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TAPED INTERVIEW - CONSTABLE ALAN KEITH NEILL, 16143, PORTADOWN RUC STATION

Testing. This interview is being tape recorded. It is a discipline only interview. The interview is being conducted in an interview room at Portadown Police Station. I'm Chief Inspector Richard Samuel Bradley, RUC Complaints and Discipline Branch, Gough, Armagh. There are no other police officers present. The date is Monday 20 December 1999. The time by my watch is 4 58 pm. There are no other persons present. What is your full name.

A Alan Keith Neill.

Q Your rank.

A Constable

Q Your number.

A 16143.

Q Your station.

A Portadown.

Q At the conclusion of the interview I will give you a notice explaining what will happen to the tapes. I will now inform you the nature of my enquiries. Excuse me one moment. I am presently investigating a complaint against police made by [REDACTED] Solicitors, [REDACTED] Lurgan on behalf of Diane Hamill, [REDACTED] Portadown representing the late Robert Hamill. I understand that on 27 April 1997 at 1 45 am or thereabouts a public order disturbance developed in the vicinity of Market Street/High Street junction with Thomas Street in Portadown involving a crowd of protestants with catholics in which Robert Hamill, a catholic, was beaten and subsequently died from his injuries

and a D, a catholic, was beaten unconscious. There was a police landrover with police on board parked in the vicinity of Market Street/Woodhouse Street junction almost opposite the disturbance. [REDACTED], Solicitor, Lurgan on behalf of Diane Hamill, [REDACTED] Portadown and the deceased Robert Hamill alleges in a letter dated 6 May 1997, I act on behalf of Robert Hamill and his sister in relation to an incident which occurred in the early hours of 27 April 1997. My client instructs me that her brother was seriously injured in an assault which occurred at the junction of Thomas Street/Market Street, Portadown. On that date my client instructs me further she had been informed that certain police officers witnessed this assault and did not intervene as promptly as possible. There followed from [REDACTED] much later prepared statements of 2 civilian witnesses basically alleging neglect of duty in the landrover in dealing with this disturbance. Police remained in the landrover ignoring a plea for help and did nothing until arrival of the ambulance. During the criminal investigation and court hearing relating to the death of Robert Hamill many witnesses related that police remained in the landrover until the attack was over and were not doing much to stop what was happening although many witnesses related that police from the landrover were actively involved in attempting to quell the disturbance. This basically is the allegation and evidence. I have to ask you were you the occupant of the landrover parked in the vicinity of Market Street/Woodhouse Street junction in Portadown on 27 April 1997 at 1 45 am or thereabouts.

A I was.

Q In view of the allegations which is tantamount to neglect of duty I am required to caution you under the RUC discipline regulations but before continuing you are aware that the matter was investigated from a criminal point of view and was referred to the Director of Public Prosecutions who directed 'No Prosecution' against any police officer. Is that correct.

A Yes that's correct.

Q Is it correct that you were served with discipline Form 17/3 notice of allegation of complaint against police by [REDACTED], Solicitors, [REDACTED] Lurgan on behalf of Diane Hamill, [REDACTED] Portadown representing the late Robert Hamill arising at Portadown on 27 April 1997.

A That's correct.

Q Is that a copy of the Form 17/3 which you signed confirming the receipt.

A That's correct.

Q Is that your signature, date and rank.

A That is correct.

Q Is it correct that during Form 17/3 service you also received a form relating to evidence by inference which basically explains that if you do not answer relevant questions or provide explanations during the interview it could be detrimental to you giving evidence at your possible disciplinary proceedings. Inference could be drawn by the tribunal at your refusal or failure to answer the questions.

A That's correct.

Q Did you receive that form.

A Yes I did.

Q Did you receive a list of representatives.

A I did.

Q I have already explained the allegation which is contained in Form 17/3 and I now caution you I say, 'You do not have to say anything but I must caution you that if you do not mention when questioned something which you later rely on in any subsequent disciplinary proceedings it may harm your defence. You may if you so desire make a written or oral statement to the investigating officer or the Chief Constable or the Police Authority as appropriate. Anything you mention when questioned or any written or oral statement you make may be given in evidence at such disciplinary proceedings. You have a right to consult a friend at all stages of the investigation. Do you wish a friend present during at this interview.

A No. Not at this time.

Q You will recall that during the criminal investigation you participated in PACE tape recorded interviews that I understand 2 interviews, 2 tapes in which a prepared statement in your name and a map were referred to and you answered questions is that correct.

A That is correct.

Q Just correct me if I'm wrong. Is it one prepared statement or was it 2 or more, can you recall.

A I there was 2 prepared statements, eh and written notes.

Q That's okay I'm just looking for them. You will recall that on 1 December 1999 I made, correction I made available to you copy of your tape PACE transcripts and prepared statements,

that's correct there were statements.

