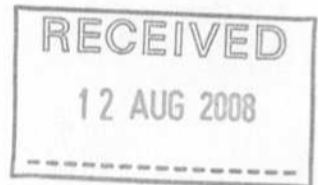


STATEMENT OF WITNESS



STATEMENT OF GODFREY DEAN SILCOCK

DATED THIS 04 DAY OF 08 2008

I, GODFREY DEAN SILCOCK 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 served with the PSNI, formerly known as the RUC for 18 years. I am now a Reserve Constable in the Tactical Support Group based in Armagh. At the time of the incident in April 1997, I had been stationed at Portadown for approximately eight years. I have been on patrol in the Market Street, Thomas Street, High Street and Woodhouse Street junction before. That area was known as a flashpoint interface for sectarian incidents. At one point in the 1980s sectarian disturbances were very regular but by 1997 it had died down considerably. There was always potential for violence, however.
3. On 26 April 1997, I was detailed along with Constable John Adams on mobile patrol. When on mobile patrol our responsibility was to respond to any incidents which occurred in the area. At approximately 1.47 a.m. we picked up a radio transmission from another patrol requesting assistance in the town centre. I cannot recall what was said but from the tone of voice and the background noise I could tell that a disturbance had developed. We were on the Gilford Road at that point. We responded immediately and it took us about two to three minutes to get to the town centre. We drove into the town via Bridge Street and then into Market Street. I have marked "X 70" on a map of the town centre to show the position of the vehicle, **page 73916**

4. When we arrived at the scene there were a large number of people who appeared to be hostile. I estimate there were about 60 civilians and four police officers. I saw two men lying on the ground and there were women with them. I could see that the men on the ground were injured so I immediately radioed through to Portadown police station for an ambulance. I cannot remember exactly what I said but I think I told them simply that there were two men injured and that an ambulance was needed in the town centre.
5. The four police officers were running around trying to keep the crowd away from the men on the ground and I think some had their batons drawn. I knew the four officers who were at the scene as Reserve Constables P40, Atkinson, Cornett and Constable Neill. I noticed Constable Neill talking to a man in the crowd. He was quite physical in the way he was doing it. He was about thirty to forty yards away from me but I cannot describe the man he was talking to or what was being said as I was focused on the two injured men. Constable Neill was trying to keep the crowd back at the same time. I saw Reserve Constable Cornett running around. There was a lot of too-ing and fro-ing so I cannot recall exactly what she was doing. Reserve Constable P40 was quite proactive shouting at the crowd trying to get them to disperse. He had his baton drawn. Reserve Constable Atkinson was also quite proactive and had his baton drawn in an attempt to disperse the crowd. I did not see him speaking to anyone at the scene.
6. I saw a police Land Rover, which was parked at the position I have marked "LR" on the map of Portadown town centre, **page 73916**. The vehicle was parked between Edward Street and Thomas Street approximately two-thirds to three-quarters of the way up towards St Mark's Church. The Land Rover was on the side of the road facing down the town.
7. There was no ambulance at the scene at that stage. I went over to the injured men. The first man was lying in Market Street near the corner of Thomas Street with his head pointing towards the direction of St Marks Church. I think that first man was **D**. I have marked his position on the map of Portadown town

centre with his initials **D**. page 73916. A second man was lying not far from the first man. The second man was on the left side of the road and further up towards St Marks Church. That second man was Robert Hamill. I have marked his position on the map as 'RH', page 73916.

8. Mr **D** had two women with him. I cannot remember what they looked like but they were kneeling down beside him. The women were distressed and quite verbal but I cannot recall what they were saying. Mr **D** was face down on the road. He was semi conscious and he appeared to have a head injury. There was blood or some other liquid around his head. I think it was in his hair. I do not think he had any other injury. During the fracas there were about thirty people near Mr **D**. At one point, they were about two to three feet away. I had to take out my baton and physically push the crowd back. I could hear people in the crowd saying "I hope they die" but I did not see anyone trying to attack Mr **D** whilst he lay on the ground.
9. I then went over to check Mr Hamill and left **D** with the two women. Mr Hamill was unconscious and was lying either on his back or partly on his side. His head was pointing towards St Marks Church and I could hear that he was struggling with his breathing. I am trained in first aid and I put my hand on his back to turn him over into the recovery position. It was clear to me from the vibration I felt in his back as I moved him that he was definitely having difficulty breathing. I checked to see if there was anything in his mouth but there was not. There was glass around his head, which I think was broken bottles. I kicked the glass away from his head to avoid him cutting himself. I did not see any blood or any injury apparent on him. I remained with Mr Hamill and I think that Constable Adams was with me for some of that time.
10. There were several other people with Mr Hamill. One of those people said that she was Mr Hamill's cousin. I cannot recall what the woman looked like or what else she said but I remember telling her to keep him in the recovery position. I recognised a boy known to me as Rory Robinson amongst the crowd of youths. I would describe him as tall, thin and in his mid-teens. I cannot remember anything else about his appearance. I knew him from my general

policing duties in Portadown. He was in the group of people that were shouting "I hope they die, they die". I am unable to say if Rory Robinson shouted actually those words but I recall that he was in a very aggressive state in that he was shouting and his body was tensed up and his eyes were wild looking. The crowd were being held back by police officers. Whilst the crowd were verbally abusive and their body language was aggressive, I did not see anyone try to assault any of the injured men.

