

incident and its ineffective investigation as symptomatic of institutionalised mind-sets in the RUC, especially in that sub-division. Mr Patten had asked him and Mr [REDACTED] whether the incident could really have happened as the Hamill family alleged, and they had told him that it could. He felt that only a public inquiry could now take us to the broader issues, but immediately went on to qualify that by pondering aloud about the value of such an inquiry against the current political background.

12 Mr Donnelly thought that his colleague who had supervised the original complaint had been too narrowly focused on the few minutes of the attack and had not paid enough attention to the read-across between the alleged police behaviour at the time of the attack and the alleged conspiracy to destroy evidence afterwards. When he himself had seen the papers he had been troubled that the allegation against Atkinson did not seem to have been followed up very enthusiastically, and that the withdrawal of statements had been taken as the end of the matter. Having said that, both he and Mr [REDACTED] recognized the difficulty of pursuing complaints when the complainants lost their nerve and withdrew.

13 I asked when and how the current criminal investigation had got under way, and Mr [REDACTED] gave virtually the same account that I had earlier heard from the Chief Constable, ie that the Chief Constable had himself pressed it when the Coroner had decided to drop the inquest.

14 Mr Donnelly ended by saying that it was clear that Neill and Atkinson must have seen what was going on. He also asked the (rather good) question how it was that the crowd had not been deterred by the presence of a police landrover only 20 yards away.

#### Next steps

15 From the papers I saw at the ICPC I now know exactly what was in the most important statements made to the police. Mr Donnelly was anxious to put the entire case papers at my disposal, and I will go over to look at them later this week. The Chief Constable also said that I was welcome to talk to the senior investigating officer, DCS MacBurney, and I shall do that as soon as he is available.

16 I think that the next thing I need to do is to ask the lawyers a few questions about the compatibility of different kinds of inquiries. I may also need to ask some questions about the background to Lawrence. Before I can do that, though, I shall need to construct an account of the Hamill case as a basis for consultation, and I shall try to do this within a week or so. I think that by the second week of August I ought to be able to put up some papers that will include an account of the main features of the case and a commentary on options that has the benefit of legal advice. I do not think that this will itself be the 'heavyweight memorandum' that you describe in your minute of 12 June, but it will be a step towards it.

ANTHONY LANGDON