A Yes that's correct.

Q The reason was to afford you the opportunity of reading them as they are lengthy and to save blank running time on the tape during interview. Is that correct.

A That's correct.

Q I now produce to you copy of the map for your information that I mentioned earlier.

A Yes.

Q You have already been interviewed from a criminal point of view and I have no further questions other than to ask do you wish your taped PACE interviews which includes your prepared statements and map to be used in the disciplinary enquiry.

A Yes that's okay.

Q Is it okay that

A Yes.

Q They are used in the disciplinary enquiry.

A Yes (inaudible).

Q Do you wish to add anything or clarify anything that you have already stated.

A Not at this time.

Q The interview is now complete but before turning off the tape I will provide you with a form explaining what will happen the tapes. They will be retained at RUC Complaints and Discipline Branch, Gough, Armagh. That is the form and I am turning off the tape at 5 07 pm.

Certified a true copy of the original

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'D. J. ...', written over a horizontal line.

A37

MF 18

This interview is being tape recorded. The interview is being conducted in an interview room at Lurgan Police Station. I am Detective Inspector Michael Irwin from Portadown CID. Other police officers present are: Maynard McBurney, Detective Chief Superintendent. Other persons present are.

COMMISSION [REDACTED], Independent Commission for Police Complaints.

SOLICITOR [REDACTED] of Edwards and Company, Solicitors.

The date is the 8th of September 1997, the time is, which is taken from my watch, is 7.40 pm. What is your full name.

NEILL Alan Keith Neill.

Right. At the conclusion of this interview Alan I will give you a notice explaining what will happen to the tapes, it's a form PACE 21. OK you're going to be interviewed here today in relation to criminal neglect of duty in relation to an incident at Portadown town centre, in which you were the driver, believed to be the driver of a landrover, I'm going to caution you as follows, "you do not have to say anything but I must caution you that if you do not mention when questioned something which you later rely on in court it may harm your defence, if you do say anything it may be given in evidence. Do you understand that Alan."

NEILL Yes.

OK I'll explain to you a number of things that's just on the table here in front of us and the first one I would explain is a location map of Portadown town centre, which just gives a general view of the whole of Portadown town centre. The second one then is a particular map which covers the junction of Woodhouse Street and Thomas Street.

NEILL Aha.

With High Street and Market Street and the third map then is a map which was used as a, in a reconstruction at Lurgan town centre in which yourself and R/Con Atkinson. Portadown town centre. Sorry in Portadown town centre, in which yourself and R/Con Atkinson positioned the landrover in a number of occasions or a number of places in the Portadown town centre. OK.

NEILL

Yes.

And on the other side of that map then there's the, then a map of the police landrover, also on the table then there's two sets of photographs, one of this series of photographs is in relation to initial photographs taken at the initial incident on the assault and it's marked for the, reference number S410/97, item number ARN1 and then the next one is marked and this was further views of Thomas Street, Market Street and Woodhouse Street areas, Portadown. That was on the night when you and R/Con Atkinson reconstructed the, the landrover in position and that's reference number S522/97, item number ARN3, if you want to look at those. OK now I'd also produce to you a number of items in which you had previously provided for ourselves, it's a statement from yourself, notes taken from you regarding the incident produced by George Lawther. This was a, there was two statements, there was one then in relation to the identity of a Mark Hobson when you came to Lurgan, Station to identify them.

NEILL

Yes.

Copy of your notebook entry regarding your duties.

NEILL

Yes.

And a copy of the accounts report regarding the baton. OK.

NEILL

Yes.

OK. What I intend to do now is to go through a number of questions here to try and set the scene and the, the incident and what occurred on that particular night. So if you would on the street map, and what map I'm going to use, is the one in front of you which is marked and which the landrovers were marked or were positioned by yourself on a reconstruction. And on the street map provided would you indicate the position of the landrover in which you were sitting.

NEILL

It would be there.

And you're pointing to LR1.

NEILL

LR1.

And that was the initial point on that night that you were sitting.

NEILL

That's correct.

OK. And could you tell us where the crew were located in the landrover and I'll turn over the map to let, to indicate just exactly where the crew were sitting, if you want to mark it with this pen here.

NEILL

Right ah.

Just put their names.

NEILL

R/Con Cornett was, was in the passenger seat.

Aha.

NEILL

I was driving. I believe R/Con Atkinson was behind R/Con Cornett and P40 was behind me.

OK for the purposes of this interview I'm just going to mark this map M1, exhibit M11 and that includes, the map of the landrover and also the map of the town centre in Portadown. OK. What was the nature of your brief before you went out that night Alan.

NEILL

Public order duties in the town centre.

Who briefed you regarding that.

