

Conference the British Police service is the finest in the World.

We are flexible, modern, admired and respected for our professional standards, and we are constantly striving for better things.

Our public satisfaction rating sits at 60% - more than comparable to any politician.

So we are completely justified to ask what is so wrong with this fine and proud service that needs such drastic, invasive change.

The job is now being undermined through a landscape of underinvestment, uncertainty, lack of cohesion and at a pace which is unacceptable and unsustainable.

It's not that difficult to understand why officers and staff are worn down, angry and disillusioned by the kicking from the political football policing has become.

A 2 year pay freeze, Winsor's reports and recommendations, PAT decisions, pensions, A19, professional body, Crime Commissioners, outsourcing, privatisation, coping with far fewer officers and staff redundancies are debilitating individuals and the service, and letting the public down. All of this fired at us from all sides simultaneously through a staggering 20% budget cut.

What's happening to policing is ideologically motivated by a Government who simply do not understand, who know the cost of everything and the value of nothing, unless of course it's got a share value!. It is arrogance which says we know best - just do it!! This, from Politicians, and a certain allegedly independent reviewer, who in the space of a miniscule amount of time in power will have not listened, not evaluated or evidenced the consequences of their actions. A fine and proud service is being bullied and beaten along.

The Prime ministers own powerful words when in opposition are most suitable when he said of the Police reforms in 2006 – they are being done too fast, without proper debate or consultation and reckless to the cost!. (Said of Charles Clarke in 2006 when he was Home secretary and looking at force amalgamations).

Confidence, anger, frustration, anxiety and all that goes with such feelings are there, because we are being treated quite shabbily. Let's be honest and positive, we want to make a contribution and help the Government sort out this mess, we can and have always been willing to contribute to ongoing modernisation, yet the real weakness of the Home Office is that we, those that know policing, are not being listened to.

The amazing support and tremendous turn out to the rally and march last Thursday sent a clear and powerful message of unity and strength - we've had enough- the service has had enough, and the public are in serious danger of not getting enough.

The service needs some respite and TLC Home Secretary. Do what Margaret Thatcher couldn't - be bold and take a 'U' turn for the sake and future of Policing and no matter how shaky the economic foundations, it's time to allow the service to grow from the austerity its now suffering, before inflicting any more on the hard working, dedicated and committed very thin blue line that is becoming thinner by the day. The service and the public rightly deserve and expect better.

Let's put all this into some context. We have never shirked at accepting our part and responsibilities in helping out with the economic mess we are in. Since the 2010 election, the Police service has already shrunk by about 6500 Police Officers and many more staff roles, with three times that number of losses yet to come. By way of representation, by the end of this comprehensive spending review, this will equate to the loss of every single officer in Wales, Cumbria, Merseyside and Lancashire. Notwithstanding the other significant savings, the annual pay freeze savings amounts to about £350 million.

The Home Secretary and Police Minister tell us that numbers don't matter, try convincing the public at election time they

don't matter!! If we are to retain operational capability, capacity and resilience to meet demand – and selfishly to some perhaps find opportunity to take a day off now and again - they do. Recruitment is patchy to none existent, there are limited promotion opportunities, training and development, aside from that afforded to our most senior ranks, is in a mess and crime is now rising, with KSI collisions for example in Devon & Cornwall up by well over 100% in the first quarter of this year compared to last.

We simply cannot continue Policing on goodwill, an empty tank and little faith in the future. We are as the Chief of Gloucestershire recently recognised on a metaphorical cliff edge.

Conference - Police officers are public servants, answerable to the law, without fear, favour or political interference. The Police Officer in uniform makes a statement, being the accepted and respected brand of authority and integrity. Crucially, we operate with public consent and approval.

It makes for disturbing, sinister contemplation that Policing is gradually being outsourced to the private sector. This is so wrong. The integrity, transparency motives and costs behind this political scullduggery (crafty deception) have to be questionable, and we must call for an urgent, fully independent review of what's going on, whilst placing an immediate halt on

the great sell off, which predictably will escalate with the advent of PCC's.

We are a fine public service, always available as the last hope and first call to all citizens, whatever their circumstances or wealth, be it to victim, criminal or someone in distress and in need of help. We are free to those that need us at the point of delivery and long may that be the case. Our values and worth are accountable to those we serve, not shareholders, Chief Executives or business partners.

It cuts to the very heart of our values, principles and integrity to think that private security companies could well be pounding the beat in your area, in a complete confusion of uniforms, strangely all in the name of austerity, flexibility or modernisation.

I agree entirely with Tom Winsor when he confirms that the greatest asset of the Police service is its people. I also agree with him when he further states the real qualities of a Police Officer are courage, self control, maturity, judgment and the ability to deal with people and objectively assess a situation as well as having intelligence. These are special individual and team qualities - which he sadly then went onto to denigrate.

His provocative and unjustified assertions in his second report that our recruiting standards are poor, our ethos and values are from a past age and we are an occupation of an intellectually,

largely undemanding nature with skills sets at the level of factory workers are not only inflammatory but seriously irresponsible.

For now Conference, we have no weapon to fight back with, other than our words and deeds expressing confidence, unity, integrity, dedication, accountability, responsibility and a solid but brave determination to do our duty 24/7. We do this in the face of some appalling and traumatic incidents, whilst dealing with all that life can throw at us. For the risks you and your colleagues take, the responsibilities you have and the commitment you give, together with our sworn allegiance, we deserve far better understanding and respect from the powers that be. The Office of Constable is enshrined in our constitution, and undoubtedly forms the very bedrock of the Police service, it must remain sacrosanct, and this Government need to understand that!!.

