

Initial Duties on 28th April 1997

As outlined in my notebook/journals, I commenced duty at 8.15 am on 28th April 1997 some 30½ hours after the initial assault and I was briefed by Detective Chief Inspector **P39** the Duty Officer, on the weekend's events. I had not been briefed or received any notice of this incident prior to commencing duty on that date. There were three main incidents that weekend in which the 'J' Division Criminal Investigation Department personnel had been involved and were fully deployed. These were as follows:

1. On 26th April 1997 at approximately 2100 hours there was an incident in which a young boy lost his eye and there were allegations of "attempted murder" being made by the family. This arose from an army foot patrol consisting of six soldiers were patrolling along the Antrim Road, Lurgan at which time they came under a sustained attack from a crowd of approximately 30 youths who threw bottles, stones and other missiles. The crowd attempted to isolate two members of the patrol and a patrol member discharged one plastic baton round in order to escape. Although the member of the patrol did not observe any persons being struck by the round, a 13 year old boy from Lurgan was admitted to Craigavon Area Hospital and later transferred to the eye clinic at the Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast.
2. On 26th April 1997 at 0145 hours, a sectarian assault occurred in which a man was kicked unconscious in a Hot Food Bar, Church Street, Banbridge. Five persons were involved in the assault in the premises in which they followed the male outside and assaulted him again. He was kicked repeatedly about the head and body. The male was unconscious in Craigavon Area Hospital with a fractured jaw, a median fracture to the skull and bi-lateral peri-orbital haematoma. He was to be transferred to Belfast if his condition did not improve. Although there had been no immediate arrests, two of the individuals had been identified and by 30th April, 5 persons had been arrested in relation to this serious assault. Three of these individuals were charged at a Special Court and 2 were released pending further enquiries.