

JUDGEMENT DUE TOMORROW ON DPP DECISION NOT TO PROSECUTE FOLLOWING UNLAWFUL KILLING OF BLACK PRISONER

Royal Courts of Justice

London

Wednesday 17 May at 10am in Court 4

On Wednesday 17 May judgement will be given on the judicial review into the decision of the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) not to commence any criminal proceedings against any of the prison officers involved in the restraint-related death of black prisoner Alton Manning at the private Blakenhurst Prison on 8 December 1995.

An inquest into his death concluding on 25th March 1998 resulted in the inquest jury on the basis of pathological and eye witness evidence from prison officers and prisoners returning a unanimous verdict that he had been ‘**unlawfully killed**’.

In February 1999 the DPP announced his decision that there was ‘insufficient evidence’ to justify charges against any of the officers involved. Following a preliminary hearing in September 1999 the family won the right to judicially review the decision not to prosecute on 20th October 1999 and the full judicial review hearing is now to be heard. This is part of their long-standing campaign to see that those responsible for Mr Manning’s death are brought to account.

The court has scrutinised the quality and adequacy of the DPP’s explanation not to bring criminal charges.

This has been the first opportunity for the court to examine the DPP’s handling of a death in custody since the quality and management of his decision making process in such cases attracted severe criticism in the Butler Report published in August 1999 and the Report of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) published in January 2000.