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26 MAR 2008

**STATEMENT OF WITNESS**

**STATEMENT OF ALISON BOWLES**

**DATED THIS**

**DAY OF**

**2008**

I, ALISON ESTHER BOWLES, declare that this statement is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that if it is tendered in evidence at the Inquiry, I will be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated in it anything which I know to be false or do not believe to be true.

1. The Inquiry has disclosed a number of documents to me. Where I make specific reference to a document in my statement I have given the number of the relevant page.
2. I have been asked about my movements on the night of 26/27 April 1997. On the night in question I was at the flat of Geoffrey Smyth. At the time Geoffrey Smyth was the boyfriend of my sister, Ann Smyth. Ann and [REDACTED] were also at the flat.
3. At about 00.30 to 00.45, Ann, [REDACTED] and I left the flat to go to the town centre. We walked to Portadown town centre via West Street. We walked past St Mark's church to Boss Hoggs chip shop.
4. We ordered food at Boss Hoggs chip shop and sat beside the Ulster Bank and ate it. When we had finished our food we made our way up High Street on the Northern Bank side of the road.
5. As we passed the Northern Bank I think I saw a police Land Rover at the opening of Woodhouse Street. It was either outside the Halifax Bank or the Alliance and Leicester but I cannot be 100% sure which. I do not recall whether the police were

inside or outside the Land Rover. There was a crowd of 40 to 50 people around the opening of Thomas Street. There was a dispute going on at that stage. I felt frightened by the crowd and so we walked past the crowd towards the Abbey National.

6. As we continued to walk up the town we saw Dean Forbes standing outside the Abbey National. I did not know Dean personally but I recognised him because he was in the same year as me in school. I would have known him to say hello to. My sister Ann said to Dean "What's going on down there" and Dean said "There's a fight going on". At this stage we were about 20 or 30 yards away from the crowd. I couldn't see a fight going on because we couldn't see anything over the people.
7. Ann [REDACTED] and I then returned to Geoffrey Smyth's flat. I have no recollection of anything being said about the fight when we had returned to the flat.
8. I have been asked if I recall if Neil Ritchie stayed at Geoffrey's flat on the night of 26/27<sup>th</sup> April 1997. This is possible. He would often stay at the flat on Saturday nights as he worked with Ann.
9. I did not know Marc Hobson, Rory Robinson or Allister Hanvey and had never heard of them until the media coverage of Robert Hamill's death. I knew Wayne Lunt because he was maybe a year or two years below me in school but I did not know him personally, only by sight. I knew Stacey Bridgett because he was in the same year as me at school but we were not personal friends. I would know him to say hello to. I do not recall seeing any of these men on the night of 26/27 April 1997.
10. I did not go to the Coach Inn on the night of 26/27 April 1997 but I would have gone there now and again. It would have been quite common for people from Portadown and Craigavon to go to the Coach Inn. There was a disco at the Coach every Wednesday, Friday and Saturday night. I do not recall if there was a bus back

from the Coach to Portadown on Wednesday or Friday but I do recall that, on Saturday nights, there would be a 52-seater Ulster bus. I would say that the people who went to the coach in would have been mainly Protestant. I have not been to the Coach for years.

11. Aside from on the night in question, I do not recall there being fights in Portadown when the bus returned from the Coach. I do not recall seeing fights at the junction of Woodhouse Street, Market Street, High Street and Thomas Street. Other than on the night in question, I have never seen an incident where the same number of people congregated together in a fight.

SIGNED: Alison Bowles  
ALISON BOWLES

DATED: 19/03/08