

[Most Popular](#)[Most Emailed](#)

[Breaking](#)[Sport](#)[Business](#)[World](#)[Gossip](#)



**THE IRISH NEWS**  
WORKPLACE & EMPLOYMENT  
AWARDS



**FREE**  
random stories



today's top pictures



**inphotos**  
browse Irish News photos online

Issue Changer:



today's pdf downloads



**sudoku**  
play online now

[NEWS](#) >

## Hamill family in tribunal call

BY Staff reporter

11/06/2008

A judge was urged yesterday to overturn the Secretary of State's refusal to extend the terms of an inquiry into one of the north's most controversial murders.

Relatives of Robert Hamill want the tribunal to be able to examine decisions made in the case by the director of public prosecutions.

The 25-year-old Catholic was beaten to death in Portadown, Co Armagh, in April 1997 with allegations that a police patrol was parked just yards from the scene of the attack.

Applying for a judicial review at the High Court in Belfast, lawyers for the Hamill family claimed in reaching his decision Shaun Woodward failed to address public

concern that no one has been convicted for the murder.

Liam McCollum QC said: "What can readily be

demonstrated is that at best the secretary of state paid lip service to the public interest exercise he was required to carry out."

The family's legal challenge came after Mr Woodward concluded in March that, based on legal advice, an extension to the inquiry's terms of reference was not required.

Opening a three-day hearing in front of Mr Justice Weatherup, Mr McCollum argued that this decision focused only on the difficulties to the DPP's office from any widened scope.

"The level of public concern might be so great that it wouldn't matter how much inconvenience there would be to a government body," the barrister insisted.

"The secretary of state, in our submission, front-loaded his process by looking at what way will this effect the DPP and what will it do to confidence in the administration of justice. The Secretary of State applied the wrong test. On that basis alone we say his decision should be quashed."

Mr McCollum also claimed the case involved legal points of irrationality and procedural unfairness.

He added: "We make the case that the decision making process was tainted by a perception of bias and therefore unlawful."

## Related Stories

- [Legal bid over Hamill murder](#)
- [Hamill family in tribunal call](#)

 Print  back to top

Bookmark:  Delicious  Digg  reddit  Facebook  StumbleUpon

 Email this story

[print advertising](#) | [media pack](#) | [online advertising](#) | [privacy statement](#) | [about us](#) | [contact us](#) | [subscribe](#) | [login](#) | [archives](#) | [sitemap](#) | [careers](#) | [home](#)