



Tony Judge

## Hell hath no fury

Drivers of police vehicles should watch out for the irate motorist who spots an officer doing something that would land Joe Citizen in the mire. Recently, a chief superintendent from Surrey Police was confronted by a driver who saw him using a hand-held mobile phone whilst driving. He was obliged to “turn himself in” and endure well-deserved ridicule in the tabloids.

Last month, a South Yorkshire traffic PC convinced a District Judge that he was driving at 48 mph in a 40 mph zone, because he was on his way to an accident. He did not use his siren or flashing lights, and aborted his mercy mission when he stopped to pick up a pre-ordered Chinese meal. He had been snapped by a speed camera. A motorist, whom he had overtaken at speed, saw him emerging from the takeaway and complained to the force. The prosecution pointed out that he had not been sent to an accident, that he had not reported that he was on such a journey, and that he had preferred to use busy town streets rather than the nearby motorway, which was clear at that time. The Judge said the officer had given his evidence with “almost disarming honesty”. Meredydd Hughes, chief constable, made it clear that disciplinary enquiries would follow the court case. When the PC told the press that it had all been “a sweet and sour experience for me”, he was probably right.

### The saintly assassin

As if the Met did not have enough on its plate, the suspicious death of the KGB spy, Alexander Litvinenko, has led to a mammoth hunt for his killers and the mysterious substance used in the crime. This must be the first suspicious death in history to require an emergency meeting of the government’s COBRA anti-terrorist committee, yet another job for our indefatigable Home Secretary. Meanwhile, I cannot understand why a man involved in a brutal organisation, renowned for torture, has in death taken on the mantle of martyr for truth and freedom. Eulogies to this “courageous little man who defied the Putin oligarchy” have filled the same tabloids

that rant against the foreigners amongst us. Litvinenko had managed to acquire British citizenship.

Were those who decided he was suitable for this honour aware of his blood stained past?

### Tribute to pay negotiator

Many retired police officers will be sorry to learn of the recent death of Dick Pamplin, an outstanding general secretary of the Police Federation from 1967 to 1975. Dick, who was also chairman of the Metropolitan Police Federation, was a brilliant negotiator who, in 1974, secured a complete restructuring of police pay. This gave the members the largest pay award to have been secured without the need for arbitration or a special inquiry.

Unfortunately, it was the size of the award that was used by the government as an excuse for withholding a subsequent increase, which in turn led to Edmund-Davies. On his retirement, Dick served as a member of the Royal Commission on Criminal Procedure and was the first ex-police officer to be appointed a member of the Parole Board.

### What do you think?

If you have any comments about issues raised, e-mail:  
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