

PHILIP COLLINS

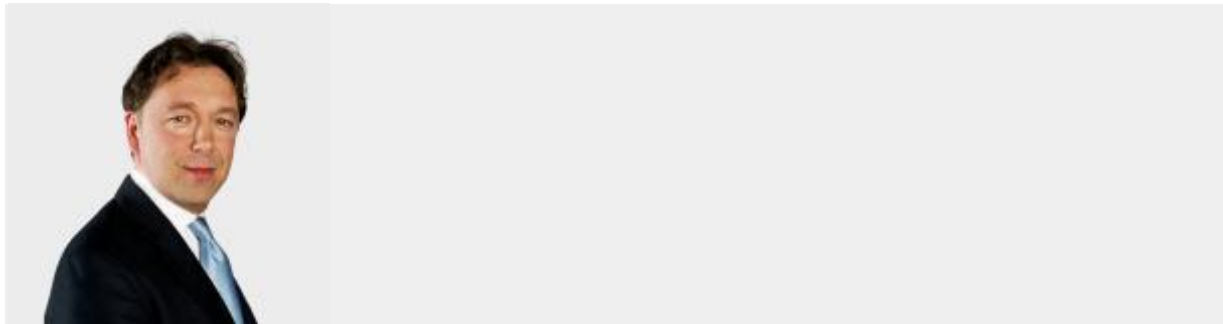
December 21 2017, 5:00pm, the times

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/the-police-must-stop-meddling-in-politics-hl7wtlrnm>

The police must stop meddling in politics

philip collins

The conduct of retired officers in the downfall of Damian Green should alarm everyone who believes in democracy



The prime minister became a politician of substance with a speech about the police. In May 2014 Theresa May, then home secretary, told the Police Federation, the profession's trade union, that successive scandals had called the legitimacy of British policing into question. As she reflects on the sacking of her oldest friend and confidant in politics, Damian Green, she might usefully read it again. When the dust settles on the departure of Mr Green, the role of the police in a democracy will be the issue from this affair that counts.

Mr Green's sacking was inevitable. Two reports, one by the Cabinet Office and one by the independent adviser on ministers' interests, concluded that by making "inaccurate and misleading" statements about the contents of his computer in 2008, Mr Green had clearly breached the ministerial code. He has not been sacked for watching pornography and he has not been sacked for the separate allegations against him of sexual harassment. Mr Green has been sacked because he failed to tell the truth and that must be the correct verdict. There is no point to a ministerial code if there is no penalty for breaching it.

The police, though, have some questions of their own to answer because their conduct has been odd from the beginning of this case. In November 2008, police turned up to search Mr Green's House of Commons office even though they had no warrant to do so. The pretext was that Mr Green, a shadow minister, had received leaked documents from the Home Office. Mr Green was then arrested on suspicion of "aiding and abetting misconduct in public office". The allegation stuttered through the justice system until April 2009 when the Crown Prosecution Service announced that it would bring no case, neither against Mr Green nor against the junior civil servant who had been leaking documents.



LEADING ARTICLE

Shuffle the Deck

Theresa May should respond to the loss of Damian Green by creating a government that wants to be there

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In evidence submitted to the Leveson inquiry, Bob Quick, the former assistant commissioner of the Metropolitan Police who oversaw the raid on Mr Green's office, described the images found on the computer as "extreme". When Mr Green denied knowing about the images, Neil Lewis, a police IT specialist who had inspected Mr Green's computer, said that although the images were not extreme the internet history on the device showed that they had been viewed extensively.

Allies of Mr Green are, at least in private, trying out some wild notions of a conspiracy organised by Mr Quick against a politician who was a shadow Home Office minister and then police minister in government. That is all rather fanciful but the two police officers have acted improperly in any case. Sir Peter Fahy, a former chief constable of Greater Manchester, has pointed out that the raid on Mr Green's office and the revelation that his computer contained pornographic images were incidents that ought not to happen in a democratic country. It is, he said, "very dangerous territory" when a police officer is making public judgments about whether a politician is telling the truth. This should be left to the courts or, in this case, to the inquiries.

Those inquiries have concluded that Mr Green did not tell the whole truth. They did not, crucially, conclude he should be sacked because he was looking at pornography at work. Whether he was or wasn't I have not the slightest idea. The only relevant point is that there was a betrayal of the principle of British policing that information gathered in the course of an investigation, which is not relevant to the case in question, should not be revealed.

Mr Lewis and Mr Quick are now being investigated by the information commissioner to see if they have broken data protection laws. If they have not, the law should be tightened because it is quite wrong for the police to be speaking out about cases which are being heard by a court or inquiry. The

police should also review the stipulation that retired officers cannot face disciplinary action. The information they hold should remain classified. It cannot be open season just because an officer takes early retirement.

It should not be open season when an officer takes early retirement

In her 2014 speech in Bournemouth, Mrs May was unsparing in the catalogue of police failures she set out: Hillsborough, the death of Ian Tomlinson after he was struck by an officer during a protest, and the murder of the private investigator Daniel Morgan. More recently, police conduct has been questioned in the case of Liam Allan, accused of rape, and in the collapse of investigations into a gangland family in Salford. The Green case, though, is a particular sub-species of police mess, which is when the force gets embroiled in politics. The history of the police's bungling efforts with the cash-for-honours inquiry and the allegations against the Tory minister Andrew Mitchell, which resulted in the sacking of three constables, shows that bringing the police into these matters is rarely an aid to justice. The right verdict has been arrived at — Mr Green has gone — but no thanks to the police.

I once asked Sir Hugh Orde, then president of the Association of Chief Police Officers and an opponent of democratic control of the police, what kind of accountability he wanted. He disliked elected police and crime commissioners, he was no lover of targets and he disdained ministerial interference. The truth is that he wanted to be left alone in the spirit of Lord Denning's celebrated but wrong-headed judgment in 1968 that a chief constable is answerable "to the law and to the law alone". The police have not earned the right to be left alone. By their conduct they have invited more scrutiny, not less.

Indeed, suspicion of the police is a British tradition. This country was, by international standards, late to create a police force because it took a long while to overcome the suspicion that force was an instrument of the state designed to suppress the mob. Policing only became a requirement for all local authorities in 1856. Paris, by contrast, had its first professionally organised police force by 1667. To this day, beyond a few specialist agencies such as the National Crime Agency, there is no national police force. The British police have always been considered to be civilians in uniform, exercising their power by tacit consent rather than at the point of a gun.

In her one and only great speech, Mrs May lamented the fact that one third of the British people do not trust the police to tell the truth. In a country in which law and order is guaranteed according to a covenant known as "policing by consent" that is worrying. If they do not change, then the law will have to change. Before that the best principle must be: police force, police yourself.

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CharlieWolf Dec 23, 2017

Politicians haven't forgiven the cops for doing their jobs in the expenses scandal. Since then there's been a silent war.

Flag

1RecommendReply

Chris P Duck Dec 22, 2017

If the same officers had reported a Labour MP for the same thing Collins would be congratulating them on doing their public duty.

Flag

2RecommendReply

Alan Davison Dec 22, 2017

It may all be based on party to you but I suspect Collins is on a higher level than that.

Flag

1RecommendReply

Robert Davies Dec 22, 2017

The police were investigating allegations of leaks. Maybe this was the reason they examined the computers?

Flag

3RecommendReply

Alan R MacKenzie Dec 22, 2017

@Robert Davies

But without the right to do so.

Flag

3RecommendReply

Ken Wood Dec 22, 2017

This is disgraceful conduct by the police.

A public servant, a senior politician, was using a computer paid for by the tax payer when he was at work to watch pornography. When he was confronted about he lied repeatedly and publicly.

Then the police exposed his lies.

Disgraceful?

Flag

6RecommendReply

Bernard Stewart-Deane Dec 22, 2017

With the Met allegedly spending £240million on recruitment agencies over five years to locate and hire ex-cops, the politicians need to interfere a bit more in the rozzers' activities. And the crazy idea of putting in a management cadre to sort out the police is similar to what has happened to the NHS - bean counters do not equal efficiency. What we need is an educated senior officer class who have not come up the greasy pole of a police career.

Flag

3RecommendReply

dexey Dec 22, 2017

Obviously the police should stop meddling in politics and perhaps politicians shouldn't meddle with policemen.

Two recent Tory MP's are probably rueing that they have.

Flag

3RecommendReply

David Mortimore Dec 22, 2017

You've said it all, "the police should not become embroiled in politics". Never mind the fact that these weren't even police officers, they were retired.

This is outrageous behaviour from retired police officers. Should be illegal.....hold on a second, it is illegal.

Flag

9RecommendReply

JournoList Dec 22, 2017

@David Mortimore Only when Labour isn't driving.

Flag

2RecommendReply

dexey Dec 22, 2017

@David Mortimore I think it would be good to get them in a court. I wonder what else they have.

Flag

5RecommendReply

JournoList Dec 22, 2017

@dexey @David Mortimore Just the script.

Flag

1RecommendReply

David Mortimore Dec 22, 2017

Obviously this entire nonsense was all to be finalised, resolved with another cabinet dismissal. I'm no wonderful Tory fan, but I just feel sorrow, verging on compassion here.... this was no Jimmy Saville, Rolf Harris crime...and it seems to somehow give the dreadful, hurtful, shocking, real, hardcore sexual recent crimes of the past few years some actual credibility. What am I missing here? Are more heads literally rolling now in the Tory cabinet? Or what's left of them, pathetic...

Flag

RecommendReply

JournoList Dec 22, 2017

@David Mortimore Tom Baldwin has a very long list and will carry on with his mission.

Flag

RecommendReply

0.44010292204 Dec 22, 2017

I started to lose trust in the police after 4 innocent youths were set up for mass murder regarding the Guildford bombings. Since then we have had many episodes of incompetence. The article sets out many of the issues we face in getting an accountable police force free from political interference. In my view most of the politicking emanates from those in uniform.

We need reform urgently. Bring in a managerial class and rid the force of the canteen culture of grievance and entitlement. Put all non specialist CID officers in uniform to enhance presence in our communities.

The crime commissioner posts have been an unmitigated error. Too much bureaucracy, cost and questionable outcomes. Scrap them.

Finally the PC on the beat will continue to have my support but his/ her command structure lacks the required education and willingness to serve that the public desire and deserve.

Flag

3RecommendReply

JournoList Dec 22, 2017

@0.44010292204 Put Michael Mansfield onto it. He's very good at reforming stuff.

Flag

RecommendReply

Bernard Stewart-Deane Dec 22, 2017

You really are joking.

Flag

RecommendReply

Mr John Gledhill Dec 22, 2017

I seem to be missing something here.

He was watching porn at work

He lied.

He is in public office.

How all this came to light is irrelevant.

Flag

9RecommendReply

Celtom Dec 22, 2017

@Mr John Gledhill

Gosh! You should look at the target before firing off.
Green compromised his integrity and broke the Ministerial Code in lying. He had to go, of course. The police had no legitimate reason to look at his computer and no lawful cause to tell the world about it. Now it needs to be established what is to be done about that. It is not irrelevant that the police behave as self-appointed moral judges.

I would like to think that there are no politicians or public servants who pick up pornography or behave immorally. That is probably a pipedream. But I accept that there are peccadilloes that are not offences against the criminal law or rules of conduct that can and should remain private.

Flag

12RecommendReply
Vincent Green Dec 22, 2017
@Celtom @Mr John Gledhill

The police did have cause and permission. They often discover other "crimes" not associated with their current enquiry.

The article states that this event was public knowledge at the hacking enquiry.

Flag

3RecommendReply
dexey Dec 22, 2017
@Celtom @Mr John Gledhill " It is not irrelevant that the police behave as self-appointed moral judges."

Very true and was there any action by Mr. Green and his friends of the time that might have prompted this action nine years later? An action that has exposed a liar at the top of public life.

Flag

1RecommendReply
Alan Davison Dec 22, 2017
@Mr John Gledhill Your first sentence is correct.

The next three sentences are all true but irrelevant to the main point at issue.

Your final sentence could not be more wrong.

Flag

2RecommendReply
Tim Clarke Dec 22, 2017
@Mr John Gledhill No he wasn't watching Porn. A file of porn thumbnails was on the computer. None of these had been clicked on to access the porn. How this 'came to light' is extremely relevant.

Flag

7RecommendReply
Vincent Green Dec 22, 2017
@Tim Clarke @Mr John Gledhill

None had been clicked, where did you get that from.

Flag

2RecommendReply
Charles Wells Dec 22, 2017
@Vincent Green @Tim Clarke @Mr John Gledhill It is irrelevant whether he clicked or not. Mr. Green can click what he pleases, like you do, unless it is illegal to do so. And it is not.

Flag

5RecommendReply

Ross Dec 22, 2017

@Charles Wells @Vincent Green @Tim Clarke @Mr John Gledhill

It is illegal to access porn sites in your employer's time or on your employer's computer. Even accessing Facebook is fraud.

Flag

RecommendReply

Raj Bhardwaj Dec 22, 2017

I've just checked using Google and note that 56% of men view legal porn each week. Not impressive (indeed a little depressing) - but legal.

All the same, ministers should tell the truth and he had to go for lying. Fair enough.

However, what the former police officers did was a far worse betrayal - they should lose their pensions.

Flag

RecommendReply

DiscoMac Dec 22, 2017

No-one comes out of this sorry saga with his reputation and integrity intact, but one man has lost his job, while the others continue to enjoy their guaranteed incomes. Let us hope that the Information Commissioner's investigation exposes the truth about how the retired officers behaved.

