

STATEMENT OF WITNESS

STATEMENT OF ANTHONY BYRNE

DATED THIS

DAY OF

2009

I, Anthony Byrne 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. In 1997 I was a taxi driver working for A-2-B Taxis. The base was at the bottom of Woodhouse Street. The office was inside the barrier and so if I started work after 6.00pm I would not be able to drive back to the office after doing a run. I could park outside the barriers and walk to the office if necessary.
3. On 26 / 27 April 1997 I was working the evening shift. I would usually have come to the base at 6.00pm or 6.30pm for the evening shift.
4. I remember picking people up from St. Patrick's Hall that night. There was a large crowd outside the hall waiting on taxis when I picked up the last few of my customers. When I was returning to, as far as I can remember, the Tunnel Bridge to be near the base I picked up a couple who wanted to go to the Garvaghy Road. They had come from St. Patrick's Hall, down Woodhouse Street and walked under the bridge and I picked them up at the beginning of Obin Street. They were a couple of hundreds yards away from the junction of Woodhouse Street and Thomas Street. This was outside the barriers.
5. The couple were a man and a woman; I think they were married. The male was a small lad, I imagine in his twenties. I cannot remember what the lady looked

like. As far as I can remember they had not booked a cab, they just flagged me down. I do not remember the exact time of this but it was late, maybe after midnight, because they had come from St. Patrick's Hall. I am not sure if they had been drinking but I know there is a bar in St. Patrick's.

6. What struck me about the couple was that the girl said that they had been chased by a number of people. She told me she had fallen and cut her knees. I do not remember any mention of why they were being chased or what it was about.
7. When the man was getting out of the cab at their home he said that he wanted me to take them back up to town. He wanted to face whoever had been chasing him but his wife wouldn't let him go. She did not want him to go; I would not have brought him back up anyway. I was then called with another job.
8. I called the Inquiry to tell them about this couple because they had been chased. I later found out who the man was; he was a part-time driver for A-2-B called **P132**. I'm not sure that I even knew him that night when I picked him up, and I do not remember if I recognised him, but I got his phone number from A-2-B. I had asked another driver who worked at that time if he knew who this man was but he wasn't sure.
9. I spoke to **P132** on the phone and asked him if he remembered me picking him up on that night and where I had picked him up. He wasn't sure if it was me who picked him up but he remembered that he was picked up at the Tunnel Bridge, what they call the bridge at the beginning of Obin Street. I was not certain where I had picked him up. He did not remember his wife cutting her knees.
10. **P132** was surprised to get a call from me but he did not give me any animosity. It was a very short phone call and we did not discuss what had happened to him that night in the town centre. He said that he had not been contacted at all about this matter, by the Inquiry or anyone else.

11. I am not sure when I was first aware there had been an incident in Portadown that night. I did not hear any sirens that I can remember.

SIGNED: *Anthony Byrne*
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ANTHONY BYRNE

Dated: *30 - 3 - 09*
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