NEILL

Sergeant P89

When he, briefed you regarding public order duties what exactly did you, mean or what was the brief.

NEILL

Public order duties in the town centre because there was a number of problems, especially around that junction and at Mandeville Street and at the other end of the town at Kentucky Fried or Boss Hoggs.

There's a number, what did you say.

NEILL

The three sort of locations where you would get trouble on a Saturday night, Friday and Saturday nights.

And that's Boss Hoggs.

NEILL

Boss Hoggs, at this crossroads, Woodhouse Street.

Yeah.

NEILL Thomas Street and at Mandeville Street.

And Mandeville Street, OK.

NEILL West Street.

You're referring to problems what type of problems.

NEILL Just ordinary Saturday night, the drunks coming out and people coming back from the Coach, people coming back from the Coach in Banbridge, they probably get off the bus at the bottom of the town at Boss Hoggs and go to Kentucky Fried and Boss Hoggs where you can have problems.

Did that include sectarianism.

NEILL Sometimes, well sometimes it does but not, mainly it's just the drunks.

Right.

NEILL Most of the sectarian stuff that would go on would be at Woodhouse Street, Thomas Street where you have people coming up from St Pat's going down Woodhouse Street.

And you mentioned St Pat's and just to clear it at this minute in time when you went out on duty on that occasion.

NEILL Aha.

Were you aware that there was a function in St Pat's.

NEILL I can't honestly remember whether there was or not there's usually people coming down from St Pat's on a Saturday night you know it's not, I can't say there would be people coming down from there now usually on the Saturday nights.

Would there normally be a problem at that junction in consequence of that.

NEILL Not every Saturday, there's the odd Saturday night there would be a problem there yes.

Just the odd Saturday night.

NEILL Yeah, not every Saturday night.

But you as police would be aware of that.

NEILL Yes.

And be in a position.

NEILL There's also a problem further on down Woodhouse Street where you'd have people coming across from West Street through Magowan Buildings car park as well, which had been quite a problem before, up to that.

Why was a decision made to park the landrover first here at LR1 here.

NEILL Well.

As you can.

NEILL That would be one of the main places we would be positioned, you can see well down the street from there and you can also see back up West Street, quite a bit up West Street so it's one good spot for to sit, rather than driving round, if you were up one end of the street you might miss something.

Aha.

NEILL Where that's more central.

And how long would you have been sitting there in that.

NEILL We weren't sitting there that long at that stage we had moved round and we had stopped there maybe ten, fifteen minutes maybe at the most.

And then what made you move from LR1 to the location here marked as LR2.

NEILL There was because we were sitting and I observed a crowd coming up the street from Boss Hoggs which was a fairly constant flow, I would say it, maybe about fifty people, or maybe more, walking up the street in dribs and drabs and some of them actually come past the junction of Thomas Street when I thought I could see something else going on down the street so I went to have a look down at Boss Hoggs to see what was happening.

Right do you know where that crowd would be coming from.

NEILL It was the, it would have been the, Coach,

the crowd from the Coach.

Aha.

NEILL And the bus would have left them off there, at the bottom of the street and that's probably where they've come from.

Is that a usual.

NEILL That's one of the usual drop off points for the Ulsterbus, it brings them back from the Coach.

And how often then would you do, would you have done public order duties in the town centre.

NEILL Well of late we've been doing it, starting at eight o'clock, going on to night shift and if we're on lates on the Friday and Saturday night you'd also, you could be held on to three o'clock.

Aha.

NEILL To cover. You could be doing that every sort of alternate.

Alternate weekend.

NEILL Alternate, Friday, Saturday or.

Right and you would have, sorry, how often would you have done that.

NEILL You'd maybe do it twice in the month.

Twice a month. And how long were you in Portadown or how long would, roughly.

NEILL I've been there four years.

There four years. As a matter of interest, position LR1 are you saying that that is the most strategic position for you to see all that's going on in the town centre.

NEILL It's one of the.

You're carrying out that type of duty.

NEILL It's one of the better places to be sitting rather than right down at this end where it, down at Boss Hoggs where you have trouble because you can't see right up because of the slight hill there.

You can see the junction of Thomas Street.

NEILL There's also, sorry there's also Kentucky Fried down here which is on the other side of the town barriers.

Yes at the bottom left hand side.

NEILL Yes. And you'd, have quite a few problems down there as well.

Right and you were aware there's a bus every Saturday night.

NEILL Yeah.

At around the same time.

NEILL At around the same time, yes.

So this is why you'd be in that position.

NEILL Yes.

Or indeed LR2.

NEILL Yes.

So you'd be aware of all sorts of problems.

NEILL Aha, that's correct.

OK. Now just before I move on there's an indication LR3 marked on the map. Would you explain then, why from LR1, you had actually parked at LR2.

NEILL We stopped, from LR1.

