



Metin Enver, Managing Editor

# Editorial - October 2008

## Jacqui's Tiff

Like a toddler protesting against the actions of their parents, last month the Home Secretary demonstrated a childish retaliation in the way she churlishly introduced the Police Officer Pay Review Body consultation document. And the timing, just weeks ahead of the Police Arbitration Tribunal which has yet to make a recommendation on this year's pay award to her and whilst two key stakeholders – official side and staff side of the Police Negotiating Board – are busy preparing evidence to present to the arbiters.

The Ministerial statement made very clear that a Pay Review Body could have been avoided at this stage if Staff Side of the Police Negotiating Board had signed up to the government's three-year pay deal.

Well, silly me for thinking that true negotiation means either side is at liberty to take it or leave whatever is on the table. Clearly, this government will lash out at those who do not take the Home Secretary's shilling.

Conscious that the government seem intent on railroading through their plans irrespective of majority opinion or what's best for the police service, the Police Federation last month set out its stall for pursuing industrial rights; a mandate given by the membership poll earlier this year if arbitration decisions are not binding on the government.

In a letter to the Home Secretary, the chairman of the Federation, Paul McKeever, made clear that plans to introduce binding arbitration in law must be announced by the time of the Queen's Speech in early December or action to introduce industrial rights will commence.

So, are we heading into 2009 with new pay negotiating machinery and a campaign for industrial rights?

Well, the answer to both questions rests with one person, the Home Secretary.

It's not too late to defer the introduction of a pay review body and secure future settlements using the current pay machinery and binding arbitration in statute will stop pushing police officers down a road many regrettably feel forced down.

So come on Home Secretary, put your toys back in the pram and sort this mess out before it's too late.

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Print: Wyndeham Heron Limited, Maldon, Essex

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