Flag

6RecommendReply

Chris P Duck Dec 22, 2017

Green's salary as an MP and any accrued pension entitlement are not affected.

Flag

3RecommendReply

dexey Dec 22, 2017

@Chris P Duck .. and a £17,000 pay off I read the other day.

Flag

1RecommendReply

Peter Hurley Dec 22, 2017

The politicisation of the civil service, including the police that commenced under Blair is a problem we are going to have to live with for quite some time, until he have a government strong enough and ethical enough to enforce proper standards of professional conduct. And as recent events concerning parliamentarians have show, we're a long way off that...

Flag

5RecommendReply

Vincent Green Dec 22, 2017

@Peter Hurley

"A government ethical enough to enforce proper standards of professional conduct"

What an interesting concept, an ethical government, staffed no doubt by ethical members we have a way to go.

I am intrigued by the concept of "proper standards of professional conduct" is this different to standards of conduct. The word proper and its like are often used do they mean anything or add anything and is professional conduct any better than say good conduct for example. The seven principles of public life applied to ministers, namely:- Selflessness. Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty and Leadership, seem to be a good start. They could equally be applied to all of us, we might have a much happier and integrated society.

Flag

RecommendReply

Bernard Stewart-Deane Dec 22, 2017

Surely, apart from two ex-cops possibly spilling the beans unlawfully, what troubles me about the 'punishment' of Green and Fallon is why they can't be suspended as ministers for, say, six months. Given what Mandleson got away with under Blair, twice and still held high office, complete banishment seems crazy, unless they were criminally intent.

At least Kate Maltby got her five minutes of fame.....and will probably find herself at the wrong end of a lot of politician barge poles from now on...

Flag

8RecommendReply

David Tilley Dec 22, 2017

There seems an awful lot of comments on this thread from ex coppers attempting to defend the actions of their ex colleagues Quick and Lewis.

We in the UK are policed by consent and to do so our police require the support of the populace. This requires trust and the actions of Quick and Lewis erode that trust, never mind the recent rape trial collapses, Hillsborough etc.

Flag

17RecommendReply

cherrypicker Dec 22, 2017

The 2 retired police officers should be investigated.

We the public need to be confident in our police, with cases like this or the rape cases now being re-investigated by the police, the confidence in the police is being hurt, and hurt badly.

Again and again the reputation of the police is being brought into dispute.

This is very dangerous in a so called "democracy".

Flag

9RecommendReply

Charles Wells Dec 22, 2017

He was not sacked because he lied, but because he watched pornography and lied about it. In fact, I suspect that they may have also found on his computer things like google searches, amazon purchases, articles read on the Guardian, apartment and car brochures downloaded from the web, etc. None of these things directly relates to his office, but nobody reported anything about them. Why? Because they are not considered sensitive material until there is a reason to think they are.

People watch pornography. It is a common things that millions do (including most of those who are reading these news). And, it is legal. You may sack someone who does that at work or through the facilities of a public office, as in his case. But the content nature of what they found in his computer is the centrepiece of what happened. Let us not be hypocritical about it.

Flag

3RecommendReply

Mr Richard Taylor Dec 22, 2017

@Charles Wells, sorry to be pernickity but he was not sacked 'because he watched pornography and lied about it'. He still maintains he did not watch pornography. Where he broke the ministerial code, and thus was asked to resign, was in claiming that he had not been told by the police that they had found pornography on his parliamentary office laptop.

Flag

8RecommendReply

Charles Wells Dec 22, 2017

@Mr Richard Taylor Thank you for your correction. But if the police had told him that they found images of giants reptiles on his computer and he wrongly claimed that this in fact had not happened, would it be a breach of the ministerial code? Would the police be interested in telling him in the first place?

Flag

2RecommendReply

Vincent Green Dec 22, 2017

@Charles Wells @Mr Richard Taylor

Are we supposed to take this post seriously.

Flag

1RecommendReply

Mr Richard Taylor Dec 22, 2017

Agree that be there reptiles or pornography on his computer is irrelevant to the original investigation into a Home Office leak. So far, Mr Green's only 'offence' in relation to the ministerial code would seem to be his statement last month that he hadn't been told by the police there was (legal) pornography on the office laptop. He had been told so that's where he fell down.

Flag

1RecommendReply

William Harrison Dec 24, 2017

@Vincent Green @Charles Wells @Mr Richard Taylor I think you are.

Flag

RecommendReply

dexey Dec 22, 2017

@Mr Richard Taylor I think there was a suggestion that he had watched it but that will, no doubt, come out in court if one should sue the other.

Flag

RecommendReply

Mr Richard Taylor Dec 22, 2017

@dexey, the police officer(s) have certainly implied that he was looking at same. As you say, it is yet to be determined if that is the case. It would also seem that back in 2008 and even now a laptop in a parliamentary office is used by all those involved in the work of that office/MP.

My point was not whether or not he'd watched it but the grounds on which he'd broken the ministerial code, ie denying he'd been told by police what they'd found when he had been informed on at least two occasions.

Flag

RecommendReply

SS Dec 22, 2017

Perhaps all that this latest sorry episode tells us is that, with many MPs apparently able to fulfill several positions (in addition to their duties in Parliament and constituency) and still have time to peruse boobs'r'us.com or whatever, the position needs only be part time?

Flag

1RecommendReply

Rylstone Dec 22, 2017

- 1- the police are not there to judge us, just to collect the evidence and pass it to the CPS, and they to prosecute, and a magistrate or jury and judge to decide.
- 2- the police, if they are to get involved in enquiries that are not part of the criminal justice system, should do so formally and via their official roles.
- 3- a retired police officer has no business going to the press or leaking documents or giving their opinions on the radio about the actions of someone they investigated in the past. The police swear an oath to serve the Crown and to treat the public according to law and without fear or favour. These

two retired police officers have acted very badly and made me less certain that I could trust a police officer if they came to my door.

Flag

13RecommendReply

dexey Dec 22, 2017

@Rylstone Should an MP or their friends make it their business to blacken the character of a police officer or to besmirch his wife?

Flag

RecommendReply

Saint John Dec 22, 2017

It doesn't matter that viewing porn at work is wrong . It's not nor never has been a matter for the police

Flag

8RecommendReply

LuckyJack Dec 22, 2017

Mr Collins, a projectile vomit of an opinion piece. You regurgitate the well trodden path of highlighting well covered cases of misconduct over years to prove all is rotten to the core. The police are not villains or heroes but they were and remain of and from the public. Some are incompetent, a few corrupt or bent, but the vast majority do their job with patience, professionalism and are not particularly interested in the puffery and yammering of politics. The present government and the print media have consistently sought to undermine and degrade trust in the police by policy and design. It must stick in your craw that despite that two thirds of the public do trust the police and day after day policing by consent continues. Long may it stay and let us hope that we do not see high streets and towns patrolled by the likes of G4S.

Flag

6RecommendReply

Mike Herberts Dec 22, 2017

@LuckyJack Disagree. Good article, interesting read. But I don't read it as 'rotten to the core'. Like it or not the police are held to a higher standard than the rest of us. They are in positions of trust and power over the public. So when they break that trust it is news.

Unfortunately recently there has been more bad then good. Most of us value our police but they are not above reproach. Likewise the disciplinary bodies need to come down hard on those that bring the police force into disrepute.

Flag

2RecommendReply

Vincent Green Dec 22, 2017

Are you saying that the evidence from Quick and Lewis was already in the public domain and had been for years. If that is the case why all the fuss.

Flag

1RecommendReply

Kader Nahaboo Dec 22, 2017

What are "*Our values?*"

Flag

RecommendReply

D Grant Dec 22, 2017

@Kader Nahaboo "What are our values?" If you don't know,Mr Nahaboo,then why are you commenting on this?

Flag

2RecommendReply

Kader Nahaboo Dec 22, 2017

@D Grant @Kader Nahaboolin Moulder

Thank you.

Norms and Values are conducive to any society's progressive foundation and progress, and their principles and aims are to strengthening social structure and human relations. Sadly, it doesn't seem to be the situation. presently. The way forward is for strong and capable Leadership to actualising those "Values" for Gradual Harmony to flourish. NOT UTOPIAN, definitely not, because Man has never, and will never be perfect on this most splendid planet. But, the former is endowed with Intellect, and should be the best creature among all the earthly creatures.

Let's avoid Intellectual Laziness to eradicating slander, backbiting and ridicule.

À bon entendeur, salut!

Flag

RecommendReply

D Grant Dec 22, 2017

@Kader Nahaboo @D Grant I had not intended to elicit such prolixity. Je vous en remercie.

Flag

RecommendReply

Colin Moulder Dec 22, 2017

@Kader Nahaboo stoooooopid comment. Why don't you let us know what your values are?

British values for me are patriotism, respect for the rule of law, everyone equal under the law, respect for all - sexuality, colour etc

Flag

1RecommendReply

David Rushton Dec 22, 2017

@Colin Moulder @Kader Nahaboo It's acutally a question, not a comment and you answered it so who's the stoooooopid one now :-D?

Flag

1RecommendReply

Andrew Middlemiss Dec 22, 2017

Apparently it is accepted that the pornographic material existed on mt Green's HoC computer, and that he lied about its existence.

If he hadn't put it there surely any sane man would be jumping up and down about a breach of security; there hasn't been such an event, so, Mr. Collins you do protest too much . You are trying to create a smoke screen.

Flag

4RecommendReply

Lazy Dogg Dec 22, 2017

@Andrew Middlemiss Don't you see Anything bizarre or even sinister about the police 1. noting the existence of legal material 2. commenting upon the same at the time during the "investigation" (itself obv politically motivated ie re a leaker) aqs if it was Any of their business to do so Even during that so-called investigation (= retaliating for embarrassed politicians) 3. officers Then taking information home and retaining "privately" even post retirement 4. then (ironically) leaking the same ? Not even J Edgar Hoover went that far .

Upon what possible legal basis was such info taken home and stored ?

Flag

6RecommendReply

Slightly Topsy Max Dec 22, 2017

If I recollect, Quick denied being the source to the Sunday times of the leaked report and also only answered questions asked of him as part of the Leveson inquiry, which was a judicial enquiry. I'm pretty sure that Quick is going to sue Green now for defamation of character. Cressida Dick should also keep her gob shut until she knows all the facts. Its interesting how her comments are politically acceptable.

Quick claims, and no one has countered, that he repeated what he recommended be reported at the time to the then parliamentary commissioner for standards, to the Cabinet Office director-general for propriety and ethics, Sue Gray, to inform her of what had been discovered after the story about the alleged handsy moment. That was leaked but not by him. As the Sunday Times has that document perhaps they know who actually leaked it?

What I actually see is a repeated attempt to over up the porn issue by the establishment and police senior officers. the meddling in politics and the truth has been not by Quick, but by politicians.

Flag

4RecommendReply

Saint John Dec 22, 2017

Quick referred the matter to his boss who said it was not a police matter as no law had been broken . The commissioner was ruling on the matter . Do why did mr quick keep bringing the matter up after that ?

Flag

5RecommendReply

This comment has been deleted

Chris P Duck Dec 22, 2017

@Peter McDonald

If he did that someone at The Times would report it and he would be sacked.
But then again that's real life.

Flag

4RecommendReply

Mr J Hopwood Dec 22, 2017

So who is the sycophant here? The journalist who gives a balanced commentary or someone who defends the police, who on the one hand refuse to divulge evidence on fake rapes because they want to boost their prosecution rate and, on the other hand, from the comfort of their index-linked pensions release irrelevant information in pursuit of a vendetta.

Flag

14RecommendReply

Luke Crawford Dec 22, 2017

@Peter McDonald

"attacking police officers fired for doing their job"

Who got fired for doing their jobs? The two officers relevant to this story retired.

Flag

4RecommendReply

Michael Askew Dec 22, 2017

@Peter McDonald The whole point is that the police officers weren't doing their job. They raided a House of Commons without a warrant and on a spurious pretext. The officers concerned reported and persist in bringing into the public domain evidence that was sleazy but not illegal. It's not the job of the police to make moral judgements on individuals, but to detect crime and bring evidence of crime to the CPS. No crime has taken place apart from (possibly) the police raid on Damian Green's office, and a possible breach by retired policemen of the Data Protection Act.

Flag

4RecommendReply

dexey Dec 22, 2017

@Michael Askew @Peter McDonald They didn't need a warrant. The Sergeant at Arms gave them permission.

Flag

3RecommendReply

Robert Davies Dec 22, 2017

No-one mentions the role of the BBC. That is the organisation that presumably felt the revelations were in the public interest. I laugh at all the suggestions that this is a police conspiracy. I know many police and their real strength is their character and willingness to stand on their own two feet to exercise independent judgement. The police I know question, think, care for the public and stand up against injustice. Things regularly do go wrong but think of the size of the organisation and the number of encounters faced during each 24 hours. I am afraid that whistle blowing will happen when injustice is perceived and there are many people who feel that ex Minister Green was slithering away from the allegations facing him and that these retired officers deserve some support.

Flag

4RecommendReply

Lazy Dogg Dec 22, 2017

@Robert Davies Does it not strike you as odd or ironic perhaps that the allegations against Green such as they are , are Not and Never have been of a criminal naturewhereas it remains to be seen whether that is true of all other parties .