Aha, yes.

NEILL From LR1 we, whenever I saw the crowd coming up.

Aha.

NEILL We moved off as we got to about LR2.

Aha.

NEILL Which is marked. There was a fella walked across from Thomas Street across the road in front of us and he was mouthing something to us. I sort of stopped, I stopped at LR2.

Aha.

NEILL Or thereabouts and R/Con Cornett opened the door and asked him what he was saying and he said something like, there's people coming

down from, St Pat's or there's friends coming down from St Pat's or something, I can't remember the exact words but.

Right.

NEILL There was some, the way he put it was, he knew there was people coming down from St Patrick's at that time.

Righto. What did you glean from that, I mean what was the significance of that remark.

NEILL Well there was quite a crowd coming up, coming up from High Street and into Market Street at that stage from the Coach which would have been nearly all Protestant and there was some people coming down from St Pat's who would have been Catholic and they would have been crossing over into Woodhouse Street.

Had you seen them at this stage.

NEILL No.

They, so they hadn't appeared.

NEILL They hadn't.

Down Thomas Street at this stage.

NEILL As we were passing just before we stopped with that boy, I had looked up and there was nobody about, there was just that one fella just crossed the road in front of us but there was nobody else in Thomas Street.

In Thomas Street at that stage.

NEILL That I could see but the, Thomas Street bends away.

Veers to the right.

NEILL Aha.

OK. Got that bit there. Now just let me go back to this particular person that Reserve Constable Cornett spoke to, can you give any description of this person or indeed what he was wearing, can you remember.

NEILL I can't, I can't really remember unless it's in my statement I couldn't honestly.

Right.

NEILL I think he was maybe wearing a blue, green shirt I can't, I couldn't honestly say.

No it's unfair, if you can't remember.

NEILL Yeah.

You can't remember.

NEILL I think he was wearing a blue, green shirt but as I say I couldn't honestly say just off, off hand.

Yeah. So at that stage he spoke.

NEILL Aha.

To Reserve Constable Cornett.

NEILL Yes.

And what did you, what transpired then.

NEILL Well I sort of looked back up the street, there was still nobody about.

Nobody,

NEILL Nobody in Thomas Street.

Yeah.

NEILL There was still nobody about and just as he finished speaking to us well the position I was in, I was just going to go down the town and back up again just to Thomas Street and park on the other side from LR2.

Would, you indicate that on your, just on the map please, your, your intentions were.

NEILL Yeah we were intending to, we'd normally stop about the crossroads or the pedestrian crossing and there about there you know.

And you're marking that, put it just an X and put your own initials and put it as one, now, well.

NEILL Just this one.

That's marked AN1.

NEILL AKN1.

AKN1. So instead of doing that you then move

from LR2 to.

NEILL LR3.

LR3. And what caused that now.

NEILL Ah.

You saw no one coming down here.

NEILL No.

So you moved off with a view to driving down the road when you stopped here.

NEILL Yes.

OK what caused that.

NEILL As the fella had spoken to R/Con Cornett as I say I moved off and there was two boys walking up from the Northern Bank, just past the Halifax and as I approached the junction there they had actually come up and -faced this boy that had already spoken to us, there was two of them, one was Stacey Bridgett, I know Stacey Bridgett and I'm not too sure who the other fella was and I knew his face but I couldn't put a name to it.

Can you mark on the map Alan in general or you, if you can't say so, where this confrontation or where these people was.

NEILL Well as I say they, he had squared up to that, the two of them had sort of squared up to that fella, he was walking down and.

If you want.

NEILL We stopped, he was, they were only about twenty foot or so from the, they probably would have been about.

And just mark that two then.

NEILL Just about there.

And your initials beside it as well. OK. Now how did this man end up in the middle of the road, was he also in the middle of the road.

NEILL I couldn't honestly say, we just went to move off whenever we saw these Bridgett and the other fella going over to him.

Going across the junction.

NEILL

Yes, they must have shouted something at him or something I don't honestly know but Denise I think R/Con Cornett said something and I looked round and saw that Bridgett was squared up to that, the other fella and I immediately stopped, Denise, R/Con Cornett opened her door and shouted out at them and let me see, aye Bridgett, Bridgett was, was still face to face with him.

Aha.

NEILL

And was for another few seconds because his friend was standing right beside him sort of staring into the other fella's face too.

Righto. And what happened then.

NEILL

Well Denise, R/Con Cornett shouted at them again and then they, Bridgett and the other fella walked up towards the Alliance and Leicester.

Aha.

NEILL

And the other fella walked on down Woodhouse Street.

Woodhouse Street.

NEILL

Aha.

Now as soon, that was happening here. Where was the crowd at, at this stage.

NEILL

They were just walking up the footpath.

You, you're indicating the other side of the, the opposite side of the road.

