

Code A

01 August 2002

Chief Constable Paul R Kernaghan
Police Headquarters
West Hill
Romsey Road
WINCHESTER
Hampshire
SO22 5DB

RE: Formal complaint against Superintendent John James

Dear Mr Kernaghan

I am writing in reference to our outstanding formal complaint and to express my concern and disappointment with the way in which our case has been handled since it was handed back to Police Headquarters. My mother Mrs M Jackson is the original complainant and my Grandmother Mrs Alice Wilkie died at the Gosport War Memorial in August 1998.

There has been an appalling breakdown in communications and it has proven virtually impossible to speak to anybody who is able or willing to help us. On Monday 22nd July I received a call from Chief Superintendent Clacher advising that after two days of meetings and consultation with Deputy Chief Constable and yourself a decision had been reached with regards to our complaints and a letter detailing this would be sent within the next few days. Unfortunately Chief Superintendent Clacher was unable to elaborate on what decisions had been made. When no letter was forthcoming, I telephoned Mr Clacher to query what had caused the delay and was advised that unbeknown to us the situation had changed and I was now advised you were now seeking legal advice and as such a delay had occurred. Again, Chief Superintendent Clacher was unable to give any further details as to what the nature of the legal advice was, or indeed whether you would be carrying out a proper investigation in to the alleged unlawful killing of my Grandmother. At this stage I was advised that Chief Superintendent Derrick Stevens was now handling the case. I telephoned Headquarters on Tuesday to chase up what was happening as yet again we had heard nothing. As I'm sure you can imagine the long wait for a decision, which I was led to believe had been made over a week before, was proving to be very frustrating. I asked to speak to Chief Superintendent Stevens, but as when I had tried to contact him in the past he was 'conveniently' unavailable to speak to me. Instead, a support worker called [Code A] informed me that you were seeking advice from the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). I asked her what this meant? What advice was being sought and which cases? She replied quite clearly that all of the cases were being "reviewed" by the CPS and she had no idea of the timescales involved. The support worker was rude and abrupt and appeared unwilling to assist me at all in what I consider to be a reasonable request. It appears at the moment that Chief

Superintendent Clacher is the only person 'willing' to communicate with us but as he has been restricted in what he can say to us it puts both of us in an awkward position. It seems that Mr Clacher is doing his best to help but is no longer able to help us. At least he is willing to talk to us; getting hold of anybody at Police HQ is a little difficult to say the least.

I find it very hard to believe that in a case such as this you appear unwilling to establish any proper channels of communication. We have been left with a distinct feeling that you are deliberately trying to wear us down and keep us in the dark. We can't come to any other conclusion when our complaint appears to be shrouded in so much secrecy and we cannot get any answers to our questions. You cannot continue to keep changing the situation without informing us or providing 'snippets' information and then refusing to tell us anymore. This is both a frustrating and emotive time for us and I want to know when you will finally agree to investigate my Grandmother's death. You cannot make comments such as those forthcoming from Ms Singh regarding the CPS without giving a full explanation of what this means or expect a response from the families involved. Ms Singh's comments raised many more questions than it answered. What exactly does it mean when I was told that the cases were being "reviewed" by the CPS? What has been sent to them? Surely a full investigation should be forthcoming before the CPS can make a formed judgement. What timescales are realistically involved here? And how does the cases being sent to the CPS relate to our complaint against Superintendent John James? It is a shame that I need to write to you in order to be able to ask these questions, but in light of the fact that I'm unable to speak to anybody then I feel I have no choice. Why is there no contact for us to communicate with us? If you wish for us to continue to remain in contact with Chief Superintendent Clacher then he needs to be able to answer our questions openly and honestly, without restrictions placed on him.

You argue that this is a "complex" case, but clearly you cannot ignore that Superintendent John James carried out a woefully inadequate "investigation". We are not on a 'witch hunt' and we simply want our allegations investigated fully and the death of my Grandmother, and all the other families, looked at properly to ascertain what really happened. We deserve for our allegations to be investigated fully and for our questions to be answered. If criminal activity is or has taken place then there is a responsibility for the Police to take action. That is all I am asking you to do – TAKE ACTION!!

I want to take this opportunity to re-iterate that we are not going to go away and will not rest until my Grandmother's death has been investigated. If you feel unable for whatever reason to agree to an investigation then I can assure you we will move onto the next level and continue to fight for justice. This is not going to go away. I can't believe that you would justifiably ignore these allegations a number of families, including my own, have made, particularly in light of the publication for the Commission for Health Improvements (CHI) damning report and the seriousness of the potential crime that has been committed. I am also aware that a number of new families have come forward in the past few weeks who also wish to have their relative's deaths investigated. These people have their own individual cases and evidence which should be considered. This is so serious that it cannot possibly be ignored, and again I am disappointed that it has again been necessary to write yet another letter.

I look forward to hearing from you soon with what I hope will be an agreement to investigate my Grandmothers death, and the establishment of a proper channel of communication.

Yours sincerely

Miss Emily Yeats

Copies to:

Deputy Chief Constable Readhead.
Mr David Blunkett, Home Secretary
Mr Duncan Gere, Police Complaints Authority