Flag

4RecommendReply

dexey Dec 22, 2017

@Lazy Dogg @Robert Davies That depends on whether all of the allegations are in the public domain. Perhaps some remain in a pocket book.

Flag

1RecommendReply

Lazy Dogg Dec 22, 2017

Well this is just speculating .

lae neither officer should possess any pocket book . Neither has any official standing. If there Was anything the Official Authorities would have taken action as appropriate. Whereas it was referred up and the decision was - 'not a police matter' . And so this is deeply concerning .

Flag

1RecommendReply

Ankur Gupta Dec 22, 2017

Can a simple explanation be that his computer was infected? As far as I understand, the comment made by Lewis was that there were thumbnails of porn images. Could have easily been those dodgy popups that happen on infected computer (they used to be more common 10 years back. Now it is all bitcoin spam).

Flag

6RecommendReply

Chris P Duck Dec 22, 2017

@Ankur Gupta

Does it not concern you that the networked computers inside Westminster might be 'infected'?

Is it best to ignore this and just let it go?

Flag

RecommendReply

Ankur Gupta Dec 22, 2017

@Chris P Duck @Ankur Gupta It is something that should be thoroughly investigated. However it doesn't require Green to resign. Being inept at computer skills is not a reason to leave the cabinet.

Flag

1RecommendReply

Luke Crawford Dec 22, 2017

@Ankur Gupta

I thought that a possible explanation could have been that he had been researching porn in an attempt to inform himself for an upcoming bill on the subject. The article, however, raises the point that Lewis said that the history on Green's computer showed "extensive" viewing. If true, this ostensibly blows such a possible explanation out of the water.

Flag

RecommendReply

Ankur Gupta Dec 22, 2017

@Luke Crawford @Ankur Gupta I really doubt he was researching. If that was the case, he would have said so as it is justifiable (using the term loosely). Extensive can mean watching a lot of images over a long period, which is quite possible under my theory.

Flag

RecommendReply

Luke Crawford Dec 22, 2017

@Ankur Gupta @Luke Crawford Sorry, I did not make myself clear enough. I meant a possible explanation at the time of the initial discovery, in 2008, of the history of viewing porn on his computer. This explanation would have been satisfactory at the time and no more need have been said about the matter.

Your theory certainly is plausible, provided that "extensive" is interpreted as you have done so, i.e., watching a lot of images over a long period.

Flag

RecommendReply

Chris P Duck Dec 22, 2017

Collins is wrong here. The officers did not meddle in politics or ethics or in anything else. Like all well trained policemen they simply reported the facts. There's nothing wrong with that.

Flag

3RecommendReply

46watt Dec 22, 2017

@Chris P Duck Reporting historical facts, not relating to a criminal investigation, to the press - there's everything wrong with that !

Flag

30RecommendReply

Chris P Duck Dec 22, 2017

@46watt @Chris P Duck

The information was released in the context of the Maltby accusations. They are highly relevant in this context.

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/kate-maltby-damian-green-you-probably-have-no-idea-how-awkward-i-felt-j2kk88frj>

Flag

1RecommendReply

46watt Dec 22, 2017

@Chris P Duck @46watt Not a criminal investigation either !

Flag

11RecommendReply
D Grant Dec 22, 2017
@Chris P Duck @46watt Maltby allegations and porn claims - in what way are they connected?
Flag

4RecommendReply
Chris P Duck Dec 22, 2017
@D Grant @Chris P Duck @46watt
Damien Green
Flag

1RecommendReply
JournoList Dec 22, 2017
@Chris P Duck @D Grant @46watt It's not quite the original script, but Tom Baldwin had to think on his feet.
Flag

RecommendReply
Taciturnus Dec 22, 2017
In fairness to the older police fraternity, it was only a few decades ago that they were instructed to be guardians of public morality. One of their tasks was to select the most good-looking young fresh-faced doe-eyed policemen and send them into public lavatories to smile beguilingly at vulnerable lonely gay men, and once nervously and optimistically importuned, to clap handcuffs on "the predators and perverts", arrest and charge them, and pack them off to prison to commit suicide. If that's part of your job description during the formative years, it must be hard to grasp that you are no longer expected to be arbiter of public morals.
Flag

6RecommendReply
D Grant Dec 22, 2017
@Taciturnus " part of a job description" - ? Sounds more like a wet dream,especially the doe-eyed bit.....
Flag

RecommendReply
Taciturnus Dec 22, 2017
@D Grant @Taciturnus I've no doubt it would have been a wet nightmare for those handcuffed in mid-flow.
Flag

RecommendReply
Grumpy Pensioner Dec 22, 2017
In 1965 I was taught that ' A Constable is a citizen. locally appointed, but having authority under the Crown, for the protection of life and property, maintenance of order, the prevention and detection of crime and prosecution of offenders against the peace. '
I don't think this has changed much since. NB. please note, arresting folk is last in line. Pete Fahey was my Ch Supt, Solihull, West midlands, many years ago - before he zoomed upwards to be Chief Constable of Mcr. He was an approachable, down to earth guy and even went on patrol, in uniform, one New Year's Eve... arresting a drunken idiot trying to demolish a shop front. I take any of his announcements on policing very seriously indeed.
Flag

8RecommendReply
Smiffy55 Dec 22, 2017
I completely agree with this article BUT Green obviously took the view that he could lie and deny what had happened knowing that the police would / could not contradict him. Sadly for him he was wrong.
It's a case where both sides were in the wrong - they deserved each other.
Flag

2RecommendReply
Steve H Dec 22, 2017
@Smiffy55

But the police (or former officers of) went to the press, not to the relevant regulatory bodies. And, remember, no crime was committed. The officers' release of information to the press is an act of political intervention and/or perceived moral superiority, not of law enforcement.

Flag

23RecommendReply

The Right To Arm Bears Dec 22, 2017

@Smiffy55 It was the right conclusion but for the wrong reasons. Again, a politician is in trouble more for the cover up than for the original offence. If he had come clean at the outset, he would have been embarrassed but may well have survived.

The role of the police here is truly worrying, from the original warrant-free search through to retired officers producing confidential information which should not be in their possession, to the allegations of pornography viewing which were downgraded from illegal material to legal (if still immoral).

Flag

14RecommendReply

JournoList Dec 22, 2017

@The Right To Arm Bears @Smiffy55 Bang to rights and so like the Dems/Rino coalition's smearing and sliming work.

Flag

RecommendReply

Steve H Dec 22, 2017

I really don't understand how the police got away with carrying out a raid and search without a warrant.

Flag

22RecommendReply

Brian Cope Dec 22, 2017

@Steve H Two alleged incompetents, Martin and Pay, didn't know the law and took the word of the Police as gospel. It was an amazing gaffe, especially as Parliament isn't short of lawyers ever ready with their two guineas' worth.

Flag

5RecommendReply

Craig Petterson Dec 22, 2017

Come on now move along nothing to see here. We've two retired officers to skewer as they revealed the truth about a serving cabinet minister. Don't worry about the porn on the government computer it's these two plods we need to go after.

Lies? Yes lot's and the poor MP has been sacked because he lied about the porn being on the computer. But we will ignore that and go after the plod, did you know they get a good pension? Oh and we'll try to go after that as well that'll sort those truth telling plodites.now back to the trough.

Flag

6RecommendReply

MCGibbo Dec 22, 2017

Keith Vaz

Flag

4RecommendReply

Lazy Dogg Dec 22, 2017

@MCGibbo OMG do you have toI'm still eating lunch . Bleuggggh

Flag

RecommendReply

Nigel Toye Dec 22, 2017

“should alarm everyone who believes in democracy”

I agree with you but your paper doesn't seem to believe in democracy.

Elsewhere today it attacks elections in a local Labour Party, saying properly elected officers “seize power” in Sedgefield.

This paper cannot seem to accept any election of people of even slight left wing persuasion.

Perhaps you should talk to your colleagues about democracy.

Flag

2RecommendReply

Steve H Dec 22, 2017

@Nigel Toye

Please stop your idiotic denigration of *The Times*'s role in democracy. Go learn more about entryism and bullying before commenting on how democracy operates.

Flag

8RecommendReply

This comment has been deleted

Steve H Dec 22, 2017

@Nigel Toye

It isn't "legitimate commenting". It's another form of Momentum-like entryism - changing the topic and focus of attention to distract from reality. This is a story about the role of the police in the Damian Green case, not Momentum's aggravated takeover of the Sedgefield Labour Party.

If you wish to avoid being insulted, refrain from insulting the intelligence of *Times* readers - and *The Times* itself, for that matter.

Flag

8RecommendReply

MenatArms1970 Dec 22, 2017

@Steve H @Nigel Toye You two and your flirting.

Flag

1RecommendReply

Steve H Dec 22, 2017

@MenatArms1970 @Steve H @Nigel Toye

My bes' mate.

Flag

2RecommendReply

Nigel Toye Dec 22, 2017

I wonder how you feel about the constant lying by the leading Brexit campaigners that led to the out vote?

Was that democracy in action, Mr H?

I find the Times hypocritical in the way it consistently attacks anything the left does. It is very insulting to Mr Corbyn all of the time in “news” stories and columns, a man who as properly elected to lead the Labour Party, or were all who voted for him “bullied” into it.

That is what I criticise the Times. The Times seems to be unable to accept that some people have views that differ from its Murdoch inspired standpoint.

Flag

RecommendReply

Chris P Duck Dec 22, 2017

It is a matter of public interest that someone at the heart of govt has pornography on their computer and is lying about some aspect of this.

Accessing porn sites on a govt networked computer is a cyber-security risk.

If you doubt this ask the data manager of your own company network about this and watch their face drop.

There is also the potential for blackmail of a govt minister.

I'm sure Putin's hackers would be delighted to find such an accessible security flaw.

Whether you like it or not the officers have done the nation a favour in highlighting this lax security practice and forcing the truth to come out.

Flag

5RecommendReply

Steve H Dec 22, 2017

@Chris P Duck

I'm inclined to agree with you except for your final sentence. The officers, if they were doing "the nation a favour", would have forwarded the information to the relevant offices involved, such as the ICO, PSC, etc. Instead they went to the press.

Flag

11RecommendReply

Chris P Duck Dec 22, 2017

@Steve H @Chris P Duck

This is a fair point. but the officers rightly stuck to reporting the facts. They were aware that anything other than this would be interpreted, as Collins interprets their actions above, as 'interfering with politics' , which is clearly not their job.

Flag

2RecommendReply

Steve H Dec 22, 2017

@Chris P Duck @Steve H

Sure, but they reported "the facts" to the press. That undermines their *bona fides* for me, I'm afraid.

Flag

6RecommendReply

Saint John Dec 22, 2017

So when the police search your office on suspicion of theft -and you are innocent of theft -and find porn on your computer are you happy for them to tell your employers ? To tell them about something that breaks the firms rules but breaks no law and that has no relevance to the charge of theft .

Flag

1RecommendReply

A Firswell Dec 22, 2017

@Chris P Duck I knowe a word rhyiming with yours. I'll put "off" after it.

Geddit, Mr Prissy?

Flag

RecommendReply

Steve H Dec 22, 2017

@A Firswell @Chris P Duck

A more refined response would be to refer the gentleman/gentlewoman to the reply given by the defendant in response to the plaintiff's solicitor's letter in the case of *Arkell v. Pressdram*.

But he/she has a point.

Flag

1RecommendReply

Chris P Duck Dec 22, 2017

@A Firswell @Chris P Duck

'I knowe a word rhyming with yours. I'll put "off" after it.
Geddit, Mr Prissy? '

Gosh your cognitive dissonance is really hurting. You know I'm right but the only defence you can think of is to abuse the messenger.

Flag

2RecommendReply

The Right To Arm Bears Dec 22, 2017

@Chris P Duck In the real world, people are sacked for having pornographic material on their work computer. Not sure how the firewalls on the IT system would allow this. But then the public sector is a law unto itself.

Flag

2RecommendReply

Chris P Duck Dec 22, 2017

@The Right To Arm Bears @Chris P Duck

My point is ethics aside it's a cyber security risk. A risk that MPs should not be taking on govt computers.

Flag

1RecommendReply

Saint John Dec 22, 2017

But it is not a police matter

Flag

2RecommendReply

Alan Lockey Dec 22, 2017

@Chris P Duck It is a matter of public interest, but it is not a matter of law. There is a crucial difference in a democracy - and the police uphold the latter, not the former. Journalists making this discovery should of course print the results. But the police, for obvious reasons, need to be held to different standards. They should have gone to the appropriate regulatory authorities.

Also, it is worth pointing out that none of this - and this shows how weird the whole thing is, frankly - occurred whilst Green was a Government Minister, or even when his party was in Government.

Flag

3RecommendReply

Chris P Duck Dec 22, 2017

@Alan Lockey @Chris P Duck

To be fair Green was confronted with the find of porn on his computer in 2008. Obviously we don't know what was said.

But any reasonable conversation would suggest it is a) not a worthy practice at work and b) it is a security risk.

Remember too that the defence of public interest goes beyond your job. You don't have to be a journalist to raise a matter of public interest.

As to your second point hackers accept that their first access to a network might be secondary (eg an opposition MP's computer). They hope to use this initial access to gain access to something bigger

and more interesting (eg the govt. network). So the cyber-security risk was still real, even though Green was only an opposition MP.

