



Metin Enver, Managing Editor

Editorial – April 2008

Paying dividends

This month marks the legal challenge to the Home Secretary's decision not to award in full the decision of the Police Arbitration Tribunal. Last year when Jacqui Smith took the unprecedented step of robbing police officers of three months' money, she set herself on a collision course with the Police Federation. A course that has seen 25,000 off duty officers marching through central London and has resulted in a High Court hearing to determine the legality of her actions.

At the time of writing, I cannot predict the outcome of that hearing in mid-April. But whatever the decision, let's not forget the words used by the judge when the application for a judicial review was made. The judge said he had 'no hesitation' in agreeing to an application for leave of a judicial review. That alone must have set alarm bells sounding in the corridors of Westminster. Perhaps, in taking on 140,000 police officers, Mr Brown had bitten off more than he could chew.

I dare say the passage of time will taint and alter precise facts, as historians look back at this tumultuous time for policing. But one fact will be very clear. Police officers across England and Wales delivered a damning blow to the bridesmaid Chancellor who finally caught the Prime Minister's bouquet. And a battle with the Police Federation in his early months meant that usually loyal supporters wondered if Mr Brown could finally leave behind his Chancellor's red despatch box and realise there is a wider political fallout for his unashamedly prudent ways.

Whatever the outcome of this current battle, one thing is clear. Brown got his fingers burnt. Whilst he may have expected a war of words with the Federation in the press he did not anticipate so many officers giving up their own time to travel to London and protest in a dignified way. He certainly did not expect the level of public support, nor political support across all parties.

Looking to the future there's one thing we can be sure of. With an election in the coming year or so, Mr Brown will not want to face the might of police officers again. I'm not suggesting this will mean straightforward discussion at the Police Negotiating Board table – far from it. But we can be assured that the anger, protests and co-ordinated campaign over the last six months will at least ensure fair negotiation takes place this year. To that end, we may yet still see the fruits of our protests. And if history records we didn't win this battle, it will record that we won the war.

Managing Editor: Metin Enver

Acting Editor: Tina Orr-Munro

Temporary Designer: Keith Potter

Contact: 15 Langley Road, Surbiton,
Surrey, KT6 6LP

Tel: 0208 335 1000

Fax: 0208 390 2249

E-mail: tina.orr-munro@polfed.org

Subscriptions: Subscriptions@polfed.org

Advertising Agent:

Landmark Services

Contact: Sharon Davies

2 Windmill Street

London

W1T 2HX

Tel: 0207 692 9292

Fax: 0207 692 9393

Print: Wyndeham Heron Limited, Maldon, Essex

Every care is taken to ensure that advertisements are accepted only from bona fide advertisers. The Police Federation cannot accept any liability for losses incurred by any person as a result of a default on the part of an advertiser.

The views expressed within the magazine are not necessarily the views of the Joint Central Committee of the Police Federation of England and Wales.

Chairman: Jan Berry

General Secretary: John Francis

Treasurer: Brian Fenlon

Vice-Chairman: Alan Gordon

Deputy General Secretary: Ernie Hanrahan

Deputy Treasurer: Dave Moore

© The Police Federation 2008

Reproduction strictly forbidden unless by prior arrangement with the publishers.

