

to the officers they were overwhelmed and were limited in what they could have done until assistance arrived. Reserve Constable Cornett does not appear to have heeded the warning provided by Mr Mallon. Although the comment was made to her about friends coming down from Thomas Street this neither alerted her to the danger of a confrontation nor prompted her into any form of action.

4.19 Reserve Constable Atkinson made 1 statement, (Appendix 9) (9683 – 9685).

4.20 In summary, Reserve Constable Atkinson described how he was part of the patrol parked up at Market Street/Woodhouse Street junction. He described seeing groups of 3 or 4 men walking up from Bridge Street area. He identified them as patrons from either Portadown Rugby Club or the Coach Inn. He initially reported the demeanour of the groups as being good humoured and relatively quiet.

4.21 Reserve Constable Atkinson described how he saw someone “*mouth*” something to the police patrol but stated he did not know what was said. He saw 2 men approach this man and words were exchanged. He recalled Constable Cornett telling these 2 men to “*clear off home*”.

4.22 Reserve Constable Atkinson described hearing a commotion at the back of the police patrol and then seeing Constable Neill being pulled from the vehicle. On alighting from the vehicle, he described a lot of shouting between a Nationalist crowd, which had come down Thomas Street, and a Loyalist crowd who were on their way home. He estimated the Loyalist crowd to number 50 and the Nationalists between 10 to 12 in number.

4.23 Reserve Constable Atkinson described a number of scuffles breaking out and he assisted Constable Neill to extricate a person who was being attacked by 4 or 5 youths.

4.24 Reserve Constable Atkinson saw 2 men injured on the ground and assisted in protecting them from the Loyalists whilst Constable Neill checked on their welfare. At one point he assisted Constable Neill to remove someone to the police vehicle and he then became involved in a violent confrontation with a third party. Whilst struggling with this person he caught a glance of 3 people jumping on the head of one of these people. He went back over to assist the injured man and whilst struggling with the crowd struck a person with his baton whom he believed was named Rory Robinson. He saw Constable A removing a person, whom he knew as Wayne Lunt, to the police vehicle.

4.25 Reserve Constable Atkinson stated that it took about 10 to 15 minutes for the ambulance to arrive and eventually, with the assistance of other officers, he dispersed the crowd.

4.26 Reserve Constable Atkinson was perhaps the most active officer initially at the scene. I am mindful that there are others who would dispute how resolute the officers were. In describing events Reserve Constable Atkinson recalled assisting Constable Neill. He stated: