

ATTENDANCE - ROBERT HAMILL DECEASED - 9.11.99

One of the witnesses referred to by a code letter (her name is Tracey Clarke) telephoned me this morning at the request of DI Irwin. She said that she knew I was planning to hold an inquest and was very concerned about either giving evidence in person or the contents of her statement being read out in court. When she spoke to me she was very tearful and I was completely satisfied that she was genuine. She said that she had been threatened on a number of occasions by loyalist and as a result she had to leave Portadown. She now has a house in Belfast and a new career in the Civil Service. She rarely returns to Portadown although her mother still lives there. She told me that even reading out her statement in court with her being referred to by a code letter would identify her. If that happened she would have to leave her present address and possibly her present employment. Those who threatened her were known to her. She has no doubts at all that if she was involved in the inquest in any way she would be in read danger from loyalist paramilitaries. I said that I would do nothing that would place her in jeopardy and I sought to reassure her that I would not call her as a witness or read out her statement in court. She seemed extremely relieved when I told her this.