

12 January 2015

Richard Foster  
Chairman  
Criminal Cases Review Board  
5 St Philip's Place  
Birmingham B3 2PW

Could I ask for your help please, over a matter I have been pursuing for a number of years? This concerns the Post Office and the convictions, sometimes after pleas of guilty, of sub-postmasters and sub-postmistresses for offences usually of false accounting, but also (I understand) theft and fraud. The accused tended to blame the Post Office's Horizon computer system for the money that had gone missing.

After discussion with many concerned Members of Parliament, the Post Office set up a scheme to consider these cases, with the availability of independent mediation if agreement between those accused and the Post Office could not be reached. I was hopeful that justice might be achieved via this scheme, but have now given up as the Post Office is doing everything in its powers to stop cases proceeding to any mediation at all. I am extremely disappointed that this is the result of much hard work and negotiation by myself and over 140 other MPs.

The result of this is that there is a strong likelihood that miscarriages of justice have occurred but that those who have suffered from them will now have no means for redress of their conviction via the Post Office's mediation scheme. Whilst we understand that some of these individuals may be guilty we cannot believe that all are and we would very much like to see what we can do to help our constituents, many of whose lives, finances, and reputations have been utterly ruined. I enclose herewith a copy of the debate in Parliament last month, which may be found at:

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201415/cmhsrd/cm141217/halltext/141217h0001.htm#14121741000002>

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Are you able to offer me any thoughts as to whether or not the CCRB would look into these cases please? I do not know the procedure of bringing this to the Board's attention, and so thought it best to begin with a direct approach to you.

I should be most grateful for your consideration of this matter.