

**No charges against any officer involved in death of Roger Sylvester  
17<sup>th</sup> November 2000**

The CPS has today announced that no police officer involved in the death of Roger Sylvester is to face criminal charges. An inquest sitting with a jury will now be held early next year.

Sheila Sylvester, mother of Roger said:

“This shocking decision comes as no surprise to my family. We have continually voiced our dissatisfaction with the investigation process, which we believe, was based on selective information. The only public investigation will now be the inquest. At the inquest officers will once again be able to remain silent, as the Coroner will tell them they do not have to give answers that may incriminate themselves. It is nearly two years since my beloved son met his death while being restrained by police officers and I am no closer to finding out the truth about how he died. There is something shameful about a system where when people die in custody their custodians never give a proper account of what they did and the system is not geared towards making anyone properly accountable.”

Deborah Coles co-director of INQUEST who has been working with the Sylvester family and their lawyers said:

“This outrageous decision once again brings the entire criminal justice system and the role of the CPS into disrepute. We can have no confidence in an investigation process that allows the police to investigate the police. In this case a flawed investigation has shaped the deliberations of the CPS and its resulting decision. When is the Government going to act so that when someone dies at the hands of the State the procedures that follow ensure accountability, openness and a pursuit for the truth? The narrow scope of evidence allowed at the inquest means that the many wider issues of concern such as police restraint methods and the disproportionate number of black deaths in police custody can not be addressed. There must be an independent judicial inquiry set up to ensure that this death and the wider issues are subjected to proper scrutiny.”

Detailed information about the case is available at [www.inquest.org.uk](http://www.inquest.org.uk) and [www.rsjc.org.uk](http://www.rsjc.org.uk)

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