Flag

RecommendReply

Tim Clarke Dec 22, 2017

@Chris P Duck There is no evidence that Green had been accessing Porn sites, in fact rather the opposite. This 'porn' was a file with thumbnail images on it which had NOT been clicked on.

Flag

1RecommendReply

Chris P Duck Dec 22, 2017

@Tim Clarke @Chris P Duck

The access to porn sites was recorded in the computer's history file.

Flag

1RecommendReply

Hem Laljee Dec 22, 2017

The Modern services have been Privatised to the extent that the Patriotism and Loyalty are put on the line to gain benefit by the Police Force. The Prison and Mental Service has become quite precarious.and of lower quality than one expects

Flag

1RecommendReply

morticia Dec 22, 2017

If the crime were so heinous, why did it take 8 years to report it?

Flag

12RecommendReply

Paul Dec 22, 2017

Is no one worried that we have a serving MP that is a proven liar? If that was a police officer they would be sacked entirely not allowed to return to the back benches.

Also the Police are trusted a lot more than the politicians that you trust to change the law. Something to bare in mind.

Flag

3RecommendReply

The Right To Arm Bears Dec 22, 2017

@Paul I'm not sure people trust the police as much as they would have in the past. This episode erodes their reputation even further.

Flag

5RecommendReply

Perranuthnoe Dec 22, 2017

These two have done immense damage to confidence in the police.

Most people are honest, but ALL of us have done things that are embarrassing if publicly revealed, and the likelihood of evidence of that embarrassment being on our computers is very high.

We have now also seen how damaging the revelation of embarrassment can be - frankly better to have committed a minor crime than to be exposed to ridicule or see your reputation trashed by your peers.

Why now would anyone cooperate with or trust the police to look at your computer or go rooting around your lives when we have this evidence that they can't be trusted to respect your privacy on matters which are not illegal or criminal?

Not me, who comes from a family of policemen, and I strongly suggest you don't either.

Flag

11RecommendReply

R Wallace Dec 22, 2017

The police were politicised under the Blair/Brown regime.

Is Philip Collins brave (and honest) enough to point the finger at the real culprit: Blair, the PM he admires so much?

I doubt it.

Flag

8RecommendReply

Mr. Guy Clapperton Dec 22, 2017

@R Wallace Blair hasn't been PM for nearly a decade and his party has been out of government since 2010. There comes a point when the current bunch have to take ownership of current problems, whether inherited from their predecessors or otherwise.

Flag

2RecommendReply

DS Dec 22, 2017

@Mr. Guy Clapperton @R Wallace The politically motivated raid on Green's office took place under the last labour government's watch.

Flag

13RecommendReply

The Right To Arm Bears Dec 22, 2017

@DS @Mr. Guy Clapperton @R Wallace When Blair wasn't PM.

Flag

RecommendReply

JournoList Dec 22, 2017

@The Right To Arm Bears @DS @Mr. Guy Clapperton @R Wallace When Jacqui Smith was Home Secretary. Where is she now?

Flag

2RecommendReply

Brian Cope Dec 22, 2017

@JournoList @The Right To Arm Bears @DS @Mr. Guy Clapperton @R Wallace A hospital truss chair. Once they get on the merry-go-round they never need get off as another job is magicked up for the great and the good.

Flag

1RecommendReply

JournoList Dec 22, 2017

@Brian Cope @JournoList @The Right To Arm Bears @DS @Mr. Guy Clapperton @R Wallace It would be nice to hear from her, particularly since she was one of the whistleblowers in the original fitting-up of DG.

Flag

1RecommendReply

JournoList Dec 22, 2017

But only when your good friend, Tom Baldwin, has hunted down every Tory and we are safe again.

Flag

RecommendReply

JournoList Dec 22, 2017

Our Mr. Baldwin is so shy. Little more than a couple of appearances on Peston on Sunday. But then, he is a very busy person.

Flag

RecommendReply

JournoList Dec 22, 2017

His career is following an interesting path, particularly since he was posted to the U.S. around the time when JournoList flourished, making sure that everyone was getting the right message. Then back to Blighty and now office boy at Labour's HQ. The Dems/Rino coalition counts on Labour to follow its lead.

Flag

RecommendReply

Graeme Whitehouse Dec 22, 2017

Is it now the right time to remove parliamentary privilege which allows MP's and ministers to effectively say what they want in parliament without recourse but wouldn't dare to say outside for fear of prosecution. This should ensure the truth is said at all times and that there is a basic code for all parliamentarians.

Flag

RecommendReply

Winston Smith Dec 22, 2017

@Graeme Whitehouse and the relevance of your comment to this article is what precisely? Green has been sacked but as the author has rightly pointed out no thanks to the police. They searched his office illegally. They weren't searching his office for illegal porn - the porn wasn't illegal although it's presence on an employer's PC is probably a sackable offence - they were searching for a leak from the Home Office. The police officers in question do not have the authority to release the information they have released nor do they have the right. If your suggestion was invoked why on earth would it make politicians more honest ? 18 months ago we had politicians of all political hues lying constantly about the pros and cons of Brexit and not one of them has been brought to book! Politicians lie ! What is far more worrying is that the people want to be lied to.

Flag

1RecommendReply

Mel Shaw Dec 22, 2017

The Official Secrets Act applies to civil servants for life. Why is there not something similar for the police? Pensions should be paid subject to a confidentiality agreement.

Flag

7RecommendReply

Mr. Guy Clapperton Dec 22, 2017

@Mel Shaw I signed the Official Secrets Act when I was a Christmas postman some 32 years ago. On doing a bit of research I found that as a subject of the UK I was covered by it anyway, the signing is just reassurance that someone is aware of its terms.

Flag

1RecommendReply

Cammie Dec 22, 2017

As for these two, stop their pensions for good - sure to be legal, they're in breach of everything.

Flag

5RecommendReply

Gardenman Dec 22, 2017

Generally, to take compensation from a pension fund the person must be sacked, prosecuted, found guilty and then have a court order leaving a guaranteed minimum amount. Too late now, and even for a current employee too much bother.

Flag

RecommendReply

Freespirit Dec 22, 2017

Lewis and Quick have done severe damage to the Police Force. Both appear not to be that bright and allowed their hearts to rule their heads, in my opinion.

This was political and a botched job at that. Is this the standard of our police force?

12RecommendReply
Freespirit Dec 22, 2017
Should read their hearts not they!

Flag

RecommendReply
Cammie Dec 22, 2017
My rock-solid new rule: never trust a copper with information. As for these two, stop their pensions for good - sure to be legal, they're in breach of everything.

Flag

4RecommendReply
50 pounder Dec 22, 2017
For years politicians of all parties have let the police get away with anything they wanted. So we end up with no local police presence and a complete failure to protect the public and their property. They are nothing short of a disgrace.

Flag

5RecommendReply
SixG Dec 22, 2017
There's been a significant change in recent decades.

Flag

The public sector (incl. the police of course) leans to the left. Don't know why and I'm certainly not suggesting they're all rabid Marxists. But generally, the political bent of the majority in the public sector is left leaning - which puts them on a natural collision course with the Tories.

Flag

6RecommendReply
R Wallace Dec 22, 2017
@SixG

They've all been trained by Common Purpose.

Flag

RecommendReply
Chris 1966 Dec 22, 2017
When the Police officers who caused Hillsborough and those who were involved in the coverup were thrown to the wolves. Police Officers no longer had any loyalty to the Conservative party.

Flag

RecommendReply
Michael Schachter Dec 22, 2017
We have also seen two rape cases collapse because the police withheld evidence. Everyone appreciates that much of the police do a brilliant job, notably in counter-terrorism. Clearly many don't. Perhaps they are rehearsing to be Corbyn's Stasi.

Flag

11RecommendReply
Chris 1966 Dec 22, 2017
@Michael Schachter They had all the practice of being Corbyn's stasi when they were Thatcher's stasi

Flag

RecommendReply
SixG Dec 22, 2017
"The police should also review the stipulation that retired officers cannot face disciplinary action"

Is this true PC? What about historical inquiries - Bloody Sunday, Hillsborough etc. Are police retirees are immune from prosecution?

Flag

1RecommendReply
R Jowett Dec 22, 2017
@SixG

They are not immune from prosecution, but they cannot face disciplinary action, and therefore professional sanctions, such as the loss of some of their pensions.

Flag

2RecommendReply
SixG Dec 22, 2017
@R Jowett @SixG OK, I see the difference. Thanks.

Flag

RecommendReply
St Ranger Dec 22, 2017
@R Jowett @SixG That is patently a ridiculous situation, if so they should be prosecuted under the Data Protection Act at the very least.

Flag

1RecommendReply
R Jowett Dec 22, 2017
Cressida Dick has said that a file has, or will be, passed to the Information Commissioner for further investigation. This is because the ICO is the only body that can investigate and bring prosecutions under the DPA. However, breaches of the DPA can carry fines of up to £500k for an organisation, it's not clear what the limit it is for an individual, but I seem to remember it's £5000.

Flag

1RecommendReply
Anthony Lee Dec 22, 2017

An appropriate time of year to be inviting the police to better police themselves; much the same as encouraging turkeys to vote for Christmas. Having grown up in the 60's during a period of black & white television (politically correct then as now I suppose) and 'Dixon of Dock Green' on Saturday evenings, I've seen police presence on the street diminish, whilst police unions and politicisation has grown exponentially.

The Thatcher years saw police earning huge bonuses for 'over time' during the miner's strike and others. The police appeared to 'grow' a extra layer of 'skin' in that period and see themselves as some sort of special case. This was made worse by their intransigence in terms of change ad modernisation. Ken Clarke when Home Secretary (for example) deduced there were too many layers of management in the police and looked to remove the rank of superintendent, only to find that superintendents themselves actually had their very own trade union. And not by accident either it might seem.

The relationship between the police and government (and for a number in the police, the Conservatives in particular) has deteriorated over time and it seems to me that the police have taken advantage of 'target setting' largely to abandon common sense in terms of prioritising police work. Investing more time in high profile and expensive 'campaign' policing than in serving the greater public. And there in lies the rub for me. The police are there to serve the public and not the other way around and I think a return to the days and values of 'black & white' and 'Dixon of Dock Green' would do none of us any harm.

Flag

15RecommendReply
Brian Cope Dec 22, 2017

@Anthony Lee Ironically, the Dixon of Dock Green golden age was peak corruption in the Met before Sir Robert Mark arrived to clean it up.

Flag

RecommendReply

Anthony Lee Dec 22, 2017

@Brian Cope @Anthony Lee Halcyon days indeed and the 'corruption' would be 'small beer' in comparison with police of today being bought off by drug barons. And no I can't prove that, but common sense tells me it must be the case because drug dealing, like gang warfare in the 60's is everywhere.

Flag

RecommendReply

Projector Dec 22, 2017

Too late. Political correctness has taken over.

Flag

5RecommendReply

Alan Hardwick Dec 22, 2017

The police were once considered the Conservatives' praetorian guard; now the Tories see them as their fitter-ups.

Flag

3RecommendReply

Henry Scrope Dec 22, 2017

Leaving aside the case of Damian Green, is it not odd that the standard of honesty required of a Minister should be different from that required of an MP? Apparently breach of a Ministerial code means a Minister loses his job as a Minister but he can still carry on as an MP.

Maybe the answer is that if the breach was fairly insignificant the MP's constituents are happy for him/her to continue to be their MP but publicity (TV, the Press) effectively bring about his/her dismissal as a Minister? That's sad.

Flag

2RecommendReply

JDM Dec 22, 2017

@Henry Scrope There is no general requirement in the MP's code of ethics to be honest. it does include the following:

"Members should act on all occasions in accordance with the public trust placed in them. They should always behave with probity and integrity, including in their use of public resources."

But most of the rules for MP's are about conflicts of interest, financial issues that may affect what they do etc. For Ministers, who speak on behalf of the Government, it is not really wrong to hold them to a higher standard of behavior.

Flag

RecommendReply

MenatArms1970 Dec 22, 2017

ENOUGH OF THIS NONSENSE!!

Let us focus on the real story here. David Davies said he'd resign if Green was sacked.....Hello? David? Are you a man of honour?

Flag

4RecommendReply

JDM Dec 22, 2017

@MenatArms1970 Green resigned. For a politicians that is far more than enough wriggle room to claim black is white and vice versa

Flag

1RecommendReply

MenatArms1970 Dec 22, 2017

Those duplicitous taints, have they no shame!

Flag

RecommendReply
JohnW Dec 22, 2017

Green has behaved like an idiot and ignored the principle that when in a hole stop digging
Others, including the media have jumped on the bandwagon to promote their own prejudices and bias, many with an over righteous attitude

Flag

4RecommendReply
Ian Gordon Dec 22, 2017

Politicians have proved time and again that they are incapable of policing themselves - there is too much at stake. All of them want to stay on the gravy train.

Flag

3RecommendReply
MatWinch Dec 22, 2017
Bring Damian back - soon.

We can't afford to lose a strong public servant like him.

So what if he batted away the story.
So what if he touched a knee or scanned some saucy videos one lonely night in Parliament.
So what if he is like most men.
He was there to represent us as well as help govern.

Flag

8RecommendReply
Give us a snarl Dec 22, 2017

So what if he was sat watching extreme pornography instead of doing his job.
So what if he lied, lied, lied to cover his tracks.
So what if harassed women.
All of which would lead to sacking in any other walk of life.
He shouldn't even be allowed into the Palace of Westminster. There are many unpleasant words to describe people like him.

