



Metin Enver, Managing Editor

Editorial - August 2007

Paying the price

Only a few years ago the murder of a police officer would dominate the news for days and be a front page headline on every newspaper. In this issue we examine the worryingly tragic trend amongst some of the popular press that the murder of an officer is somehow inevitable, to be expected, and therefore not worthy of dominating headlines any longer.

Regrettably this lack of appreciation and value of the sacrifices police officers make in the execution of their duty seems to also be lost on Gordon Brown and his new government, as we embark on yet another battle to ensure that the UK's 170,000 police officers receive a fair pay award from this coming September.

On the one hand the gentle giant, Gordon Brown, praises the hard work and professionalism of police officers, whether it's the fight against terrorism recently witnessed in London and Glasgow, or the invaluable role saving life and property during the recent floods; all vital policing tasks that cannot be recorded and measured by statistic obsessed number crunchers in the Home Office. Yet on the other hand, we appear to be witnessing the brutality of a new leader who speaks with forked tongue, and is now hell bent on destroying a fair pay system that has existed for decades, recognises the unique role of the Office of Constable, and has ensured harmonious industrial relations throughout the lifetime of successive governments since 1978.

But it's not too late. It was neither Mr Brown or the Home Secretary, Jacqui Smith, who tasked Labour stalwart Sir Clive Booth to throw a spanner in the works with his biased and ill informed recommendations to change the police pay structure.

If Mr Brown and his government genuinely value the professionalism and commitment of police officers, then now is the time to demonstrate that, and honour a fair pay deal which reflects the daily dangers faced, the fact that police officers have to run towards trouble when everyone else can run away, and the responsibility and burden of being accountable 24/7 whether on or off duty.

And let's not forget the tragedy of the growing list of names being added to the police Roll of Honour each year. How many other workers have to make that type of sacrifice simply doing their job Mr Brown?

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