

Who Polices the Police in Liberal Societies?

News:

On the 4th of March, hundreds of women in London protested over violence against women and girls and to highlight the lack of action in addressing male violence. It comes amid increasing revelations and allegations of sexual assault, domestic violence and sexual misconduct of hundreds of serving and ex-police officers, particularly in London's Metropolitan police force. Last month, David Carrick, pleaded guilty to 49 sexual attacks and offences, including 24 counts of rape which spanned over two decades while he was a serving officer. Carrick was at one time an armed officer with the Parliamentary and Diplomatic Protection Command. Two years ago, Wayne Couzens, a Met police officer, was found guilty of the abduction, rape and murder of Sarah Everard. He was also found guilty of previous episodes of indecent exposure. A review of the Met Police, found that police officers were using their stop and search powers to stop "attractive women" and also found WhatsApp group chats where serving officers were talking about assaulting their own partners. There were also many cases of police officers abusing their power to perpetrate violence against women. Mark Rowley, the Met Police Commissioner admitted that there was sexism in the force and that now over 1000 Met officers are being investigated for allegations of domestic violence and sexual offences.

Comment:

This problem is not isolated to London's Metropolitan Police. In recent days, the media have reported that dozens of UK police officers have been disciplined over sexual contact with crime victims and witnesses. It was reported that nearly 80 officers in 22 forces across England and Wales have faced action for inappropriate sexual relationships or contact with victims, witnesses and suspects since 2018. These figure are believed to be only the tip of the iceberg as they represent only half of the police forces in England and Wales. These are individuals who are supposed to police the public and prevent these crimes, rather than perpetrate them!

Although the scale of this problem affecting the police force in Britain is extremely worrying, it is not surprising, as it simply reflects the epidemic levels of violence and sexual crimes against women within the country and liberal societies generally. According to Home Office figures, sexual offences logged by police in England and Wales hit a record high in the year to September 2022 (199,021 sexual offences and 70,633 rapes) and reflected an increase of more than a fifth compared to before the pandemic. According to the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network, America's largest anti-sexual violence organisation, every 68 seconds, an American is sexually assaulted, and there are over 460,000 victims of rape and sexual assault each year in the country. The majority of victims are women. This is a problem that is clearly out of control in many liberal states across the world!

Some have suggested that the way to tackle sexism and sexual crimes by those within the police is better vetting when hiring individuals and more effective dismissal of officers found guilty of such behaviour and attitudes. However, this does not

address the crux of the problem – which is what has created a mentality in so many men that drives them to harass or be violent towards women and even joke about it with their friends and colleagues, including those who are vested with the responsibility of protecting women? These vigils, demonstrations, campaigns and conferences, held against women and violence, fail to understand that it is the actual liberal values within these states which fuel these crimes. They have created an environment that has systematically degraded the status of women by allowing their relentless objectification and sexualisation in society – breeding disrespect towards them. This is alongside promoting sexual freedoms and encouraging individuals to fulfil their sexual desires any way they wish, which creates a dangerous environment for women. Furthermore, the increasing marginalization of religion and religious beliefs within secular societies has nurtured personalities who feel that they are not accountable to any higher being – only to themselves – and therefore they will commit these crimes if they feel they can get away with it in this world. Ultimately, liberalism has created societies where the pursuit of carnal pleasures reign supreme.

Hence, it is liberal values that need to be in the dock alongside the perpetrators of these crimes against women!

In contrast, Islam promotes the concept of Taqwa (Allah-Consciousness) that creates a mentality of accountability to the Creator, and an understanding that every action has consequences of reward or punishment in the Hereafter. This is the frontline defence against any form of violence or sexual misconduct towards women. Alongside this, Islam places protecting and preserving the dignity of women at the same level as protecting life itself. Hence, the objectification, sexualisation or any action that degrades their status, violates their dignity, causes them harm or fuels crimes against them is prohibited, and there are severe punishments for such actions. Islam also rejects the concept of sexual freedom and defines a clear social system that regulates the relationship between men and women in order to ensure that any sexual contact or relationship is restricted to marriage alone. In fact, Islam does not only prohibit sexual harassment of women, but it forbids a man from looking at any woman except his wife with lust, or from looking at any part of the body of a non-Mahram woman other than her face and hands, and obliges him to lower his gaze. Allah (swt) says: ﴿قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا فُرُوجَهُمْ ذَلِكَ أَزْكَى لَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ﴾
“Tell the believing men to lower their gaze and guard their private parts. That is purer for them. Indeed, Allah is Acquainted with what they do.” [An-Nur: 30].

However, unfortunately today, crimes against women are widespread in our Muslim lands too due to the import of the same liberal culture as in the West. The only way to address this problem is to establish the System of Allah (swt), the Khilafah based on the method of the Prophethood which will ensure that all the laws of Islam are implemented correctly and completely, consequently protecting the dignity of women.

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