# Committee report dismisses Elon Musk's claims of two tier policing during riots



A recent report by the Commons Home Affairs Select Committee has addressed the claims made by billionaire Elon Musk regarding a "two tier" policing system during the riots that took place last summer. The report, which was labelled as "disgraceful" by committee members, asserted that Musk's allegations, alongside those of far-right political figure Nigel Farage, were "baseless" and served only to undermine the frontline officers who risked their safety to quell the violence.

The riots erupted in July and August 2022, following the tragic murders of three young girls in Southport—nine-year-old Alice Aguiar, six-year-old Bebe King, and seven-year-old Elsie Dot Stancombe. Subsequent misinformation spread online suggested the suspect was an asylum seeker, a claim which had no foundation in truth and significantly contributed to the unrest that ensued.

The report details the chaos that unfolded, with far-right groups targeting mosques and asylum hotels amid escalating violence. It noted that more than 300 police officers sustained injuries during the riots, with approximately 69 needing hospitalisation as a consequence of their efforts to maintain order. In total, over 1,800 arrests were made, and police were compelled to work an additional 40,000 shifts to respond to the disorder.

In light of the criticisms aimed at police responses, the committee firmly stated, "This was not protest. Those participating in disorder were not policed more strongly because of their supposed political views but because they were throwing missiles, assaulting police officers and committing arson." Dame Karen Bradley, chair of the committee, emphasised the need for the authorities to modernise disclosure rules regarding serious crimes to prevent misinformation from spreading, which ultimately undermined trust in law enforcement.

Dame Karen further noted that the restrictions on information sharing had allowed "bad actors" to exploit the tragic events as a platform for spreading false narratives. She remarked, "By failing to disclose information to the public, false claims filled the gap and flourished online."

The committee's report highlighted the necessity for the government to address the significant financial burden incurred by police forces during the riots, estimated at around £28 million. Alongside this, they recommended a strategic approach to both retain existing officers and improve recruitment efforts, as many were already suffering from heavy workloads and stress.

Emily Spurrell, chair of the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, emphasised the importance of enhancing national information-sharing capabilities in the context of ongoing policing reforms. A spokesperson from the Home Office acknowledged the report and underlined the importance of learning from past events, stating that the government is working closely with policing to refine national decision-making processes and ensure that officers receive adequate support.

The committee's findings come as a response to ongoing concerns regarding policing practices amid fluctuations in public sentiment, particularly in relation to the handling of far-right sentiments and the dissemination of misinformation in the age of social media.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)