

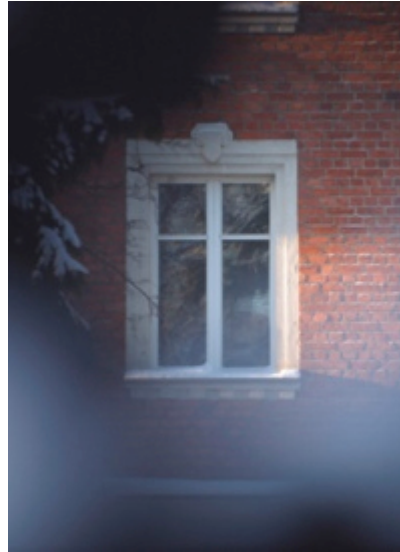


Written by [Alex Newman](#) on February 15, 2010

British Police Plan Fake Break-ins

British police have a new strategy in their supposed effort to reduce burglaries: posing as robbers themselves.

As part of Operation Golden, undercover cops will wander through neighborhoods in Cheshire checking British subjects' doors and windows to make sure they are locked. If they are not, police will "drag sleepy residents from their beds and lecture them," according to a *Daily Mail* article entitled "[Police who play burglar in the middle of the night.](#)"



The new measure comes in response to recent data indicating that up to 40 percent of burglars in the area break in through an unlocked door or window. Police defended the effort, claiming it will encourage British subjects to be more careful when it comes to home security.

But even the police in charge of the break-ins admitted that resident may become upset. "If we're told to get lost then that's a risk we take. It's a difficult balance to strike," explained operation boss Inspector Gareth Woods, who noted that the effort will take place from 4 p.m. to 2 a.m.. "The bottom line is officers get a mixed reception when doing anything like this, but I say to any of my officers that if they see an insecure car or house to let the owner know, no matter what time of day or night. Most reasonable people will say thanks for letting them know and be grateful."

Residents of the affected area, however, were not thrilled with the idea. "I think it is preposterous," said Adrian Dodd, a local resident quoted by the *Daily Mail*. "It is all well and good advising people but you can't come trespassing on property in the dead of night and waking people up. Someone will have a heart attack."

Other concerned subjects highlighted the potential danger of the operation. "In America people can use whatever force necessary to defend their homes," said Paul Hunter, a 20-year-old student quoted by the *Daily Express* newspaper. "I hope this doesn't go wrong and a policeman gets mistaken for a prowler and something unfortunate happens."

A 38-year-old East Sussex woman who was lectured after catching an officer breaking in through her window last year also commented on the tactic, saying that while it made her think, "I thought it was a bit much really." She asked the *Daily Mail* not to reveal her name.

In addition to the fake robberies, police will also be expending taxpayer money on hanging leaflets from peoples' doors with a checklist of security measures for before they leave home. "Operation Golden is about raising the profile of security at home and keeping people safe," explained the department's chief inspector, Peter Crowcroft.



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The New American contacted the [Cheshire police department](#) hoping to get answers to some questions, including: What would happen to a resident who attacked a police officer under the false impression that he or she was a burglar? What if officers discover something such as drug use while breaking and entering? What if actual thieves claim that they are police when caught invading somebody's home? The department did not call back with answers before press time as promised, but a woman in the media department did confirm that the program was real.

Critics have blasted the new program as a dangerous and ridiculous waste of taxpayer money. In all of the articles about it, not one supportive resident was quoted. Nearly every comment ridiculed or attacked the effort. But for the people of the United Kingdom, this is simply another example of the state reaching way beyond its proper authority. Any efforts to restore liberty in that nation have a long way to go, and at the moment at least, the inertia is going the other direction.



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