You know, although going through similar challenges and problems, it's heartening to hear that the Scottish Government are promoting good working relationships and understanding as they deliver structural change to Policing. Quite a contrast to the haphazard, brutal, frenzied and provocative attack we are experiencing in England and Wales. Importantly Scotland is making progress on their policing changes without the need of

any input from Tom Winsor as they regard his report to be an insult to the Service - a clear North & South divide in opinion!!

So that's the very briefest of comments relating to the general affairs of state as part of my address, I now want to turn to saying a few words about other critical issues.

Let's be clear, our ability as Inspectors to deliver real decisive and transformational leadership is thwarted only by organisational bureaucracy. Created mainly by Political interference and administrative micro management which gets in the way of common sense decisions and good operational judgment calls, which Constables, Sergeants and Inspectors are all capable of making.

As Inspectors we act as the rock of stability, guardians of operational standards, planning and delivery. We are adaptable, creative, able to prioritise and lead whilst delivering efficiency in a modern fast moving world. We are can do will do people. Exactly what's expected of us, yet we should be emboldened and encouraged to take decisions and be measured on good judgement and common sense. We don't want to be steered by or answerable to paper chasing bureaucrats - we want our stars to shine in every difficult and problematic situation. To do what we are paid to do, to lead and make decisions that support, help and encourage our operational colleagues. That's something we would support

Government initiatives around and would urgently wish to be involved in discussions for the greater good.

The high octane pace of Policing, and the responsibilities that go with the job, demands inspectors of the highest calibre, those who have the unnerving qualities of making operational decisions, whilst motivating and supporting staff. Critical to these qualities is leading by operational experience gained through a comprehensive grounding having served in the previous two ranks. It is the ICC pledge to continue to make these very valid points and we will argue as vociferously as we are able to enhance and develop the profile of Inspectors.

Contrary to what Winsor proposes or understands, we don't need direct entry to the rank, nor to that of Superintendent. We need greater investment, assistance and support to those able to progress upwards, not just for a few chosen ones, but for all those, including Constables and of course Sergeants, who take and make often critical and life changing leadership decisions. Our aim is to ensure that we press as hard as we can to get national standards and consistency a priority in giving all new to role Inspectors the level of organisational development training necessary to be the best.

The riots of last summer tested the resolve, determination, bravery of the finest Police Officers in the World. You Conference, Inspecting colleagues reacted positively and with

excellent leadership to the challenges that you were faced with, despite the domestic hardships and lack of clarity about being paid for long hours through such an enormous commitment both in force and supporting PSU's. The attack by yobs and hooligans determined to create public fear, mayhem and destruction had to be faced with strong, courageous and determined resolve. The finest qualities of the British Police Officer.

It's not easy being an Inspector in today's police service, our recent national survey of inspecting ranks, published in March, provides unquestionable evidence that life for so many of our colleagues is not only tough and difficult, but it's becoming harmful to health, well being and domestic harmony.

Alongside the significant fall in Superintending ranks, we have witnessed in just over 12 months a drop in excess of 10% in our numbers nationally. This whilst the workloads and pressures remain unforgiving and ever more challenging to manage from top to bottom, as the diminishing resources at the front line are being stretched beyond breaking point.

Conference, the ICC will maintain our momentum on this, and will continue to highlight the issues until we see positive improvements. Your voice of support to today's motion reflects the concerns. But you all play a key role, as Federation reps - I hope you are able to use the evidence contained within

the survey, to fight and negotiate locally with your own Chief Constable for fair and respectful treatment as we, the ICC, on a national level will do all that we can at every available opportunity.

There's a lot more that I want to say, but time beats me.

Before I finish, I want to pay tribute to those officers who have lost their life in service this last year, their passing is a tragedy, but the memories and legacies they leave behind will live on forever.

To those who have been injured, mentally and physically by doing this fine job, I say thank you and wish you a speedy recovery.

Finally a few words about you. The ICC fully understand the enormous difficulties you have trying to balance a day job with the additional workloads of being an effective federation representative. But the rewards, successes and achievements as well as experience gained from undertaking federation duties helps ensure that you all play a critical part in ensuring Policing is delivered to the highest standards and our colleagues can feel confident that we are there for them. I wish Government Ministers would listen to and hear the voice of inspiration, modernisation, fairness and flexibility which you all produce in fine accord.

The tremendous contribution you all make is quite remarkable, and that's why we should feel positive, uplifted and encouraged by what we achieve. Our rally last week called for a huge commitment, but it energised the cause. We are positive, determined, can do, will do people with energy, imagination and importantly have skills and talent which we can use productively to always see a brighter future.

Enjoy the rest of conference, let's send out a euphoric message that we can and will prevail, despite the dark shadows hanging over the service, we will not be worn down, we can win through, because we have the greater and more powerful arguments and persuasion, and I know we have the public on our side.

Remember this – when an airplane takes off it's always against the wind, not with it!! So to government, ACPO & police colleagues alike I wish to firmly reiterate our Conference strapline 'The Police Service Needs its Stars' You Folks, The Inspecting Ranks of England & Wales. The alternative consequence to policing does really not bear thinking about!

Conference thank you!