Flag

4RecommendReply
Cammie Dec 22, 2017

@M. Br. It was not only not extreme, it was legal. You've been persuaded by a lying ex-copper. He was over-friendly with an adult woman. He's committed no offence.

Flag

2RecommendReply
morticia Dec 22, 2017

@Cammie @Give us a snarl Indeed, she said yesterday that she hadn't wanted Damian Green to lose his job.

Flag

RecommendReply
Ian Gordon Dec 22, 2017

@MatWinch He lied to the House of Commons.

Flag

3RecommendReply
Cammie Dec 22, 2017

@Ian Gordon @MatWinch Not sure it was to the Commons but he did talk to the media. So what if he lied about his sex life, what are you, a monk?

Flag

1RecommendReply

BSP Dec 22, 2017

Tangential to the story I know, but of interest nevertheless, how easy must it be to hack into HofC IT systems if that sort of stuff is being viewed?

Flag

1RecommendReply

JDM Dec 22, 2017

@BSP At the time (8 years ago) it was possible. Now porn sites are blocked from access, entirely because of the IT security risk

Flag

RecommendReply

Pam Nash Dec 22, 2017

It was right that Green went for lying.

That said, it was manifestly wrong that police raided his office without a warrant and that Quick and Lewis have revealed that there was non criminal porn on his computer.

Those below who are defending the police action should consider whether they'd be happy with police raiding their premises without warrants and subsequently revealing non criminal, but embarrassing, material found there.

If that becomes the norm then it's a very rocky road indeed.

Flag

26RecommendReply

Alan Hardwick Dec 22, 2017

@Pam Nash Police often raid premises without warrants.

Flag

2RecommendReply

Paul Dec 22, 2017

He was arrested for an offence that carries a maximum penalty of life. This is an indictable offence and there are a number of powers which the police can use to search premises. At no point has it been claimed that it was an illegal search another play on words.

Flag

RecommendReply

Arthur Atkinson Dec 22, 2017

"The police must stop meddling in politics" but not the press...

Flag

6RecommendReply

Peter nuttall Dec 22, 2017

@Arthur Atkinson A pointless comment.

Flag

3RecommendReply

Give us a snarl Dec 22, 2017

Why pointless? A pertinent point. You can't wring your hands over police exposing the wrong doing of politicians, but overlook how utterly shameless the press is in pushing political lies and propaganda, and destabilising governments of all hues.

Flag

2RecommendReply

Newminster Dec 22, 2017

M Br —

The police's job is not to "expose wrongdoing"; it is to investigate crime, catch criminals, and compile the evidence (**all** the evidence) to enable a case to come to court.

There is already at least anecdotal evidence that the 2008 investigation was instituted as a favour to the then Home Secretary Jacqui Smith and that a similar request by a Conservative Home Secretary would have been stalled. There is also anecdotal evidence of the “Law and Order” approach to the Commons authorities — let us go and get what we want or we’ll get a warrant and turn the whole Palace of Westminster upside down, sunshine!

So they get Green’s computer and find nothing on it that the DPP is prepared to use either against Green or the “whistleblower” but — hallelujah! — they find some pornography. Nothing illegal but “extreme” if you believe Quick (poor shrinking violet - how did he ever even make sergeant?) or not even extreme if you believe Lewis.

And that, M Br, ought to have been the end of the matter because the police are not our moral guardians —for which we should be eternally grateful — and if I had to make choice about who was going to govern the country, a man who may or may not have been watching porn now and again or a couple of retired coppers bent on a bit of revenge, I know where my choice would lie. How about you?

Flag

5RecommendReply

Cammie Dec 22, 2017

@M. Br. The police have a duty of trust to the public and confidentiality on matters relating to their work. If you you don't know that, back to preschool for you.

Flag

RecommendReply

Arthur Atkinson Dec 22, 2017

@Cammie @Give us a snarl Who is M. Br referring to?

Flag

RecommendReply

Arthur Atkinson Dec 22, 2017

@Peter nuttall @Arthur Atkinson Why's that Peter?

Flag

RecommendReply

DAVID GREEN Dec 22, 2017

If officers are accused of lying by Green they have a right to publish facts supporting their defence. It is, after all, defamation.....and they should sue.

His continued denials make the case for defamation stronger.....and I'm sure any reasonable judge would agree that the record of activity on that computer is the key.

Flag

1RecommendReply

Arthur Atkinson Dec 22, 2017

@DAVID GREEN They should sue if there's grounds to - Mr Quick said he was going to sue unless he got an apology - he's not sued though has he?

Flag

3RecommendReply

JDM Dec 22, 2017

@DAVID GREEN Remember the timeline - the police breach confidentiality and afterwards DG says they are lying. The another policeman breaches confidentiality to support the first policeman. If the policemen involved want to sue - then so be it. but releasing this information publicly as they did is just wrong

Flag

7RecommendReply

Colin Childerley Dec 22, 2017

Democracy what is that any more, we are controlled by the social media and no one will

ever do anything about it.

You can demolish anyone with a stroke of the key board and everyone is guilty before being proven innocent

Flag

5RecommendReply

Alan Hardwick Dec 22, 2017

@Colin Childerley Could be argued that many are controlled by by the right wing print media, "and no one will ever do anything about it".

Flag

RecommendReply

MenatArms1970 Dec 22, 2017

Jesus there's some misinformed hysterical people on this website. I do so enjoy reading the sweeping generalisations of politicians, media columnists like you Phillip and Matthew Parris when you label all of us as 'enemies of democracy' and in a mass conspiracy against politicians.

Here's some facts for all of calling us Little Hitlers, Gestapo, inquisitors and Stasi (oh and by the way, read your history books and you'll see quite a few differences between us and them!)

1. The Times broke the story about Maltby and the porn.
2. Quick as an ex-police officer (please note use of word ex) was asked to comment, rightly or wrongly he did.
3. Green came out swinging and used language that he will probably have to withdraw and apologise for or be sued.
4. An ex-colleague who had access to all the evidence and knew Green was lying came out in support of a colleague. He is under investigation, fair enough play with the big boys you play by there rules.
5. 2 senior people in HMG have investigated and said Green lied.

Now this isn't rocket science.

1. He either downloaded porn and watched it on a Government computer (A Police officer has just been sacked in the North of England for that very offence_)
2. Or he was aware as a Government Minister that his computer security had been breached/hacked and decided not to tell anyone about it for several years whilst this investigation laboured on.

Now the reason I know that there isn't a 'Police Conspiracy' is quite simple.

The young PC fighting for her life with the crackhead in Moss Side doesn't give flying *&*& about Damian Green.

The Skipper trying to stop his officers getting their heads filled in an a Public Order incident isn't thinking 'after this I must form a cabal to hunt down democratically elected politicians'

When Inspectors get together they whinge about loss of Overtime, how the calibre of officer isn't the same anymore and how the hell are we supposed to deliver a service with thousands less people.

So to Matthew, Phillip, Reginald Albion and David Lowder I say get over yourselves you over dramatic, police hating, moaning harpies!

Flag

10RecommendReply

Peter nuttall Dec 22, 2017

@MenatArms1970 T wo points - the initial moves by the police were incorrect, confidentiality was broken, and your other points are irrelevant to this case. Also the word is their, not there. You, I'm

afraid, don't exactly fill me with confidence with regard to the intelligence of police officers. Particularly this - "The Skipper trying to stop his officers getting their heads filled in an a Public Order incident isn't thinking 'after this I must form a cabal to hunt down democratically elected politicians'"
It doesn't make sense.

Flag

5RecommendReply

MenatArms1970 Dec 22, 2017

@Peter nuttall @MenatArms1970 I typed all of that on a phone, you should be impressed not castigating!

Flag

1RecommendReply

Growltiger Dec 22, 2017

@MenatArms1970 @Peter nuttall As a victim of the spell-correct function on my phone, I sympathise with MenatArms. Good effort in the circs. But the fact that many police are hard at work meeting the needs of the moment, with no thought for politics, does not demonstrate that other police are not spending their every waking moment on devising little plans that are probably meant to keep the political classes aware that the police are in control, not them (to reference part of the conversation that was supposed to have taken place by the gates of Downing Street).

Flag

3RecommendReply

Peter nuttall Dec 22, 2017

@MenatArms1970 @Peter nuttall Well done - I can sympathise - but it doesn't make any of your points correct.

Flag

2RecommendReply

Ben Williams Dec 22, 2017

@Peter nuttall @MenatArms1970 To be fair, this is clearly someone who feels strongly about something important, and I value skills beyond his grammar.

He's still wrong - if the police don't abide by the law then they lose their right to "police" the rest of us.

Of course, even if Green didn't break any laws, we have a right to expect higher standards of our politicians too, which a very significant minority clearly don't do.

Flag

2RecommendReply

MenatArms1970 Dec 22, 2017

@Ben Williams @Peter nuttall @MenatArms1970 I actually don't think my grammar was that bad. They never expose or critique your work on the Daily Mail website. Tch!

Flag

RecommendReply

JDM Dec 22, 2017

@MenatArms1970 I have issue with what you say, especially as it seems you are a member of the police:

The Times might have released the story, but all I have seen say it was Quick that gave them the info

The rules governing a policemen today (who lost his job) are very different to the rules governing an MP 8 years ago. Nothing in the MP rules at the time stopped the watching of porn and the computer use policy did not restrict its use for porn.

he was not a Government Minister when the police took his computer. Not entirely clear what you mean about computer security being hacked.

A more thorough knowledge of the facts and a more accurate use of them is what we would expect from the police. Apparently you disagree.

Flag

RecommendReply

MenatArms1970 Dec 22, 2017

@JDM @MenatArms1970 'Nothing in the MP rules at the time stopped the watching of porn and the computer use policy did not restrict its use for porn.'

I'm sorry are you saying it's acceptable to watch Porn in a work environment?

I would argue that the only occasion that would be permissible is if you're the director or actor on the set of 'Miss Cheerleader likes to be spanked' and you're reviewing the last scene you filmed.

Not sure how you know Bob Quick was the original source for The Times expose?

Green denied the downloading or use of porn websites, therefore he was either hacked or someone had access to his work computer to do so.

Which I think falls under the definition of computer security, correct?

Flag

RecommendReply

Reginald Albion Dec 22, 2017

Core defence for the Inquisition: we are just looking for the truth.

See Kafka for further references.

Flag

1RecommendReply

Jack Silver Dec 22, 2017

Great work by the police. He was a dirty old man. End of.

Flag

1RecommendReply

Lucius Tullus Dec 22, 2017

@Jack Silver The police were raiding the office on an entirely separate matter. He may be a dirty old man, but despite earlier unsourced leaks, it was apparently not illegal pornography.

Therefore what Green did comes under the category of 'an HR issue' and was nothing to do with the police.

If the police had found evidence of excessive use of the computer for online shopping or facebook should they also have leaked this?

Please take a look at Reginald Albion's post above for why this was not great work by the police.

Flag

9RecommendReply

Give us a snarl Dec 22, 2017

'Hr issue' you kidding? If this happened I any other walk of life that person would be out the door.

Librarian found watching extreme porn at work...

Store manager found watching extreme porn at work...

Headteacher found watching extreme porn at work.....

Tory Mp found watching extreme porn at work... Oh... Have a 5 minute HR meeting and a mild telling off. Pah!

Flag

3RecommendReply

Lucius Tullus Dec 22, 2017

@M. Br. I'm afraid you are completely missing the point, which is that the pornography was nothing to do with the police. I'm surprised so many people are failing to understand this.

Flag

3RecommendReply

Jack Silver Dec 22, 2017

At last the policemen had some morals. Not much in evidence on this forum.

Flag

1RecommendReply

Bryan Russell Dec 22, 2017

Barely a week goes by without politicians from one side or the other demanding a police investigation into some aspect of politics.

For far too long politicians of all sides have treated the police as a cheap tool, calling for police investigations as a stunt to make political gain for their party. If they don't want the police crawling all over their activities, they shouldn't spend so much time and energy demanding that 'this or that' is investigated.

Don't blame the police for this situation - blame the politicians.

Flag

5RecommendReply

David Lowder Dec 22, 2017

Smacks of the Stasi.

Flag

5RecommendReply

Waldorf Dec 22, 2017

Absolutely right on both accounts. First, Ministerial Code broken and Green had to go. Second, police procedures must be investigated.

Flag

13RecommendReply

The Man On The Clapham Omnibus Dec 22, 2017

Brooke's cartoon is offensive, without a shred of truth, and disrespectful to all who live in this wonderful country.

Being a remoaning paper is one thing, hating everything the government and people stand for is quite another.

Flag

5RecommendReply

Bernard Adams Dec 22, 2017

@The Man On The Clapham Omnibus

I doubt whether the Poles would get the Union Jack upside-down, as Brooke has.

Flag

3RecommendReply

island voice Dec 22, 2017

@Bernard Adams @The Man On The Clapham Omnibus It means "in distress" sooo up side down might be very apt?

Flag

2RecommendReply

Ytongs Dec 22, 2017

@Bernard Adams @The Man On The Clapham Omnibus I was looking at that too but I think it is the right way up. Broad white diagonal next to the flagpole at the top.

Flag

RecommendReply

Frankie Lee Dec 22, 2017

When the Police raided Green's office they were investigating offences. That's their job. As for disclosure of information, if it is in the public interest then it is permissible. It is a protected disclosure. Arguably when the behaviour of MPs is a national issue, disclosures about Green are permissible.

