

speaking to Thomas Mallon, taken up position at the bottom of Thomas Street, it is quite likely they could have physically prevented the nationalists from crossing to Woodhouse Street until the loyalists had been moved from the junction or alternatively escorted the nationalists into Woodhouse Street.

As I see it, the sectarian conflict was developing as police sat chatting. This was despite the fact the landrover crew must have been aware that all the ingredients for serious and violent sectarian confrontation were present in Portadown town centre that night.

Constable Neill was not only the driver of the landrover, but also the senior RUC man at the scene and, accordingly, on his shoulders lies the responsibility for the failure of police to react with sufficient urgency. It is my intention to recommend some form of disciplinary action against Constable Neill and, at the appropriate time, will be giving further consideration to this issue.

Notwithstanding the above, one cannot get away from the fact that the sole purpose of the landrover patrol that night was to prevent public disorder in Portadown centre. Additionally, members of the crew were well aware that the Thomas Street/Market Street Woodhouse Street junctions had seen sectarian confrontations in the past.

- (5) I must admit to having my suspicions regarding the purpose of the two telephone calls made from the Aitkinson household to the Hanvey home. However, in the final analysis, Reserve Constable Aitkinson denies any knowledge of the calls and witnesses have come forward to explain their purpose. The prospect of proving these allegations, even if additional lines of enquiry were pursued, is, in my view, remote.

Conclusion

Being of the opinion that a satisfactory investigation has been conducted in the criminal allegation of "misconduct in a public place", I have prepared the following:

- (a) Statement of Completion (Criminal) for your signature;
- (b) Draft letter to Diane Hamill, filed at 89B, for approval;
- (c) Draft letter to [REDACTED], Solicitor, filed at 89C, for approval;
- (d) Draft letter to Detective Chief Superintendent McBurney, filed at 89D, for approval;
- (e) Draft letter to ACC, filed at 89E, for approval.

GREG MULLAN  
12 January 1998

90. 16/1/1998  
a most excellent and clear minute.  
Statement signed.  
Draft letter approved.  
M. Mullan