

Diane Hamill

Complaints and Discipline Branch
Gough Barracks
Armagh

12th August 1997

Dear Superintendent,

I am writing to inform you of an incident which I find disturbing. On Sunday 1st of June a man began throwing stones towards our houses from the [redacted] area and shouting sectarian abuse at myself and my mother. He was shouting things like, 'Get out of Portadown you fenian bastards, What about Robert Hamill', and motioning as if to hold someone by the hair and kick their head. As I am sure you understand this was very distressing for myself and my mother as Robert Hamill was my brother, he was murdered by a group of loyalists almost three months ago.

During the incident I phoned Portadown police station and informed them of what was happening. I was told that assistance would be sent.

I saw a police jeep drive past where the man was without approaching him. I again phoned the police station and gave them a description of the man. The police jeep still failed to stop and approach the man who by this stage had moved along to the top of [redacted]. I drove past where the man was standing approx. 15 minutes after my first phone call, I then drove down [redacted] from the [redacted] end. There was a police jeep driving along [redacted]. I drove up behind the jeep in an attempt to attract their attention, I flashed my lights continually and waved but the officers failed or refused to acknowledge me even though one of the rear doors was open and an officer could clearly see me. I stopped at the bottom of [redacted] as I was too distressed to drive any further and I was also under the mistaken impression that the officers were about to approach the man in question. They did not. The number plate of the jeep was AAZ 9147, a woman police officer was driving. Approx. 10 minutes later I walked to a relatives house on [redacted] and I saw the same police jeep drive up [redacted]. I stood on the road to ensure the jeep stopped so I could speak to the officers inside. The WPC got out to speak to me, I asked why they hadn't approached the man I had given the description of earlier, she said they had seen the man in question but they didn't know it was him as they hadn't received a description. She promised they would go up to the man straight away and speak to him, at that point I turned to walk away only to glance back to see the jeep drive off in the opposite direction from where the man was. The RUC officers failing to respond to my call for help only added to the distress inflicted upon my family.

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On the 22-7-97 at 6.50pm a WPC claiming to be the one I spoke to during the incident phoned me to let me know the outcome of my complaint that night, she told that they didn't see the man again that night, I explained that I didn't expect her to as she had drove away from where she knew the man was instead of approaching him. I don't see the point of this phone call as it only served to remind me of the inaction of the RUC and revive the distress suffered by myself and my mother.

I would appreciate it if you could look into this matter for me and provide me with an explanation as to why the officers blatantly refused to answer my call for assistance.

Kind Regards

Diane Hamill

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