Of course senior police bosses are so much in the company of politicians these days that they will be very keen to screw these junior officers on behalf of important people whose feathers have been ruffled. That senior officers have become so politicised is the real concern, or at least it ought to be, but that will be drowned out in the rush to savagely punish two minions who spoke up about a self confessed liar.

Flag

4RecommendReply

Beth Vaughan Dec 22, 2017

It was an illegal search, but regardless of that there was no court case resulting from the search all information gathered should have not been released, it should have been destroyed in accordance with the Met's document retention schedule.

Further policemen retiring from the force absolutely should not have taken copies of this data. Ignoring politics everyone should be very concerned about the unprofessional actions of these two men.

Flag

24RecommendReply

Notacoldwarwarrior Dec 22, 2017

The search was conducted without a warrant. The Police aren't there to look after morality of politicians, just to investigate crime. This is a politically based stitch up and Quick et al must face consequences.

Flag

28RecommendReply

Jon Quirk Dec 22, 2017

Virtue Signalling and PC-thinking are numbing all our brains.

We all need to press a "reset" button and start thinking about the real issues, the big issues that shape and define us now and into the future.

We can't let the little Hitlers rule us all and in particular set the agenda for what we think and believe.

The policeman in this instance is very much a little Hitler.

Flag

7RecommendReply

James Lawson XIX Dec 22, 2017

I must respectfully dissent from the view presented by Mr Collins. It is not true that in every case that the Police require a warrant to search premises. If they turn up on your doorstep and make an arrest, their authority to search a suspect's premises are automatic in relation to the offence for which the arrest has been made. Our Police have the widest powers of arrest than any other police force in Europe, including, for example, making all offence, arrestable, thus triggering the power to search premises and vehicles. This arises as a consequence of the abolition of the distinction between arrestable and non-arrestable offences.

What the Tories are now beginning to see is the 'chickens coming home to roost'. For years, the Tories and New Labour have been happy to compete with each other as to who could be the 'toughest' on crime, and who could be condemned as 'soft on crime'. They were more than willing to

give statutory effect to the shopping list of powers any Chief Constable asked for when they turned up to Lobby Ministers directly.

As long as those powers were necessary to control the lumpen 'proletariate', the political establishment were not overly concerned about the constitutional requirement of checks and balances just as long as the property and the lives of the 'great and the good' are protected.

It really did not matter whether, *inter alia*, the right against self-incrimination was abolished, or that the admissibility of heresy evidence in criminal trials was greatly extended or that previously strict controls over 'similar-fact' evidence was relaxed to the point where evidence of previous bad character was sufficient to secure increasing convictions for the least amount of money as legislative effect was given to that line in the Humphrey Bogart film 'Casablanca:' "round up the usual suspects."

The cozy relationship between the political establishment and the Police was actually articulated by Tory Minister Andrew Mitchell himself when, on being challenged by the Constable on duty on the Downing Street Gate, said: "We are the Government, you guys [the police] are supposed to be on our side".

Our side?

The real problem here is the one that Mr Collins will not articulate. It is not the Police who are cocking a snook at democracy. The Political establishment who have come into contact with the Police have been hoist to the petard of the extensive powers they have been happy to confer on those they wrongly believed are 'on their side', and they and their cheerleaders don't like it one little bit do they?

The late and greatly missed Lord Denning was absolutely correct when he said that a Chief Constable is responsible to the law alone'. The 'establishment' would do well to remember that before they start throwing Criminal Justice Acts around like confetti at a wedding while denigrating the very Human Rights which are there to protect everyone - even people like them!

Flag

RecommendReply

Awewheesht Dec 22, 2017

Louise Theroux interviewed an inmate in the US who was appealing for the umpteenth time for parole after serving 10 years of a 25 year sentence for homicide. Louise asked why he thought he should be considered for early release and the criminal said he was innocent and it was a miscarriage of justice. It was poignant that part of his appeal was an ID parade photo used against him where he was the only one wearing handcuffs.

I don't know the truth of the Damien Green porn search history, or the alleged misconduct or worse in things sexual - and he is not an credible person to hold high public office as a result - but one interpretation the police have done nothing to dispel is that they could not get him by conventional inquiry so the alternative strategy was the retired police gambit.

This interpretation means political pressure has been applied to the Police to preserve Green, and I believe the Police have gone after him imaginatively by other means. As a miserable failed process it does echo the case of the poor wretch in the US. In doing so, harm is done to democracy and particularly public trust in these institutions.

Flag

2RecommendReply

David Craig Dec 22, 2017

@Awewheesht Is "Louise Theroux" in any way related to the reporter Louis Theroux?

Flag

3RecommendReply

Alan Hawkes Dec 22, 2017

@Awewheesht Do you have evidence that political pressure was 'applied to the police to preserve Green,'? If you do, you should reveal it to the appropriate authorities.

Flag

4RecommendReply

Awewheesht Dec 22, 2017

@Alan Hawkes @Awewheesht Unfortunately, no. So sharp of you to spot that similarly named writer though.

Flag

RecommendReply

Awewheesht Dec 22, 2017

@Alan Hawkes @Awewheesht I'm merely offering an interpretation as I clearly stated, not making an allegation. This is a discussion thread and by definition we can only speculate why Theresa May has held Green to her bosom since 2008 when he was raided, why she has sat on the fence for months neither supporting or condemning him and why there are people happy to go on the BBC even today with concerns about his behaviour.

So some people would be justified in interpreting things in the way I've explained. If the police were subject to political pressure to investigate a matter of public interest (shock horror) is it worthwhile for a member of the public to report it to them, since they would already know it? there lies the difficulty, you see.

Flag

1RecommendReply

Ken Broadbent Dec 22, 2017

I know from the experience of my mum that male prison officers resented the introduction of female officers, principally because they struggled to lie on the witness stand. Same for the police?

Flag

2RecommendReply

Awewheesht Dec 22, 2017

@Ken Broadbent Eh?

Flag

6RecommendReply

Jack Jones Dec 22, 2017

Sorry but that is a ludicrous statement.

Flag

3RecommendReply

Ken Broadbent Dec 22, 2017

@Jack Jones @Awewheesht @James Murray

Yeah I didn't make myself clear at all.

What I meant was my mum was in the first intake of women officers in a male nick 25 years ago. The existing officers hated it because the women officers found it impossible to lie to a judge in cases where prisons 'fell down the stairs' etc. They just can't do it for some reason.

So the entire culture changed and the officers lost a lot of their unofficial power.

Flag

RecommendReply

james murray Dec 22, 2017

@Ken Broadbent

Ken,
I see what you mean.
It is a feature of the enforcing professions that one should close ranks and protect colleagues.
I do not know if there is much there is to be done to change this culture.
Jim Murray

Flag

4RecommendReply
Andrew Cole Dec 22, 2017
"inaccurate and misleading" statements about the contents of his computer in 2008,
The questions should not have been asked as the activity was legal. So the misconduct also relates to the people the police reported to.

Flag

6RecommendReply
Marcus Lau Dec 22, 2017
Can we take this to mean you're entirely comfortable with a Deputy PM viewing this material on a parliamentary computer?

Flag

1RecommendReply
inthelineofhire Dec 22, 2017
@Marcus Lau Has that been established then?

Flag

5RecommendReply
Marcus Lau Dec 22, 2017
@Inthelineofhire
I rather think it has.
Allegedly, the PC was logged into under his account, at times when he would have been there, and on numerous occasions too.
It will not need to be proven to any standard, as what he did wasn't illegal.

Flag

1RecommendReply
Peter Rona Dec 22, 2017
@Marcus Lau The viewing occurred in 2008 when he was not Deputy PM. In any case, I, for one, am a great deal less uncomfortable about about it than about illegal police activity.

Flag

6RecommendReply
Marcus Lau Dec 22, 2017
@Peter Rona
Especially when it's a Tory in the hot seat, you might well add.

Flag

RecommendReply
Alan Hardwick Dec 22, 2017
@Peter Rona @Marcus Lau But the lie took place when he was Deputy PM.

Flag

RecommendReply
Melissa Roy Dec 22, 2017
Is it unreasonable to ask why the Tories have been circling the wagons around Damien Green for the better part of 9 years?

One would think after a string of controversies he would be seen as a liability?

Flag

RecommendReply

Alan Davison Dec 22, 2017

@Melissa Roy You don't really get it. Do you?

Flag

14RecommendReply

kateha Dec 22, 2017

Mr Green did nothing wrong over the past nine years. If you have evidence to prove otherwise please produce it. Ergo, hyperbole re. 'circling the wagons' says more about the comprehension skills of the (in this case) reader, than anything about either Mr Green or the Conservative Party.

Flag

6RecommendReply

Marcus Lau Dec 22, 2017

"Mr Green did nothing wrong over the past nine years". Complete sophistry.

Did Mr Green do anything illegal? Perhaps not.

But 'wrong' in terms of Parliamentary behaviour? Manifestly he did, I would suggest.

Flag

1RecommendReply

Melissa Roy Dec 22, 2017

@kateha You don't even know what I am talking about, do you?

Flag

RecommendReply

Mrs Sarah Rees Dec 22, 2017

Ditto the cps.

Flag

3RecommendReply

Gordon Gilbert Dec 21, 2017

I am innately suspicious of the police and have made it a rule to behave in such a way as to have as little as possible to do with them.

Flag

28RecommendReply

Roger Broad Dec 21, 2017

Let us get all of this into perspective as it comes at a time of Government excelling itself as the purveyors of the truth and some who might also wish to call its own " legitimacy into question" Mr Green resigned for failing to tell the truth, in addition other allegations of a sexual nature were found by an internal Government standards enquiry to have been plausible. But has Government been honest with the electorate throughout Brexit. From the Red Bus to David Davis. The whole conduct of Government should be called into question on this very serious UK involving issue. Today some 39 Brexit assessment papers were launched into Public view. A general public comment response questioned their legitimacy . Also the extremely poor quality of their drafting and content in relation to its relevance to Brexit negotiations . Was the truth told about these and subsequently at what time were they hastily cobbled together ?

Let us have no more political smokescreens, the major issue for the Country is how badly Brexit is going and the incompetent and untruthful manner in which it is being handled.

Flag

5RecommendReply

Jack Jones Dec 22, 2017

Possibly true, possibly not, possibly a bit of both - but entirely irrelevant to this article.

Flag

13RecommendReply

Geoff Taylor Dec 22, 2017

@Roger Broad Several year ago, long before any Brexit referendum, a Cabinet Minister's computer was found to contain porn. The Minister unwisely told some porkies to try and cover it up and has had to resign as a result.

Since time immemorial politicians have been found out and punished for having it away with the hired help, for having their hand in the till or for misusing their assets (fnarr fnarr). This is nothing new, apart from the rather overt police agenda which is my major concern here.

My other major concern - How in bloody blue blazes can anyone think that this has anything at all to do with Brexit?

Flag

9RecommendReply

John Austin Dec 21, 2017

The police have always lied, but now that some ex-police are playing dangerous games with the Tories, they have finally woken up to the fact they ain't all like Dixon of Dock Green.

'Night all.

Flag

10RecommendReply

Chel2000 Dec 21, 2017

Whistle blowers save democracy not the other way around.

The police officer who exposed Govt corruption is a hero.

Flag

1RecommendReply

Guy in Norfolk - but now in Spain Dec 21, 2017

' The police must stop meddling in politics '.

I TOTALLY agree with this and started arguing such when the police (aka Thatcher's Army) were sent up north to smash the miners.

Trouble is in 2017 the Tories don't like being being under the spotlight themselves.

Hypocrites.

Flag

8RecommendReply

David Shipley Dec 21, 2017

@Guy in Norfolk - but now in Spain Over the course of the last 35 years the police have changed sides. They were on the side of authoritarian Tories then and are on the side of authoritarian socialists now. The common thread is....

Flag

8RecommendReply

Carla Dec 21, 2017

'Sir Peter Fahy, a former chief constable of Greater Manchester, has pointed out that the raid on Mr Green's office and the revelation that his computer contained pornographic images were incidents that ought not to happen in a democratic country.'

The police are completely to blame for this fiasco. There would have been nothing for Green to deny (or lie about if you prefer that word) if the police had acted correctly and not raided his office without a warrant and not kept a copy of what was found on the computer and then chosen to publicise it many years later. I seriously hope they are held to account for their actions as I doubt very much they would have done this to a Labour politician.

Flag

70RecommendReply

Peter Jordan Dec 21, 2017

@Carla You have given a pointless and simplistic summary of a very careful analysis in this opinion piece, then added a silly bit of paranoia.

Your suggestion that the police would not have done this to a Labour politician is without any foundation. Special Branch routinely investigated Labour politicians during the cold war on the theory that they might be working for the Russians.

The Police may be guilty of malpractice, but they are not out to "get" the Tories.

Flag

5RecommendReply

Caroline Charalambides Dec 21, 2017

@Peter Jordan @Carla I agree Peter Jordan...but then it wouldn't fit the narrative?

Flag

2RecommendReply

Carla Dec 22, 2017

@Peter Jordan I may think your comment is silly and pointless too but I wouldn't be so rude as to say so. We all have a right to express our opinions.

Flag

6RecommendReply

Chel2000 Dec 22, 2017

@Carla @Peter Jordan

Put forward a legitimate point.

This isn't a chat room.

