

CONFIDENTIAL



Deputy Director

FILE NOTE

On 12 May 1997 I met with Superintendent [REDACTED] and Superintendent McBurney. Mr McBurney wished to brief me in relation to the six persons who had been charged with the murder of Robert Hamill.

Mr McBurney outlined the details as follows:

The incident occurred at approximately 1.45 am on 27 April in the middle of Portadown. Robert Hamill, together with a man named D [REDACTED] and two females were going home having left a dance hall in the town centre. These persons were Catholics. At the same time other persons got off a bus which had arrived from Banbridge. These persons were Protestant. The incident occurred in Portadown town centre and there was a police land-rover situated outside the Alliance and Leicester Building Society very close to where the incident occurred.

Mr McBurney stated that this was a small fight which escalated. Eventually D [REDACTED] and Hamill were attacked by a mob of some 20 to 30 persons. There was a general fracas.

Robert Hamill was left unconscious. He was taken to hospital. Police were informed that his condition was not too serious and that he was going to live. There was no overall concern about his condition until 8 May. Mr Hamill's condition suddenly deteriorated and he died. A post mortem was carried out by Dr Crane, who has stated that his provisional finding is that the cause of death was a head injury.

Mr McBurney stated that having regard to the injury sustained by this man he should not have died. There was no real reason why he died. Dr Crane thinks that it may have been septicaemia. He cannot confirm this but hopes that he will be able to shortly. Mr McBurney stated that Mr Hamill received no really serious injury. There was a slight fracture to the side of the head but his skull on that side was thinner than on the other side. Police investigations commenced on 27 May. Three persons were arrested and were later released.

There have been allegations that police did not act quickly enough in relation to the incident. Five people were subsequently arrested. None of the five have made any admissions. A sixth person was arrested. He made no admissions. A final post mortem report has not yet been received. The main evidence against the six accused is provided by two witnesses, Tracey Clark and Timothy Jamieson. In addition, in relation to one of the six accused, Bridgett, his blood has turned up on the jeans of the deceased.

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