NEILL

Yes they were on the opposite side of the street walking up.

Were they as far as Thomas Street.

NEILL

From Thomas Street. There was, some, some had actually passed Thomas Street I mean there was dribs and drabs but I mean it was, there was a fairly constant flow of them at the same time.

And there was no trouble or anything at that stage.

NEILL

No they were just singing and shouting and just normal Saturday night on their way back home it wasn't.

Yeah. Did you anticipate any trouble at that stage or could you visualise any trouble happening at that stage, apart from Stacey whom you saw here.

NEILL No. Not at that moment in time, no.

Well was.

NEILL It was just after we had, just after they, those two had walked away from that fella, they came back over to us because we were watching the other fella going down Woodhouse Street and then they came over to the door of the landrover.

They came over to the landrover.

NEILL Aha.

And would you have been speaking to them there I mean was that a general conversation or were you talking to them or whatever.

NEILL Bridgett was started talking to R/Con Cornett but it was a, it was a very brief conversation like it wasn't.

Yeah.

NEILL Well it's not, it's not as if she knew him or anything and then I think P40 in the back he knew Bridgett and he spoke to him briefly and I had just mentioned to them I says there's an awful crowd of you tonight and, and he says oh that's just the usual crowd coming back from the coach.

Right now you were speaking three, four of you rather were in the landrover, you had seen Stacey or Bridgett rather and this slight confrontation, did it occur to any of you at that stage or did you even consider maybe some of us should get out of the landrover during this discussion, with these people.

NEILL No it, it broke up.

With these two.

NEILL We, just as Denise, R/Con Cornett shouted over at them and it was you know they stood there for a minute, she shouted over again and that was it, they just went their separate ways.

But the,

NEILL There was no.  
Was this before they spoke to you or afterwards.

NEILL Oh that was before they came over and spoke to us.  
Yeah, so she shouted at them.

NEILL Aha.  
They seemed to clear off but then they come back, in a few seconds or minutes or.

NEILL As we were moving from LR2 they walked past the corner of the Halifax and they had approached that fella that was that had initially stopped us.  
Yeah.

NEILL Now the, they hadn't spoken to us at any stage.  
Ehm.

NEILL At that, it was whenever we were stopped at LR3 after R/Con Cornett had spoken to them, telling them to stop what they were doing that they walked off to the Alliance and Leicester and we waited, we just sat there for, it wasn't very long, we weren't sitting there very long and then they.  
So you stopped in LR3.

NEILL Yes we stopped at LR3.  
Yeah.

NEILL And then as we were watching the fella going down Woodhouse Street they walked back over to us.  
They walked back across to you again.

NEILL At that. That's, yes that's Bridgett and the person that was with him.  
Yes. So on this side of the street things were progressing.

NEILL Yes on the Thomas side of the street there was still ah a fair crowd walking up.  
Can you remember at this latter stage then seeing anyone coming down Thomas Street.

NEILL No from that position in LR3 you couldn't see anybody coming down.

Right, OK. Would you explain why you couldn't see anybody coming down at that stage.

NEILL Well the position of the landrover but also the, it's not a direct crossroads as you can see like it's.

Yeah it's just for, for the purpose of the tape here explain the landrover or can you or.

NEILL Well the landrover is across the stop line.

Aha.

NEILL At the top of Woodhouse Street, at an angle and Woodhouse, or Thomas Street would be, it's not a.

It's not vertically opposite it.

NEILL Not across from it.

Yes, aha.

NEILL Yeah. Where I couldn't see.

Now did you see any of these people carrying anything.

NEILL Yes I believe the other person that was with Bridgett or was it Bridgett, there was one of them had a, a bottle of, I think it was a bottle of cider, green bottle, I think it was Olde English, it was, it was Stacey had it, Stacey Bridgett.

SOLICITOR If you want, you can refer to your statement there, if you want to clear up anything in particular.

NEILL I think that.

In actual fact you're quite right, it is Stacey.

NEILL Stacey, aye.

As you've said in your statement.

NEILL Yeah well he was actually standing in the inside of the door. When your boy, the landrover door.

Yes I'm happy enough with that there, the point I'm coming back to now is a remark, he made the remark that he was a painter.

NEILL Aha.

Now was this part of the discussion that you were having with.

NEILL No, whenever I said about asking him if that was the normal crowd it was, it was the other fella, he was standing sort of beside R/Con Cornett and just sort of behind the door or not behind the door.

Show us here.

NEILL He would have been, he would have been standing there.

Just so. Well just, and this would have been the one with, then mark that number three and that is the person with Bridgett is it.

NEILL That's the person with Bridgett and Bridgett was standing in there.

And mark that four. OK. And, the door was open.

NEILL The door was open like this, showing there.

Now on this map your driver's door is shown open.