Flag

1RecommendReply

Notacoldwarwarrior Dec 22, 2017

The Police in general maybe not. I wouldn't be so sure about certain individuals.

Flag

1RecommendReply

Chel2000 Dec 21, 2017

@Carla

Your kidding I hope.

Can you imagine the clamoring for this Govt to call a general election if it was Labour involve in all this sleaze.

It is only because of the right wing bias, that dominates our media, that their still hanging around like a bad smell.

A couple of Tory MP's ended up with custodial sentences when Major's Govt was dumped out of power in 1997.

Will that scenario repeat itself soon ?

Flag

2RecommendReply

David Shipley Dec 21, 2017

@Chel2000 @Carla Is English your first language?

Flag

7RecommendReply

Chel2000 Dec 22, 2017

@David Shipley @Chel2000 @Carla

If you don't have a case to make an argument please don't make childish comments.

Flag

5RecommendReply

BMP Dec 22, 2017

@David Shipley @Chel2000 @Carla

What's yours? Invective?

Flag

RecommendReply

kateha Dec 22, 2017

@David Shipley @Chel2000 @Carla Certainly does not appear to be his or her, first language incoherence does not I'm afraid add to any debate.

Flag

1RecommendReply

Alan Davison Dec 22, 2017

@Chel2000 @Carla Except this time it will be a couple of bent cops doing time.

Flag

2RecommendReply

Keith Dec 21, 2017

Scapegoats are often sought after an embarrassing episode like this, sometimes unfairly. Possibly the blame might well be eventually spread much further, but if these two ex-policemen are not rapidly made examples of then pity help our democracy.

Flag

34RecommendReply

Alan Hardwick Dec 22, 2017

@Keith As you write: they are ex-policemen.

Flag

RecommendReply

Clevertrevor Dec 21, 2017

Lewis & Quick deserve to have the book thrown at them. A heavy book, thrown hard.

It is not the job of a police officer to search the premises of anyone, let alone an MP, without a warrant. It is certainly their job to take the evidence, squirrel it away in their attic and produce it a decade later for the purpose of making mischief.

I regret to say that the "wild notions" of a conspiracy do not seem particularly wild at all.

Flag

70RecommendReply

Mr R Dumont Dec 22, 2017

@Clevertrevor

The Police and Criminal Evidence Act authorizes search without warrant of anything or any premises under the control of a person who has been arrested for an offence. I am sure that the police conducting the search of the premises did so after they had arrested Green on suspicion of having committed an arrestable offence. They have been given this power to assist them to find evidence

relating to the offence for which the person has been arrested. This makes their search lawful. If in the course of this search they find evidence of any other offence they cannot ignore it. Hundreds of such "searches without warrants" are carried out every day, allowing the police to recover stolen property drugs etc. before the property can be spirited away.

Flag

4RecommendReply

Deep Joy Dec 22, 2017

@Clevertrevor The police were officially called in by the Government, to investigate the leaks which had been happening when privileged information was passed to the Press and published. Presumably a direct order from the Government passes as a warrant.

Flag

3RecommendReply

Epi-man Dec 21, 2017

We will not be able to trust the police until some of their number get sent to jail when found to have been committing crimes. Else there is insufficient to discourage bad attitudes.

Flag

27RecommendReply

Chel2000 Dec 21, 2017

@Epi-man

We will not be able to trust Tory MP's until some of their number get sent to jail when found to have been committing crimes. Else there is insufficient to discourage bad attitudes.

Like 1997 when two of John Major's Tory Govt ended up in prison.

Flag

2RecommendReply

David Shipley Dec 22, 2017

@Chel2000 @Epi-man You forgot about the 4 Labour MPs jailed for fiddling their expenses ie stealing. This discussion is about the role of the police, not a p*ssing contest about which party has more crooks in.

Flag

14RecommendReply

David Jones Dec 21, 2017

Maybe all this happened due to under-funding! After all, every other excuse is put down to that.

Flag

17RecommendReply

Ian Lumsden Dec 21, 2017

@David Jones Yeah. I didn't tell you about the mobile phone transcripts because er I was over-stretched.

Flag

13RecommendReply

Peter Jordan Dec 21, 2017

@David Jones Obviously, leaking facts about a politician takes effort, so under-funding is not the cause.

Maybe you are confusing this with the earlier case of failure to disclose evidence to the defence in rape trials. That obviously does relate to under-funding, which is real and long-term.

Flag

1RecommendReply

Yersinia Pestis Dec 22, 2017

@David Jones

Brexit. You forgot Brexit.

Flag

RecommendReply

Mrs Kay Wheelton Dec 21, 2017

He was found to be dishonest in his account of what happened. That from an independent enquiry from within parliament. May has sacked him but is now blaming others. Porn Gate pleb Gate which side is to blame?

Flag

5RecommendReply

RECH Dec 21, 2017

@Mrs Kay Wheelton If the police had not put the material into the public domain **before** he was dishonest, then none of this would have happened. That is why it is very important indeed to determine whether or not the police acted ethically and / or legally.

If the position had been reversed, and a politician had done this to a senior police officer then I don't for a single moment think you or anyone else would give the politician the benefit of the doubt.

Flag

41RecommendReply

Richard Marriott Dec 21, 2017

@Mrs Kay Wheelton

The police in this case have betrayed the trust placed in them, starting with the original Commons raid in 2008, which was a violation of Parliamentary privilege and for which the names of the then Sergeant-at-Arms and the then Speaker (Martin) will go down in infamy!

Flag

29RecommendReply

David Stewart Dec 21, 2017

@Richard Marriot Both of them useless.

Flag

5RecommendReply

Peter Jordan Dec 21, 2017

@Mrs Kay Wheelton Your comment displays the classic "either-or" fallacy. The police are to blame for disclosing that which should not be disclosed. Grieve is to blame for telling lies. Theresa May doesn't have to choose which of them is to blame. Both are wrong and she is perfectly right to say so. It's not "either-or".

Flag

4RecommendReply

PAUL Dec 21, 2017

It is not democracy that the police have undermined: it is the Rule of Law. The RoL is a social construct predicated on a set of social conventions and practices that describe concepts such as professional duty (clearly lacking here); respect for conventions (thrown out of the window with a Trespass on Parliamentary property); and the power of restraining influences. This would be why the Police were constituted as uniformed lay people with no more rights to arrest than anyone else, whilst a warrant is limited in scope and at the gift of the Courts.

Once we forego these safe guards we no longer live under the Rule of Law.

Flag

61RecommendReply

IanR Dec 21, 2017

@PAUL What RoL as you put it stops a retired policeman whistle-blowing on a lying senior minister?

Flag

3RecommendReply

Richard Marriott Dec 21, 2017

@IanR @PAUL

The use of confidential evidence gathered unlawfully by abusing Parliamentary privilege and not even pertinent to the case being investigated at the time!

Flag

33RecommendReply

IanR Dec 22, 2017

@Richard Marriott @IanR @PAUL Well, why oh why did the Cabinet Office investigate it now if it was irrelevant. Their conclusion about Green's claim that,

"he was not aware that indecent material was found on parliamentary computers in his office, were inaccurate and misleading, as the Metropolitan Police Service had previously informed him of the existence of this material. These statements therefore fall short of the honesty requirement of the Seven Principles of Public Life and constitute breaches of the Ministerial Code. Mr Green accepts this."

Flag

RecommendReply

Alan Davison Dec 22, 2017

@IanR @Richard Marriott @PAUL Your post is irrelevant. Richard is correct. I am not sure if you can't or won't address the important issues in this.

I would like to know if you have never lied. I hope you have never tried to undermine our democracy.

Anyone can tell which of those two is the most important.

Flag

1RecommendReply

IanR Dec 22, 2017

@Alan Davison @IanR @Richard Marriott @PAUL The ministerial code is as follows, I've underlined the Honesty one as it seems beyond your comprehension, note the operative word 'all'.

The Seven Principles of Public Life

Selflessness: ministers should act entirely in the public interest.

Integrity: no financial obligations should be accepted if they could undermine the minister's position.

Objectivity: when making appointments, decisions should be based on merit.

Accountability: all public office-holders are accountable, and should co-operate with all scrutiny procedures.

Openness: all decisions should be justified, and information should be restricted only when necessary for the public interest.

Honesty: public office-holders are required, by duty, to be honest in all their dealings and business.

Leadership: the principles should be supported and upheld by leadership and example.

Flag

RecommendReply

Alan Davison Dec 22, 2017

@IanR @Alan Davison @Richard Marriott @PAUL Evasion, evasion, evasion.

Let us be clear: no one is arguing that Green didn't lie. He lied and in so doing broke the ministerial code and has been sacked. Rightly so.

Now, do you think you could answer whether you think it is okay for ex-coppers to undermine a democratically elected government?

Flag

3RecommendReply

David Mortimore Dec 22, 2017

It is obviously, certainly impossible for ex-coppers to undermine a democratically elected government...no brainer.

Flag

RecommendReply

IanR Dec 23, 2017

@Alan Davison @IanR @Richard Marriott @PAUL "He lied and in so doing broke the ministerial code and has been sacked. Rightly so."

Do try to understand that the Cabinet Office investigation was originally called to investigate the Kate Maltby affair - up to that time the porn issue was unknown. You can't have it both ways agreeing that he is a liar and was rightly sacked for that, but with another breath saying the porn issue should have remained secret and so, he wouldn't have been found guilty of lying.

Flag

RecommendReply

Alan Davison Dec 23, 2017

@David Mortimore So Green wasn't sacked then? I thought he was.

Flag

1RecommendReply

Alan Davison Dec 23, 2017

@IanR @Alan Davison @Richard Marriott @PAUL I will tell you what I am saying. Green lied and was rightly sacked. But it is more concerning to me and to others that police officers entered his office without a warrant (that is, illegally. similar to burglary) They then stole his computer and obtained data that suggested he had been viewing legal porn. Not illegal, just embarrassing. They then kept this information after they retired and produced it many years later. They then chose the moment when he was being accused of some indiscretion to launch an attack on him. They did this by stating that he watched porn on his work computer to lend weight to the Kate Maltby story. The narrative being that he was a pervert and would most likely sexually harass young women.

They did this not because they were Victorian prudes who were outraged or because they were whistle-blowers. These were hardened cops after all.

They did this for political reasons. They brought about the sacking of a member of a democratically elected government. They knew he would lie about watching porn. I don't know anyone who would not lie about watching porn on their work computer until presented with irrefutable evidence.

Now, Green has been dealt with. These ex-cops who carried out much more dangerous actions now need to be dealt with.

You may not agree, and your continued refusal to answer the point suggests you do not agree. If you do not agree you have a very perverse view of public affairs.

I think the more likely reason, however, is that you are a Momentum troll.

Why else would you post comments on a centre right newspaper that conflict with the values of its readers?

Flag

RecommendReply

Waldorf Dec 23, 2017

@alan Davison. Just for information I do not have a clue. When the first article came out 5 days or so ago about "his going" the reporting was so garbled that I asked the question....after reading this article what proportion think he was sacked and what proportion think he resigned. Of course I got no answers and I am still none the wiser. So do not be too harsh on others who are like

me...confused but amused. There are three possibilities aren't there. He was sacked, he resigned, but if he had not resigned he would have been sacked. So does it matter?

Flag

RecommendReply

Alan Davison Dec 23, 2017

@Waldorf Saint Waldorf. I have no dispute with you. You are a good man.

There are, however, a lot of Momentum paid trolls on this site and I, from time to time, refute their arguments. It is not possible to have debates with these people as they have Momentum positions which must be followed to the full. They do not debate, they just repeat the same garbage over and over. If you have ever watched Sarah Huckabee-Sanders on the White House podium you will realise these trolls are the same thing.

It is important that Times readers do not confuse these people with ordinary posters.

Thankfully, most Times readers pay no attention to the deluded fools.

Have a Merry Christmas, Saint Waldorf!!

Flag

RecommendReply

Vincent Green Dec 23, 2017

@Alan Davison @IanR @Richard Marriott @PAUL

I have read that the officers did have permission to enter the office and search, I think it was given by the Master/Sergeant at Arms or some official of Parliament.

I have a nagging doubt about evidence obtained "illegally" and then deemed inadmissible in a court of law. It seems to be a way to hide the truth and if courts are about anything it must be seeking the truth and delivering fairness and justice.

Flag

RecommendReply

Vincent Green Dec 23, 2017

@Alan Davison @Waldorf

In the spirit of Christmas cheer and fairness your comments, with which I totally agree, can equally be applied to others not just Momentum. I would suggest that any person or group who denies facts/truth or will not entertain that they might be wrong or have things to learn. You could add to these groups people who have no argument on the comments being made and perhaps in frustration or it may be their character then resort to personal abuse.

Best seasonal wishes.

Flag

RecommendReply

Alan Davison Dec 23, 2017

@Vincent Green @Alan Davison @IanR @Richard Marriott @PAUL

This was Green's private office and, not being familiar with parliamentary protocol, I do not know if the officials you mention have the right to permit that office to be searched. My feeling is that they ought not to have that right.

The courts are about supporting the law. The law requires a warrant to search premises and that means there must be due cause, the suspicion of a crime. In this case there was no crime committed but "evidence" was kept by two police officers who used it as part of a political conspiracy.

Permit me to repeat. Green committed no crime by viewing legal porn.

Perhaps, in order to ease your nagging doubt, you would like the police to have power to search anywhere and anyone without a warrant. However, the purpose of a warrant is to restrain any possible abuse of power by the police.

