

# NEEDING TO KNOW THE TRUTH

## MURDER AND THE SEARCH FOR JUSTICE IN NORTHERN IRELAND

■ Over thirty people attended the public meeting on the 27th November 2002 at the Friends Meeting House.

Speakers from the Nottingham Robert Hamill Campaign, National Civil Rights Movement and the Pat Finucane Centre in Derry addressed the issues of sectarianism, racism and unlawful killing in Britain and Northern Ireland.

The murder of Robert Hamill has been the subject of a local Nottingham campaign for the past three years, but links were also made with the sectarian murders of Robert's lawyer, Rosemary Nelson and also the earlier murder of another civil rights lawyer, Pat Finucane. Suresh Grover, chair of the National Civil Rights Movement, spoke of the parallels in Britain where racism rather than sectarianism was the motivating issue. The obvious comparison to the three Irish murders was the murder of Steven Lawrence.

Steven died at the hands of racists while Robert, Rosemary and Pat were murdered by sectarian thugs. Apart from the cruel injustice of these killings, there are many other similarities. Indifference and cover ups from the police were common to all four deaths. Only the action of respective families and friends led to any public debate or awareness of what had actually happened. Despite the efforts of campaigners to seek justice in these tragic cases, it remains true that no one has yet been convicted of the murders of Steven, Robert, Rosemary or Pat.

It's clear that the McPherson Report, which followed the public inquiry into Steven's death, has still not been implemented. A review of the evidence relating to Robert, Rosemary and Pat is being undertaken by an independent judge, but this process will take two years.

Those who attended the meeting agreed, the campaigning must go on.

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I WOULD LIKE TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT JOINING  
THE NOTTINGHAM ROBERT HAMILL CAMPAIGN

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Please Return to: Nottingham Robert Hamill Campaign  
C/O The International Community Centre, 61b Mansfield Rd, Nottingham  
NG1 3FN, or e-mail:robhamillnott@yahoo.co.uk

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# NOTTINGHAM

## Robert Hamill

### CAMPAIGN NEWSLETTER



# USE OF CS SPRAY IN NORTHERN IRELAND

The use of weapons by the RUC and the British army in Northern Ireland has long generated concern about their health effects as well as the accountability of force. In early 2003 the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) proposed introducing the hand held CS sprays that have been deployed in England and Wales since 1996. While initially justified as a last step in restraining extremely violent individuals, complaints have been made that the spray has become a first step form of intervention. Concerns have also been raised about the lack of medical testing and monitoring of their effects. The Northern Ireland Policing Board has recently endorsed the proposal of the PSNI to introduce CS spray. Responding to the decision the Pat Finucane Centre has said that the board members have failed to carry out proper consultation, the decision was made in secret at a meeting at which the public was excluded and the proposal was endorsed before any guidelines had been agreed and there was no consultation with human rights or experts in the field.

The next meetings of the Nottingham Robert Hamill Campaign  
(@International Community Centre, Mansfield Rd) are:  
7th April, May 5th, June 2nd, July 7th, Aug 4th, Sept 1st  
Oct 6th, Nov 3rd, Dec 1st (All start at 7pm)