NEILL Aha.

On, on that particular night.

NEILL No it was closed.

And the back doors.

NEILL The back doors were closed.

OK now just let me finish this here, which one of these people or persons is the one that refers to being the painter.

NEILL That was the one I've marked as three.

The one you've marked as three. And you, or rather Cornett was having this discussion with this particular person.

NEILL She, no she was speaking to Bridgett who is marked here as number four.

Right, well who did he make this remark here to.

NEILL He was talking to me at the time.

Right and he made the remark to you.

NEILL It was he had, it was just briefly you know that there was a number of people or a large number of people that had come back from the Coach and he had said that he had been over trying to get a job and then that he had given his card to the owner of the Coach hoping to get a painting job at the Seagoe.

Ehm.

NEILL That's, the owners of the Coach have just purchased it at that time.

OK. Now during this discussion what happened then.

NEILL Well that would, I mean that was it, it wasn't really a discussion like it was.

It was a talk or.

NEILL It was just this.

Passing time of the day as it were.

NEILL Yeah it was only about a couple of sentences as it was, as we were, I had stopped speaking to the other fella and the next thing my door was opened.

Yeah, now explain that aspect and what happened then.

NEILL Right well as I was sitting in the driver's seat R/Con Cornett was still, had her door open, and Bridgett was standing talking, was speaking to her and then my door was opened and I was grabbed and was being pulled from the landrover.

Now, being pulled from the landrover, yeah.

NEILL Aha by the arm.

As he was pulling at me he said, you sat there and watch that happen.

NEILL Aha.

Now what was meant by that, what did you think at that time when he said that.

NEILL I didn't, I didn't know what he was talking about at the time. It was only after, once we got out and once after, after the whole goings on that we realised what he was talking about.

Well now you see, you refer to the goings on and I take it but we'll just slow it down for a second or two.

NEILL Aha.

You sat there and watched that happen.

NEILL Aha.

So you hadn't a clue as to what was going on at that stage.

NEILL No, no.

Right so you must have taken a look around or you may not have done, I don't know, I'm asking you.

NEILL But.

What did you do and what did you say.

NEILL Well the position I was in, I was slightly turned on my seat looking out. R/Con Cornett's door so ah but even at that you couldn't, the position in the landrover and being able to look behind you from the landrover it's quite hard.

No I know, point taken.

NEILL You know so I couldn't, the way that it was positioned it was hard enough to look sort of behind you.

Well how long did it take you getting out of the landrover along with your colleagues, this person has said.

NEILL Well he was pulling me out, there was another woman I think was standing shouting at us as well and we were out, we were out in no time at all, we were out you know as he was pulling me out I was getting out.

Aye but I mean how.

NEILL

Ah.

I mean a minute or, or what.

NEILL

No, no it was only a matter of seconds.

Ehm. So very quickly you were out of the landrover.

NEILL

Yeah.

And.

NEILL

And the rest of them, they were all out but more or less as I was out, as I, I saw R/Con Atkinson and P40 out at the back, they were standing at the back.

Well now how long did it take this person here getting out and round or where did they go.

NEILL

R/Con Cornett, I'm not too sure. She, whenever I got, there was whenever I got out of the landrover there was just a crowd of people standing at the junction of Thomas Street, there was a bit of cat calling going on but there was no actual fighting or anything else, there was no, there was no, anybody, you know I couldn't see anybody being assaulted I moved to the back of the landrover where R/Con Atkinson and P40 was and then suddenly it just erupted and there was fights going on all over the street.

Was there many people about at that stage.

NEILL

Well whenever I got out and

Let's just as a matter of interest take a look at the map on this side and give us an indication where the main numbers were and where the different fracas if you possibly can give us an indication where they were taking place, if you can now.

NEILL

Right most of the people would have been around the end of Thomas Street.

I mean just draw that in a big circle there Alan please if you can or whatever, or what number are we at now. Five I think. Five. X5 will just do well on it, and you're talking about that.

NEILL

That was me and

That's five is it.

NEILL Yeah. Sorry.

It looks like a three. And you're marking a big circle round the mouth of the give way.

NEILL Yes well when you're talking about I would say forty, fifty people like.

Aha.

NEILL Were there.

And when you first went out you were saying they were taunting people.

NEILL It was just like a matter of cat calling was going on.

Was there two specific groups or.

NEILL Well whenever I got out you, you could have split them at that stage you know as, in that you could say there was about, I would have said eight to ten people that have come down from Thomas Street.

Aha.

NEILL And the rest had been the ones that were going up from coming back from the Coach.

Aha. So what did you think that that man was referring to when, he had said to you when you were getting out of the landrover he had, he had made a comment.