If police have due cause and yet do not obtain a warrant before recovering evidence then that is a failure on their part and no reason to do away with the need for a warrant.

The people in the UK had to wait for hundreds of years before persons in authority were made subject to the law. Removing the need for a warrant would be a regressive step on the road to a police state.

I presume you would not be comfortable with that.

Flag

RecommendReply

Alan Davison Dec 23, 2017

@Vincent Green @Alan Davison @IanR @Richard Marriott @PAUL There are Russian trolls on this site, too. Similar methodology, different issues.

Let that not spoil our Christmas cheer!

Merry Christmas!

Flag

RecommendReply

Vincent Green Dec 23, 2017

@Alan Davison @Vincent Green @IanR @Richard Marriott @PAUL

No I would not be happy with a police state and that was not what I was suggesting. Perhaps it is a price worth paying that too many crooks get off on a technicality. I have personal experience of proven drug dealers getting off in spite of DNA and fingerprint evidence.

Flag

RecommendReply

David Mortimore Dec 23, 2017

Why was Green sacked? How do you feel about this fact?

Flag

RecommendReply

Vincent Green Dec 23, 2017

@Alan Davison @Vincent Green @IanR @Richard Marriott @PAUL

Sorry I know it is Christmas, we start early in our house, but I could not resist a comment on your penultimate paragraph. It seems that a suitable quantity of alcohol sharpens the mind and raises a wry smile.

DG was/is a person in power and he was trying to cover up and escape the rules of the "game", a little ironic.

Best wishes.

Flag

RecommendReply

Alan Davison Dec 23, 2017

@Vincent Green @Alan Davison @IanR @Richard Marriott @PAUL I think you should lay off the drink if that's how it affects your thinking!

Flag

RecommendReply

Alan Davison Dec 23, 2017

@David Mortimore Don't know who this comment was directed at. Green was fired for breaching the ministerial code which he did by lying. How I feel about it is that it was right to sack him. I have stated this fact on several earlier posts.

However, Green's lying is not the main issue. The action of the police officers is the most dangerous and important issue here. But that fact probably escapes you and if so you have nothing of value to contribute here.

Flag

RecommendReply

Peter Jordan Dec 21, 2017

@IanR @PAUL The whistle-blowing came before the lying. So lying can't be used as a justification for whistle-blowing.

Flag

5RecommendReply

IanR Dec 22, 2017

@Peter Jordan @IanR @PAUL His lawyers knew about the porn in 2008 - didn't they tell their client?

Flag

RecommendReply

Peter Jordan Dec 21, 2017

@PAUL Thank you for that blinding (and lengthy) glimpse of the obvious. The fact remains that undermining the rule of law is a threat to democracy.

Flag

4RecommendReply

stella hollis Dec 21, 2017

A troubling aspect of the original raid is the fact that having removed the computer the police destroyed it . Whose was it ? Green still denies that he had looked at the pornographic images . We are not told whether or not the leaks came from this computer ... and it is incomprehensible why the two policemen kept notebooks that are not their property and which they were supposed to hand in years ago . All very odd .

Flag

108RecommendReply

IanR Dec 21, 2017

@stella hollis The ToL at the beginning of December reported that the hard drive had been copied and stored for evidence. Everything I have read indicates that the porn was on parliamentary computers downloaded via the Parliamentary server.

Flag

5RecommendReply

Peter Rona Dec 21, 2017

@IanR @stella hollis But that does not explain why the laptop needed to be destroyed. The fact is that the copied hard drive is easier to muck with than the original. The question is whether the destruction of the laptop amounts to tampering with evidence EVEN IF THE HARD DRIVE HAD BEEN COPIED.

Flag

22RecommendReply

Melissa Roy Dec 22, 2017

@Peter Rona @IanR @stella hollis<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2009/aug/20/damian-green-records-deleted>

Doesn't explain why Galley got off scot-free after having stolen government property from a Home Office safe, either...

Flag

3RecommendReply

Peter Rona Dec 22, 2017

@Melissa Roy @Peter Rona @IanR @stella hollis no it doesn't.

Flag

RecommendReply

Richard Marriott Dec 21, 2017

@IanR @stella hollis

Why are you so determined to defend the indefensible in this case? In the article above, Philip Collins states that Green had to go, before he gets his teeth into the very sinister behaviour of certain ex-police officers!

Flag

3RecommendReply

Robert Davies Dec 21, 2017

I do not believe your comments about Sir Huh Orde to be fair or correct. The British Police have always been accountable to the law. The weakness in the past is that Judges with first class degrees believed that police would never lie. The concept of the sus law being founded on a policeman seeing three overt acts was flawed from the start. How many people have ever seen one crime being committed let alone three attempts in a short time by the same person. Law was maintained for years by an unspoken conspiracy between the public, the courts and the police. The public called on police to tell their children off or to give them a clip around the year

The office of Constable has always been a unique office among subordinates. The concept of the PCCs has undermined the concept of accountability. How many different members of the public ever attend the PCCPanel that is supposed to hold the PCC to account. I went once in Cambridge and found I was the only member present and in no way could you describe the Panel as holding the PCC to account for anything. No-one knows these individuals. They communicate through mails linked to web sites. No-one is interested in reading these political correct toms.

The simple fact is that almost everyone lies. Look at politicians! The challenge is to create the right culture, have strong leadership, have independent oversight and a process of accountability that works. We do not have all of these at present.

Flag

7RecommendReply

Ian Lumsden Dec 21, 2017

Police offices should face disciplinary action even in retirement.

Flag

78RecommendReply

MK390 Dec 21, 2017

@Ian Lumsden How can a member of the public, which is what retired officers become, be subject to a discipline code of an organisation they have left and for actions taken as members of the public after retirement?

Flag

3RecommendReply

Arizonaman Dec 21, 2017

@MK390 @Ian Lumsden As I understand it they remain bound by the official secrets act. Perhaps someone more knowledgeable can confirm or deny that.

Flag

11RecommendReply

MK390 Dec 21, 2017

@Arizonaman @MK390 @Ian Lumsden Yes, but so am I from when I was a MoD apprentice 40 years ago.

The wording was disciplinary action, which, as I explain, is a non runner.

The issue is whether two members of the public have broken the law. Plain and simple

Flag

1RecommendReply

Arizonaman Dec 21, 2017

@MK390 @Arizonaman @Ian Lumsden Fair enough, I guess that is why they are looking at the area of data protection for a possible offence of transmitting protected data. Ultimately, this might highlight a need for a new legal protection so that police can be trusted not to use or misuse confidential information gained while in the service. As it is these two have torpedoed that trust below the waterline.

Flag

10RecommendReply

MK390 Dec 21, 2017

@Arizonaman @MK390 @Ian Lumsden Yet we have a minister of the Crown who has blatantly lied and is being portrayed as a victim

Flag

1RecommendReply

Arizonaman Dec 21, 2017

@MK390 @Arizonaman @Ian Lumsden Agreed, He lied after Quick put that information into the public domain and deserved to lose his job for that lie. However, the fact that the victim was a liar does not take away that the fact that two ex-policemen revealed confidential information about someone who had committed no crime, but did upset a number of policemen. No one comes out clean from this mess.

Flag

14RecommendReply

MK390 Dec 21, 2017

@Arizonaman @MK390 @Ian Lumsden I agree.

Flag

3RecommendReply

Ian Lumsden Dec 21, 2017

@MK390 @Arizonaman @Ian Lumsden Life is complicated. He lied. He is guilty. He should not have been placed in that position in the first place. He is a victim.

Flag

8RecommendReply

Ian Lumsden Dec 21, 2017

@MK390 @Ian Lumsden For the very same reason that I, formerly working in a very senior position in the public service, could not release information about some of my clients. It would cause turmoil, private tragedy and get on the front page of this newspaper. I only learnt what I did because I was a public servant. It stays with the job. The two officers obtained their information because they were police officers. They are now private citizens and should forget it.

Members of the police service are in a position of absolute trust. They can access my bank accounts, medical record and computer history. I don't want any of that information released into the public domain. It is mine. They transgressed.

I actually doubt the individuals concerned have the intelligence to appreciate just what they have done.

Flag

19RecommendReply

Peter Jordan Dec 21, 2017

@MK390 @Ian Lumsden Their terms of employment include a lifelong commitment to keep confidential information confidential.

Flag

6RecommendReply
MK390 Dec 22, 2017

@Peter Jordan @MK390 @Ian Lumsden Police officers aren't (or certainly weren't in the time these two were serving) employees but Crown Servants. Service was regulated by Police Regulations of various sorts and versions and enshrined in law.

Flag

RecommendReply
Paul Dec 22, 2017

And what sanction would you impose? Sack them?
If police can be disciplined once retired for leaking information then it must be a level playing field for Politicians.

Flag

RecommendReply
London Resident Dec 22, 2017

@Paul Strip them of all benefits associated with their previous employment, including their police pensions.

Flag

2RecommendReply
Ian Lumsden Dec 22, 2017

@Paul The "sack them" is silly, Paul. Politicians should be held to account even when out of office if they have done something illegal. With regard to police officers, I suggest that breaking confidentiality is a criminal offence regardless of whether one is in or out of service. My suggestion will be examined by lawyers I'm sure.

Flag

2RecommendReply
Wyn Ford Dec 21, 2017

Quick and Lewis have betrayed those many ex-colleagues in the Met who are committed to doing a good job for the public they serve. At a time when confidence in the police is very low, they have managed to bring it lower. Public distrust obviously makes policing harder. Their inappropriate and seemingly vindictive behaviour undermines the concept of impartial policing. It's time for a change in the law — so there would be no doubt that such dismal antics with privileged information will result in criminal action, whether during service or after retirement.

Flag

93RecommendReply
Peter Rona Dec 21, 2017

"The right verdict has been arrived at" I am not so sure. There must be circumstances where the illegal activity of the State releases the citizen from the obligation to tell the truth, and this may have been one of them. The biased characterisation of information obtained by an illegal search, released with the clear malicious intent to harm, seems to me such a case.

Flag

39RecommendReply
Peter Jordan Dec 21, 2017

@Peter Rona Your suggestion is so extraordinary that it warrants a question: Are you really saying that, faced with illegal disclosure about me, I would be entitled to lie about it?

Flag

RecommendReply
Peter Rona Dec 22, 2017

@Peter Jordan @Peter Rona Yes. the obligation of the citizen to tell the truth cannot be greater than the obligation of the police to obey the law. Ms. May should have launched an investigation of the

police simultaneously with the investigation of Green and should have taken action, if any, only after the results of both were in hand. If Green would have lied in the knowledge that the police are also under investigation, I can see the case for dismissing him. But if he lied while facing an evident illegality and injustice about which nothing was being done, I do not see the basis for requiring that he be truthful.

Flag

3RecommendReply

Nicholas Beale Dec 22, 2017

@Peter Roma. He was fired for lying about whether he knew of these allegations about porn. He should have said " these allegations come from a tainted source and are untrue. Furthermore my view the raid of my parliamentary office was a gross breach of Parliamentary privilege, illegal and unconstitutional. It would therefore be inappropriate for me to comment further." Then he would still be in his job.

Flag

1RecommendReply

Peter Rona Dec 22, 2017

@Nicholas Beale Maybe. The whole story seems dodgy to me, and I very much doubt that we have been told the truth. To fire him for something that happened in 2008 because he now said, untruthfully, that the police did not tell him that they had found porn on his laptop (which the police have destroyed) seems extraordinary. Otherwise I agree with you.

Flag

1RecommendReply

Reality check Dec 21, 2017

I am no legal expert but surely if they raided his office without a warrant and subsequently arrested him this was illegal. Could Green take retrospective action for unlawful arrest?

Flag

43RecommendReply

Captain Haddock Dec 21, 2017

Was his arrest not at his home address?
Why would that be unlawful?

Flag

RecommendReply

IanR Dec 21, 2017

@Reality check His parliamentary office was searched with the agreement of the relevant authorities including the Speaker.

Flag

8RecommendReply

Richard Marriott Dec 21, 2017

@IanR @Reality check
To their eternal shame!

Flag

12RecommendReply

RECH Dec 21, 2017

The chronology here is really important. The police (or more accurately ex police) put this material into the public domain, prompting Green to lie, presumably because he panicked - it was at the height of the Weinstein revelations.

He had to go for lying, but the fact remains that if the ex police did behave unethically or illegally (or both) then their actions have resulted in the sacking of a very senior politician. That simply cannot on any reading be excusable.

Flag

121RecommendReply

Peter Jordan Dec 21, 2017

@RECH The police action cannot be excused, but this does not justify Green lying. He wasn't sacked for viewing porn; he was sacked for lying. You say that he had to lie. This is untrue. Lying was not only wrong, it was stupid. He must have known that the facts would emerge. Sadly, stupidity does not appear to be a reason to sack members of the government.

Flag

2RecommendReply

RECH Dec 22, 2017

@Peter Jordan @RECH Actually what I said was "He had to go for lying".

Flag

1RecommendReply

Vincent Green Dec 22, 2017

@RECH

He did not have to go for lying, he had a choice.

Flag

RecommendReply

RECH Dec 22, 2017

OK - I'll rephrase it. Lying was unacceptable for someone in his position even in this situation so I think it was a good thing he resigned.

Flag

1RecommendReply

*Ref.: The police must stop meddling in politics.docx
26/04/2018 11:15*