

Fair Pay campaign hits the mark

Dorset officers guarding the Labour Party Conference in Bournemouth last month burst into spontaneous applause at the sight of the Police Federation's latest weapon in the fight for fair pay.

A nine-foot high poster of Gordon Brown telling officers the government has a duty to support them was mounted on a van and driven around the centre of Bournemouth as Labour Party delegates gathered for their annual conference.

The officers were detailed to protect the conference centre and the delegates, including Prime Minister Gordon Brown and the rest of the Cabinet. When the van rolled into view, scores of them began applauding.

Clive Chamberlain, Dorset Federation chairman, said the sight of the poster lifted morale among officers.

"What struck me was the paradox of seeing professional officers looking after ministers and delegates at the conference centre when quite clearly they are not looking after us."

Mr Chamberlain said the response to the campaign was 'absolutely brilliant'.

"Officers started clapping when they saw it. There is very little officers can do to demonstrate their feelings so they really appreciated what the federation was doing. It was a real morale booster.

"It was also good to see Jan Berry and Alan Gordon not only talking to ministers, but also talking to those officers outside the conference centre to gauge their feelings," added Mr Chamberlain.

In July 2007, the Official Side and the Staff Side of the Police Negotiating Board failed to agree the annual pay rise for police officers for the second year running. On November 2, the dispute goes to the independent Police Arbitration Tribunal. Officers can show their support for the campaign by signing the online petition at www.polfed.org

Clive Chamberlain: National pay campaign hits the mark



Concerns over self-defence law review

The self-defence laws are to be urgently reviewed, amid concerns from the Police Federation that it could raise false expectations among the public.

Jack Straw, Justice Secretary, made the announcement at the Labour Party Conference in Bournemouth last month.

He said: "I know from personal experience that you have all of a millisecond to make the judgement about whether to intervene."

"In such a situation, the law on self-defence works much better than most people think, but not as well as it could or should."

Jan Berry, chairman of the Police Federation, called the move 'a laudable sentiment', but sounded a note of caution.

"Two years ago, as Home Secretary, Charles Clarke and his team found the legal implications of this fell short of a deliverable solution."

"It is irresponsible for a government, either current or shadow, to use such a potentially dangerous subject to demonstrate a proactive stance on crime – not least the danger of raising public expectation when the reality is not achievable."

Mrs Berry called for 'common sense laws' to protect the law-abiding majority against the minority of offenders.

Self-defence laws to be reviewed



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