NEILL I didn't, I still didn't honestly know what he was talking about, they were just standing, there, from what we could see, or from what I could see whenever I got out was they were just shouting at each other, I didn't see any, any assaults going on at that stage.

Right.

NEILL It was only when I, once I moved to the back of the landrover as I say I was standing with R/Con Atkinson and P40 that it just suddenly.

Aha. Did you at any time hear anyone say to P40, what the fuck are you going to do.

NEILL There was a lot of, there was a lot of things said that that I can't honestly remember,

there was probably something very much like it.

Did the person that pulled you out did he say, do you know would he have had a conversation with P40.

NEILL I couldn't say.

What actually happened to that person.

NEILL I don't honestly know what happened to him or where he went or who he was.

Can you describe him at all.

NEILL Ah.

I know you, I think you in, in your statement.

NEILL I think it is described in my statement.

Aha. And just if there's anything, stocky male.

NEILL Stocky male. Approximately, he was mid thirties ah.

His clothing in particular.

NEILL Well he was wearing blue, green casual shirt.

Had he a tie on.

NEILL Short hair.

I know it's.

NEILL I couldn't honestly say.

SOLICITOR It seems a silly question. From my point of view I have to identify certain personalities.

Yeah, OK let's assume then that you got out of the landrover and you see a number of fights going on and you in your statement say you, you saw one fight outside Eastwoods.

NEILL Aha.

Now can you explain the sequence from there and explain that particular fracas, whatever other fracas you went to and where you went after that and then, now and this will be quite difficult and I'm not trying to tie you down but you've got to think and say to

yourself, where did these individual fracas occur and if you could trace your steps from wherever to each fight do you understand me, did you try to separate.

NEILL Yes.

Did you try to.

NEILL Separate.

To separate.

NEILL Aha.

Because you were obviously moving about quite a lot.

NEILL Aha.

And so far you've explained quite a lot.

NEILL Aha.

OK. Could you do that now. That's from this particular incident here.

NEILL From LR3 where the landrover is there.

Yes you then see a fight and you go towards it.

NEILL Right well that fight was over I believe, over at Eastwoods clothing, on or about the footpath.

OK just explain that and carry on from there.

NEILL Well it, it was sort of it appeared to be a three on one situation and I mean three Prods on one Catholic.

Ehm.

NEILL Because, there was a number of fights going on at that stage so it wasn't I just went straight, I just saw that one and just went straight for it in an effort to try and get the Catholic boy out of the road and to get him down Woodhouse Street and try and get him out of the road.

Yeah which you succeeded in doing.

NEILL Yeah well he, he continually came back, that was the

Well can you describe that person.

NEILL Ah he was wearing like a leisure, leisure top, sort of a, with a zip.

Ehm.

NEILL Is wait 'til I see, white cream type leisure top.

Yeah you can refer to your statement.

NEILL With short sleeves.

Right, now continue if you can put any more to that.

NEILL I think he'd have been about late twenties I would say, dark, I think he had, I believe he had dark hair.

Just before you move on from that point and I know it's skipping a bit you, did you see a number, there was two males actually went to the hospital in an ambulance.

NEILL Aha.

If you're aware of that.

NEILL Yes.

Three males in total, three actually went and I was going to ask you was that one of the persons that went to hospital.

NEILL I couldn't honestly say.

Sorry that's OK. Right it, it may seem out of context.

NEILL Yes.

But it answers a question.

NEILL Yes.

At a much later stage OK.

NEILL From our position marked six.

Aha.

NEILL I took that person in the white, cream type leisure top back down Woodhouse Street trying to get him out of the road.

How far, would you indicate where you, where you actually brought him to.

NEILL I got him as far, I would say it was near the end of or the tale end of the Alliance and Leicester in Woodhouse Street.

Just mark that seven then. Was this boy struggling or anything or was he.

NEILL He was, he was struggling but he was you know he was skinny, scrawny sort of thing so I just hawked him out of the road.

Yeah.

NEILL But as I, was trying to talk to him at, he was against the wall there at the Alliance and Leicester.

Ehm.

NEILL Somebody came behind me and punched, him in the face as I was talking to him so I grabbed, I think that fella fell to the ground and I think it was more drink than being unconscious or anything.

The punch aha.

NEILL Yeah. I immediately grabbed, I grabbed the other fella and took him back up the street.

You say the other fella, that's his assailant. That's the person that assaulted him.

NEILL That's that person yes, that's the person that assaulted him, I took him, I was taking him back up the street and I think he, as far as I can remember he just kept on saying I'm sorry I just had to do it or something.

Well tell me this and I know it might be a stupid question, how did you know he was a Catholic and I refer to number six.

NEILL Number six. Well I mean there was, there was four in the fight.

Aha.

NEILL And considering the numbers of people that were there you know you could just sort of.

You could.

