such circumstances happening again.

I am not claiming Surrey Police broke the law. I have no idea who made the false claims or why. I'm sure they will turn out to have been "anonymous". But I do believe these extraordinary actions require examination by an independent panel. When bodies become experts in avoiding doing their duty, we, as a society, are in real trouble.

Allowing police to get away with this kind of behaviour is shocking. Using such excuses to avoid examining this kind of behaviour is even more shocking. Another way meant to supervise police behaviour, the Police and Crime Commissioners, has proved to be a disaster. That was set up by the then Home Secretary, Theresa May, an expert in avoiding blame. Draw your own conclusions.