

CONFIDENTIAL

BRANCH NOTE

Robert HAMILL

On 22<sup>nd</sup> February I met with [REDACTED] at his office and updated him regarding the case. I told him that the strategy we had directed is still being pursued but that the new SIO had delayed matters as he had to read all the cases papers. I told him that it was expected that there would be real progress within the next 3 weeks and that I would send a fax to him the morning activity occurred in order that he would be able to tell his client. He and his client expressed satisfaction with our part in the enquiry but still ultimately want a Public Enquiry. No further specific detail was given regarding the current investigative strategies.

He thanked me for going to see me. I offered then, or at any stage, to meet Diane HAMILL which he said he would bear in mind. He will update her on the issues I had outlined.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2001 The Ombudsman and I met with Sir Ronnie FALANAGAN at NCB ay our request. He was told that we had concerns about the commitment of the investigators as they were seeking to delay arrests and the technical deployment with a desire to 'cleanse' Andrea McKEE by prosecuting her, then taking a further statement, securing her support as a prosecution witness and then arresting and prosecuting the defendants. The SIO (RUC) had pursued these objectives with the Ombudsman SIO and was told that I did not agree. He had then asked to see me and was due to take place the following Tuesday.

The weaknesses of this strategy were summarisedas follows:

- Significantly delay progress
- Andrea NcKee may not cooperate, indeed it was unlikely in all probability that she would as she would be placed in danger of going to prison
- All element of surprise would be removed as the suspects would be well aware as to what was happening
- Michael McKee is thought to be very vulnerable and may confess. Surprise will maximise those opportunities