11. I recall a woman wearing a white top pointing out a youth to me in the crowd. She alleged he had jumped on the head of Robert Hamill. I looked over at that youth. He was smaller than Rory Robinson and was wearing a grey tracksuit top. I could hear people call him Stacey and I saw him react to that name by turning around and acknowledging the people who were calling his name. He had blood coming from his nose. I was close enough to him to see from his eyes that he was excited. He was standing beside Rory Robinson but I could not tell if they knew each other. I also recall seeing a youngish man in a grey Umbro sweatshirt running between the two men lying on the ground. He was intoxicated and aggressive towards me and the other officers at the scene. He was cursing and obstructing me verbally whilst I was trying to tend to the men on the ground. I cannot recall if he was abusive towards anyone in the crowd but he was not aggressive towards the injured men, so I assumed that he was with Mr D and Mr Hamill. I cannot remember him speaking to any of the women with the victims.
12. When the ambulance arrived at the scene, it felt like an eternity had passed since I had radioed for assistance but I think that it was only a matter of minutes. I spoke to the paramedics but I cannot remember what I said. I think it was a general conversation about the injured men and I may have mentioned to them that I had kicked glass and stuff away from the men. The paramedics put the men in the ambulance and I think that the two women who were with the injured men got into the ambulance with them. I do not recall anyone else getting in the ambulance.

13. Once the injured men were taken away I recall Sergeant **P89** arriving at the scene. I cannot remember if Inspector McCrum was with him. I then went to assist the other police officers who were dispersing the crowd of youths. I recall that there were riot guns at the scene but I cannot recall how many. I think that there were also four firearms. I think that Constable Warnock had one riot gun and that he shouted a verbal warning to the crowd.
14. There were about 60 youths in the crowd at that stage and they appeared to all be Loyalists. There were also some Nationalists that had been with Mr Hamill but they were not a crowd as such. The Loyalist crowd were still aggressive and excitable after the injured men were taken away and there was a lot of shouting but I did not see any fighting or any bottles being thrown. The Mobile Support Unit arrived at the scene but I cannot remember exactly when or how many officers there were. Usually, there are 20 officers and five Land Rovers in a Mobile Support Unit. The unit is usually made up of a mixture of Reserve Constables and Constables.
15. We moved the crowd away from the town centre up towards West Street. I think that it took a number of minutes to do so. From start to finish I believe I was at the scene for about an hour, maybe a bit more or less. Once the crowd was moved up to West Street there was no one left in the town centre apart from police officers. There was a lot of glass and debris on the ground but I do not recall any directions being given to tape off the scene or to try to preserve anything from the scene. At that stage I do not think that I had been trained in scene preservation. I cannot remember if there were any other senior officers in the town centre apart from Sergeant **P89** but I certainly do not recall any instructions being given to us.
16. I think that I left the scene with Constable Adams and went back to the station, perhaps to have a break or regroup. I cannot remember what time it was when we left the town centre. In my statement of 24 May 1997, which contains page numbers **9223 to 9224**, I recorded that I then went to Craigavon Area hospital with Sergeant **P89**. I do not know what time that was but we went to the hospital to find out the condition of the injured men. When we arrived at the

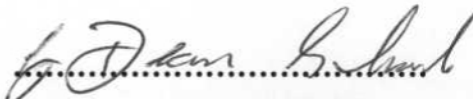
hospital I saw the man in the grey Umbro sweatshirt who I had noticed at the scene. I think he was identified to me as Robert Hamill's cousin. He was still very aggressive towards us at that stage and was verbally abusive.

17. I spoke to a woman who was with that man who I think was another of Robert Hamill's cousins. She was not aggressive towards us and we had no difficulties with her. I did not speak to any doctors or nurses while I was at the hospital and I do not think Sergeant P89 did either. We were at the hospital for no more than a few minutes. I do not have a record of the details of the visit in my notebook. I cannot remember what information was passed on when we returned to the police station but I think Sergeant P89 informed the investigating team of the situation.
18. I cannot recall what time it was that we got back to the station. The station is spread over a number of floors. There is a basement, two other floors and an attic. There is a recreational room on the first floor which was about 30 feet by 35 feet. There was a very small kitchen on the ground floor with two tables in it which seated up to eight chairs. I do not think I saw any of the officers from the Land Rover crew when I returned to the station but I did see Constable Adams and we had a general chat.
19. I completed my notebook some time that morning but I cannot remember when or where in the station I completed it. A copy of that notebook entry contains page numbers 9964 to 9965. Just when I was about to terminate duty for the day, I was called to the CID. It was approximately 8 a.m. Detective Sergeant Alder, Detective Constable Keys and I think Detective Chief Inspector P39 were there. Also present were Constable A, Reserve Constable Warnock and Constable Adams. I cannot remember if anyone else was present. I think we were told that the injuries to the men were serious but I do not think that we were told that Robert Hamill had been transferred to the Royal Victoria hospital at that stage. We were all asked to make statements so I remained in the CID annexe to do mine. I think that there were number of us sharing a table and making our statements but I do not recall discussing my Statement with anyone

but once I was finished I think I discussed it with anyone. I handed my statement to Detective Sergeant Lawther.

20. Save for that meeting with the CID team I do not recall any formal briefings on the incident and I did not discuss my statement with anyone from CID. In my statement, I had identified Stacey Bridgett and Rory Robinson. I know that Rory Robinson and Stacey Bridgett were later arrested but I was not asked to attend any identification parade or any other identification procedure. I am sure that I could have positively identified Rory Robinson and Stacey Bridgett as members of the Loyalist crowd.
21. After 27 April 1997, I do not recall discussing the incident with any of the officers at the scene. I did not discuss it with Reserve Constable Atkinson.
22. I have been asked about Allister Hanvey. I can say that I know Allister Hanvey from my general police work but I do not recall seeing him at the scene on 27 April 1997.

SIGNED:

  
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GODFREY DEAN SILCOCK

DATED:

..04/02/2008.....