



Keep election promises on police numbers

 Electioneering is already well under way in both Parliament and through the national newspapers and our television screens. All the candidates are making their four-yearly promises to increase or, at least, maintain record police numbers, trying to out-bid each other in an attempt to win the hearts of minds of the British

public, knowing that crime is an issue that could cost or win them votes. The campaigns of the major parties resemble a slightly more subtle game of selling their wares. It doesn't take a huge stretch of the imagination to envisage the candidates standing outside Parliament shouting, "roll up, roll-up, cast your votes this way and we'll throw in some

extra bobbies" Del-boy style.

Of course extra police officers on our streets are more than welcome but such a promise has to be backed-up with adequate resources. These officers need to be trained properly to ensure standards are kept high and deployed where they are needed, not stuck behind desks filling out forms. 

What do you think?

We would like to hear your views on the issues discussed in this month's magazine.


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Who is pulling the strings for the police service?

 Is the Government planning to pave the way for a police state with its increasing interference in policing? They say they value police independence from politics, but recent events could have us believe otherwise. First we see Steve Green, chief

constable of Nottinghamshire Police, speaking in the *Telegraph on Sunday* last month about a lack of officers who can carry out investigations into murders in the city and having his hand slapped by local MPs. We also have a situation where officers

joining SOCA will lose their status as constables, no longer swearing allegiance to the Crown, but effectively to the Home Secretary. Bill Hughes, director general of SOCA, talks to *Police* this month reiterating his operational independence from the Government,

while at the same time he states that a cabinet committee will oversee the organisation. The independence of chief officers is essential if the police are to serve the public and not the latest Home Secretary. 

In Focus



Investigators from law enforcement agencies all over the world have visited a unique facility in Tennessee nick-named The Body Farm. The facility gives scientists the opportunity to examine the effects on decomposition on the human body which can be key in murder enquiries such as that Holly Wells and Jessica Chapman. **Pages 23 and 25**



Bill Hughes, deputy general of SOCA, talks to Police about its priorities, pay and conditions for its staff and what he plans to achieve a year ahead of the official launch date. Phil Chamberlain reports. Pages 19, 20 and 21



As the three major political parties make their pledges on crime and boosting officer numbers, Carol Jenkins speaks to Mark Oaten, Home Affairs spokesman for the Liberal Democrat Party, and gets his views on cutting bureaucracy for officers to tough love for lazy prisoners. Pages 26 and 27