

THE P NOMINEES

POLICE BRAVERY AWARDS 2001

A total of 281 officers from West Yorkshire. Tina Orr-T...
authority and the Federati...

Bradford Riot Mayhem

WEST YORKSHIRE POLICE

In partnership with British Transport Police and northern forces

Nicholas Berry (representing constable ranks)
Philip Stone (representing sergeant ranks)
Andrew Ball, BTP (representing inspector ranks)

MORE than 300 officers from West Yorkshire Police, assisted by the British Transport Police and other northern forces, were injured in Bradford last July in some of the worst rioting in Britain for over 20 years.

During the height of the violence, when officers from eight forces had to be drafted in to assist West Yorkshire, more than 1,000 rioters petrol bombed police lines, tore down walls to hurl bricks and rocks at officers, and aimed scaffolding, metal fencing and fireworks at them. A stolen car was set on fire and rolled down a hill towards exhausted officers who managed to jump clear and extinguish the flames. It was then discovered a butane gas cylinder had been put on the back seat ready to explode. The urban terror began on 7 July when 500 officers were deployed to police the city. They were anticipating a banned march by the British National Party, which did not, in the end, take place. A large number of youths, mainly Asian, congregated to oppose the BNP's appearance. Sporadic outbreaks of disorder and violence occurred at locations around the city but were dealt with promptly. However, by 5.30 pm, youths who had been gathering in the north of the city started throwing bricks and stones at police officers and horses.

Police re-inforcements were urgently required and, from then on, more youths from the city made their way to the area to stone police lines, causing terror and confusion to local residents and those innocently caught up. The stoning continued for two hours when rioters began to erect barricades across the main road. From this time onwards, police officers in the front lines faced an unprecedented, vicious and sustained attack. They were hopelessly outnumbered and many, who had been on duty since eight that morning, were exhausted. They were wearing heavy overalls, protective equipment and using heavy shields in hot summer weather. The majority of the injuries were sustained by West Yorkshire and British Transport Police officers as they waited for re-inforcements. These included concussion, broken teeth and bones, especially to the lower legs and shoulders. Several police dogs were injured and several horses received stab wounds. It was only at around 11.30 pm, as rioters' ammunition was running short, that the crowds began to disperse, setting fire to buildings and cars in their wake. The worst affected officers were then relieved and re-inforcements were able to undertake dispersal measures which took a further four hours.

Richard Critchley, Federation representative, said: "But for the courage, dedication and devotion to duty shown by every officer on duty in Bradford that night, over long periods, though exhausted, bleeding and outnumbered, there is no doubt the rioters would have stormed the city centre. The awful consequences to life and property that would have ensued can only be imagined."



THE POLICE FEDERATION & THE SUN NEWSPAPER
POLICE BRAVERY AWARDS

Sun

