

**CONFIDENTIAL****TAB E****POLICE REFORM/DISBANDMENT & COMMUNITY JUSTICE**

- \* There is work to be done to make the RUC more efficient, more effective, more accountable, and more acceptable especially in the Nationalist community. The Police (Northern Ireland) Bill currently in Parliament is an important step in achieving these aims.
- \* Disbanding the RUC is not on the Government's agenda.

**Community Justice**

If raised: express interest, but without any commitment.

1. The danger to Nelson in 1993 was taken by Mr John Stevens (the Deputy Chief Inspector of Constabulary) and his enquiry team. Mr Stevens was conducting a rigorous investigation into allegations of collusion between loyalist paramilitaries and members of the security forces, at the request of the High Court. Nelson was charged and convicted of a number of very serious crimes including five counts of conspiracy to murder. It would have been quite wrong to have turned a blind eye to illegal, whatever the cost to the intelligence system. There can be no blanket immunity from prosecution for informants who commit crimes.

2. The trial judge in the Nelson case recognised that there is a difficult dividing line between loyalist participation within a terrorist organisation as a security force informer, and active engagement in terrorism. In the judge's view, Nelson crossed over that line.