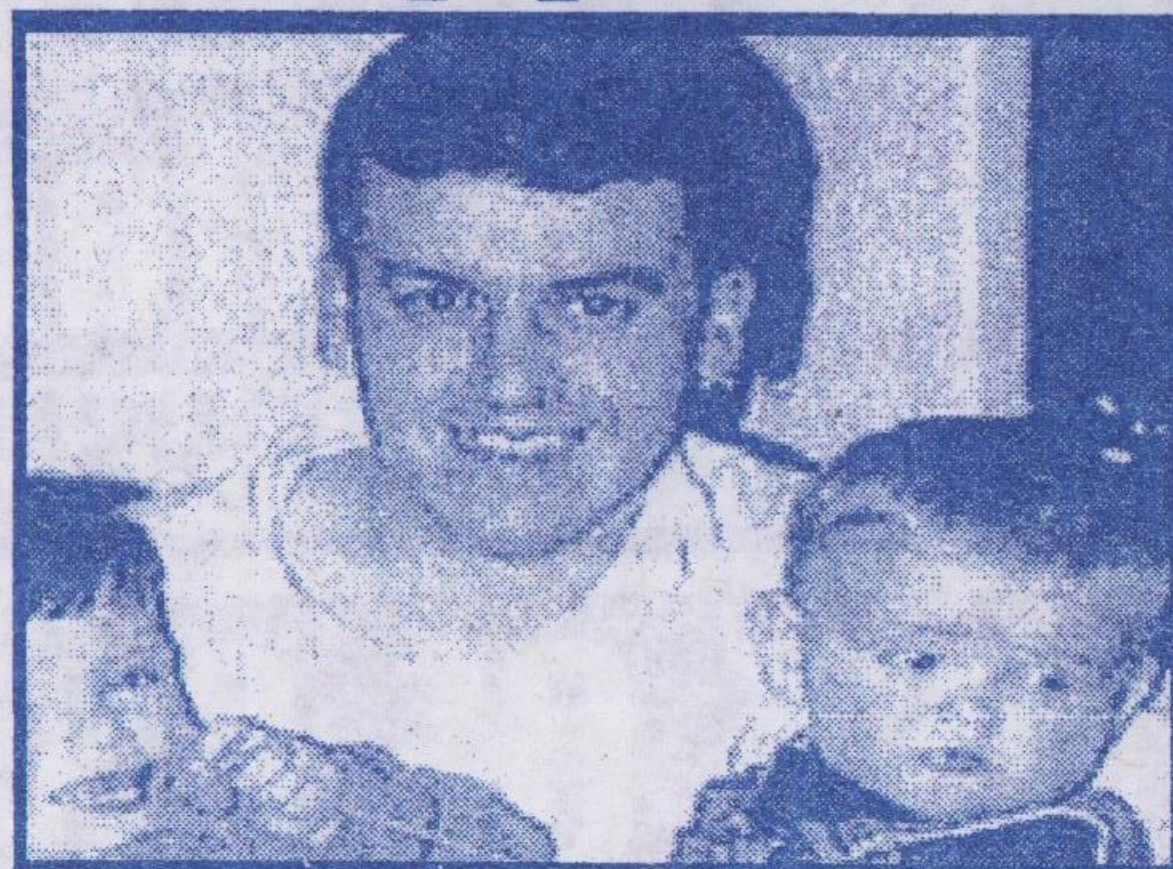


# What really happened

■ Robert Hamill was kicked to death by a mob of thirty loyalists in Portadown, Northern Ireland. The incident happened in the early hours of 27 April 1997 in full view of an RUC Land Rover, only 200 yards from an RUC station.

4 RUC officers, wearing body armour and armed with machine guns, stayed in the Land Rover until after the attack.

- ◆ They ignored warnings of a potential incident
- ◆ They ignored pleas for them to intervene during the attack
- ◆ They did not fire warning shots to disperse the crowd
- ◆ They did not administer first aid to Robert as he lay dying
- ◆ They did not declare the area as a scene of crime, collect any forensic evidence or take



statements from people present at the scene

- ◆ They detained one person but released him after only a few minutes
- ◆ No arrests were made for two weeks

Robert's family want to know why. They are asking the government to set up an independent inquiry into the incident.

## JUSTICE FOR PETER MCBRIDE

Eighteen year old Peter McBride was shot dead by Scots Guardsman Mark Wright and James Fisher near his home in Belfast in September 1992.

In 1995 Wright and Fisher were convicted of murder and sentenced to life imprisonment, but were released three years later and rejoined their regiment

Last April, Mr Justice Kerr dismissed a legal challenge against the army review board's decision to allow the pair to stay in the army and the McBride family are now appealing against that decision. Peter McBride senior said, "We hope the appeal is successful but if it goes against us we intend to try and get the case brought before the European Court of Justice." Mr McBride said he read recently that Wright and Fisher were in line for promotion. "You commit murder here and you get promoted," he said. "It would not happen in any other civilised country."

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT TROOPS OUT MOVEMENT  
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The Nottingham Robert Hamill Group has the support of a number of AMICUS, UNISON, and NAPO trade union branches, as well as Nottingham and District Trades Council.



Welcome to the third edition of the Nottingham Robert Hamill campaign newsletter. The newsletter will be produced quarterly. Articles and letters are welcome. All articles should be sent to: The Nottingham Robert Hamill Campaign, 61b Mansfield Road, Nottingham NG1 3FN or via e-mail to [robhamillnott@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:robhamillnott@yahoo.co.uk)

## RELATIVES FOR JUSTICE STATEMENT 24TH OCTOBER 2001

### UNITED NATIONS ONCE AGAIN CONDEMNS BRITISH USE OF PLASTIC BULLETS

The following is the text of the recently produced report by the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child. This committee has joined their colleagues in the UN's committee on torture in condemning the use of plastic bullets. Of significance is the fact that this statement has been made 16 months after the introduction of the new plastic bullet and the introduction of the office of the Ombudsman.

Chairperson of Relatives for Justice Clara Reilly said:

*"If this peace process is ever to gain momentum again. If we are ever to see a truly accountable policing situation then this British government must grasp the nettle and immediately ban plastic bullets. They must get off their current "security" agenda and come down on the side of human rights.*

*"They cannot to continue to ride two horses on the one hand promoting the use of lethal weapons against civilians and children and on the other speaking about their commitment to peace and human rights. They are currently violating the most basic right of all - the right to life."*

For full text of this report please see  
[www.relativesforjustice.com/plastic/plastic.htm](http://www.relativesforjustice.com/plastic/plastic.htm)

## TROOPS OUT MOVEMENT

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