

had been made in the immediate area of the assault. However, the witness, Ms E , who was believed to have made reference to this individual being involved with the assaults, later denied making such a remark to Reserve Constable Silcock. Constable Cooke had also placed Stacey Bridgett close to Robert Hamill. Additionally Tracey Clarke identified Stacey Bridgett's involvement as did Jonathan Wright in his statement dated 15th May 1997.

Given the foregoing, I took this information from the Forensic Scientist to the Senior Investigating Officer (Detective Chief Superintendent McBurney) and the Deputy Senior Investigating Officer (Detective Chief Inspector P39) for further direction. To the best of my recollection the discussion involved whether:

- (a) Under PACE (NI) Order 1989 or under the Magistrates Court (NI) Order 1981 the investigation now had the power to produce and further interview Stacey Bridgett. In effect, police had no legal powers to return Stacey Bridgett to a police station in order to pursue a line of questioning about the assault on Robert Hamill. This was because Stacey Bridgett had been charged with the murder of Robert Hamill.
- (b) Questioned the merits of re-interviewing Bridgett who had already denied under interview having any contact or having been in the vicinity of the immediate attack.
- (c) Consideration of no immediate interview, taking into account that these were initial forensic findings and further forensic examinations were still ongoing. Only on conclusion of such would a full forensic picture and scientific interpretation of the findings be known. Additionally, other enquiries were still ongoing regarding significant witnesses including the attempts through [REDACTED]'s solicitor's office to obtain such evidence.

In view of these points the direction was no further action at present. It was highly unlikely that any further evidence of the assault would be obtained at that time by way of an admission. In view of the legislation, consistency of views amongst the senior detectives involved and the fact that this information did not add to the evidence