


Judge Met officers on facts not trial by media

 The Met police officers waiting to hear their fate in relation to the shooting of Jean Charles de Menezes must be under enormous pressure and the last few months have seen events unfold in the full glare of the media.

Confirmation that the officers could face prosecution over the shooting came at a preliminary inquest hearing in London recently from Richard Latham, lawyer for The Independent Police Complaints Commission.

Of course, it goes without saying that the family of Mr Menezes are suffering immense grief over his death and want answers as to the exact circumstances that led up to the tragedy.

This is why it has been extremely damaging for someone within the IPCC to leak selective documentation on the shooting which calls into question the events of July 22 at Stockwell Tube Station.

Yes, the facts should be allowed to come out, the media are entitled to report on stories in the public interest, but this should be after detailed consideration of all the evidence.

In a court case where someone had been accused of murder a jury would examine all the facts before making a decision as to whether they were guilty or innocent.

Any reporting on the case would have to include an element of balance which is blatantly missing in much of the media coverage.

In this case there are big pieces of the jigsaw missing and it is not fair, on the officers or on the family of Jean Charles de Menezes, to speculate as to what may, or may not have happened without looking at the whole picture.

Debate has raged across all the national newspapers, some reporting calls for Sir Ian Blair,



Editorial by Syreeta Lund Deputy Editor of Police magazine

commissioner of the Met, to resign based on the evidence of selected leaked documents and the knowledge of hindsight.

In *Police* this month (News, page 7), we feature extracts of a letter from the Federation to the IPCC, expressing dismay at the turn of events that has led to partially-informed reports in the media creating a rabid frenzy among newspaper editors.



Police officers on the ground are struggling

The Federation is carrying out focus groups within police forces across England and Wales to find out about the experiences of police officers at a grass-roots level.

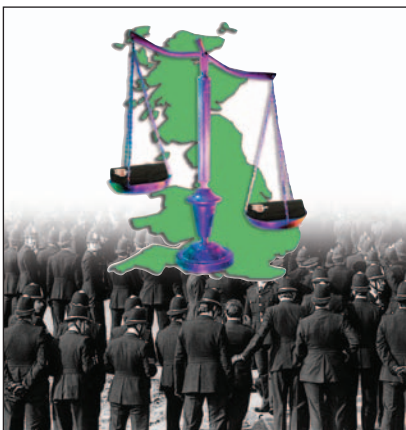
Alan Gordon, vice-chairman of the Federation, has already started the work and has found forces and their officers are stretched to breaking point.

While politicians at Whitehall dream up the latest set of targets forces are pulling officers out of response teams to deal with them. This means the very people who the public are most likely to call on when they have a problem are not going to be available.

This is not only influencing the service the public are getting; it's also having an effect on officers' morale, because they do not feel they can provide the service they want to.

And while response officers are drafted into specialist teams to deal with the 'flavour of the month' priority, such as street crime (who hears about that now?), probationers are brought in to fill the gaps in response teams. See comment on page 9.

In Focus



As the Superintendents' Association holds its annual conference this month, Ian Johnston, vice-president of the organisation, outlines the changes facing those in the rank as they increasingly take on more responsibility. **Page 16 and 17.**



South Yorkshire Police is tackling organised crime, including human trafficking, with an innovative project designed to work closely with other organisations. The force now work across police borders with West Yorkshire and Humberside Police to combat the criminals. **Page 18 and 19.**



What causes youth crime? A police advisor to the Youth Justice Board writes about the causes and potential solutions to tackling the issue as the media carries reports of 'Yob Britain'. **Pages 24 and 25.**

Picture posed by models