NEILL I don't know how, I don't honestly know how I picked him out but certainly wasn't with the

other ones, he wasn't dressed, he wouldn't have been dressed in the.

Aha.

NEILL Way they go to the Coach.

Aha.

NEILL You know.

Right. Again that's reasonable,

NEILL Yeah.

Now let's go back again to this person that struck the person that you were trying to get down Woodhouse Street.

NEILL Right.

Tell us about him, where you took him and who he was, a description of him and how he got away.

NEILL Well I took him back up to the landrover at position LR3 he wasn't giving me his name or anything and I can't, I couldn't describe him he was just I would say late teens, early twenties.

Well how did he get away, did you release him.

NEILL There was, as I say I couldn't honestly say from, even from my statement I couldn't say where each individual thing happened, I know that was right at the start, this happened right at the start.

Yeah.

NEILL But as from what happened in between times I couldn't honestly say, brought him back up to the landrover, I believe there was another I looked round and seen R/Con Atkinson and Sharpe were still involved in different fracas, at this time there was still nobody we, there was still no back up there.

Had you asked for anybody for back up.

NEILL Well R/Con Cornett had, the pocket phone and she had been shouting and screaming and.

Right.

NEILL For assistance. As far as I remember there was, whenever I got that fella back to the landrover I believe there was bottles smashed or there was a fight started nearby.

Right. Can you elaborate on that there, elaborate on the fight that started nearby you and if you heard of bottles smashed or whatever.

NEILL Ehm.

It's for to give us an impression of what was happening at the time because quite obviously there was a lot happening.

NEILL Aha.

And it's to try and isolate the different fracas, fights, whatever.

NEILL Aha. I can't, I couldn't honestly say where exactly that fight was, I know I left that boy because there was that, there was only the four of us there.

Ehm.

NEILL And it was a matter of not just trying to separate their fights but actually trying to look after the other three, of my colleagues that were there as well.

Oh yes I take that, well did you separate this second fight then.

NEILL Yes I separated another fight and then there was something else happened, you know it just, the whole thing, I couldn't honestly say where or what happened you know.

In sequence.

NEILL In sequence.

Yes. Well what is the next thing that you can put into any form of sequence then that you can stipulate to be, I'm aware that that happened and I'm aware that this was the case.

NEILL Do you mean right at a particular time.

That particular time.

NEILL There's nothing in particular I mean it's, I've tried to go through it and tried to sort it out myself in my own head and it just, I just can't do it.

Well you're not doing too badly.

NEILL You know.

Actually you know. It makes sense.

NEILL Yeah.

What you're saying, you understand me.

NEILL Aha.

And I understand that it's very difficult to recall those sort of things after such a lengthy period.

NEILL You know even at the time I couldn't remember.

Ehm.

NEILL Just exactly where any particular thing happened and I remember when I was standing there I can remember somebody, a bottle being smashed and there was a bottle smashed on the landrover as far as I can remember and the glass sort of came down over us.

Ehm.

NEILL But there was also, I looked up from the side of the landrover, shall I mark that just.

Yes, aha for where you're talking there.

NEILL Number eight.

You were standing there.

NEILL I was at, the back of the landrover there and there was a bottle smashed over the landrover at that stage, at about that time I was also aware of a bottle, bottles being thrown down the street in and around this area.

You mark that just nine.

NEILL Nine, and there seemed to be somebody, you would say, he was running down, there was a person running down Market Street towards this bottle which was.

You're talk, you're pointing.

NEILL Close to Thomas Street.

You're pointing down, he was at the top of, going down the street,

NEILL He was coming, Market Street towards the.

The junction.

NEILL Towards the junction of Thomas Street.

Aha.

NEILL High Street.

Aha.

NEILL And there was another fella which I would say was, I believe it may have been Hamill but I couldn't honestly say that it was, I believe it was Hamill.

That was running down the road.

NEILL That was running actually up towards the church, towards this other boy. The boy that was coming down from the church towards Thomas Street.

Aha.

NEILL He either had a bottle in his hand or was, had picked a bit of glass or something up.

Aha.

NEILL From the street.

Right.

NEILL And that other boy was near enough on top of him but at, at that particular time something else happened and my attention was taken away from it again.

Well how do you know that at number nine that this was Hamill.

NEILL I don't.

Or may have been.

NEILL It may have been Hamill I don't honestly know that it was Hamill.

What would give you that impression.

NEILL

It was later on, or whatever, whenever these, the two people were, were down on the ground and that would be Hamill and the other one, D [redacted] That's when I remembered actually having seen the bottle being smashed and the boy running down the street and the other boy running up at him.

Aha.

NEILL

And that's why I believe it was.

Right for the purpose of the tape here, the tape has come to an end, I'm going to have to stop this interview to get two more tapes and it'll only take a couple of minutes 8.23 at the minute.