

STATEMENT OF WITNESS

STATEMENT OF ALAN KEITH NEILL

AGE OF WITNESS[If over 21 enter 'over 21'] : OVER 21

I declare that this statement consisting of 5 pages, each signed by me is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence at a preliminary enquiry or at the trial of any person, I shall 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.

Dated this 27 day of April 1997

GEORGE LAWTHOR
SIGNATURE OF MEMBER

A K NEILL
SIGNATURE OF WITNESS

by whom statement was recorded or received

I am a Constable in the Royal Ulster Constabulary stationed at Portadown RUC Station. On 27 April 1997 at 0010 hours I was detailed JD81, a landrover crew along with Reserve Constables Cornett, Atkinson and P40. Our duties were public order in the town centre. At approximately 0140 hours we were parked in Market Street when I observed approximately 50 persons coming up High Street towards Market Street/Woodhouse Street/Thomas Street on the Thomas Street side of High Street. Some of these had already cleared the junction and I decided to have a look down towards Boss Hoggs. As I moved from Market Street into High Street a male approx mid 30s crossed the road in front of us mouthing something. R/Con Cornett opened her door and the male said, "There's a crowd coming down Thomas Street from St Pats." At this time I was aware of 2 youths coming from the Halifax. They approached the male who had spoken to us in the mouth of Woodhouse Street. One I know as Stacey Bridget was face to face with the male. This had been unprovoked. R/Const Cornett shouted out at Stacey and the other youth who then walked off. The male then proceeded down Woodhouse Street and the youths came over and spoke to R/Const Cornett. I noted that Stacey had a bottle of cider in his hand which I believe

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was 'Olde English'. I am not aware of the other youth's name but know him to see. He is 5'9", thin with short brown hair. He made the remark that he was a painter and that he had given his name to the owner of the Coach Inn in hope of a job at the Seagoe Hotel. At this time my door was opened and a male, approximately mid 30s, started pulling at me. At this time the landrover was stationary at Woodhouse Street across the Give Way lines with the nose of it pointing inwards. This male was wearing a blue/green casual shirt with short hair and was stocky build. As he was pulling at me he said, "You sat there and watched that happen." I was not aware at this time what he was talking about, at the same time there was a lot of shouting from behind. I got out of the landrover and observed what appeared more to cat calling than anything at the end of Thomas Street. I would say there was approximately 8 - 10 persons, male and female, who appeared to come from Thomas Street trying to make their way across into Woodhouse Street and approximately 30 or more taunting and getting on. A free for all then started in a matter of seconds in Market Street. There were a number of fights going on. I observed one outside Eastwoods Clothes Shop where there appeared to be 3 on one. I then made for this. I am not aware of who they were. I managed to separate these persons and removed one to safety to Woodhouse Street. This male was in his 20s and was wearing a white/cream type leisure top with a short zip at the throat. As I was in Woodhouse Street with this person another male came from behind me and punched this person in the face. I then grabbed this male and took him to the landrover. He would not give me his name but he was late teens, early 20s, black hair. There

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was then another fight started near me. R/Const Cornett was at the side of the landrover. I separated this fight. We were still awaiting back-up to arrive at this time and I observed R/Con Atkinson and P40 in Market Street. It was at or about this time that I became aware of 2 persons lying in Market Street outside Eastwoods and the other more at the mouth of Thomas Street. There was a couple of women tending to them. I went over to them, both appeared unconscious. The male outside Eastwoods was breathing, rasping and was lying in a pool which I immediately believed to be blood and checked this person but could not see any cuts. I then remembered having seen a bottle smashed in this area. I then realised that it was alcohol on the ground and that I seen a male, early 20s, going to lift a piece of glass. This was not the same person who was lying on the ground. He had been coming from the Church side towards the glass going to lift a piece and a person, who I believe was the injured male, running at him. I am not sure where I was or at what stage this was in the whole event. I had spoken to R/Con Cornett and told her to get an ambulance and then tried to assist in getting the crowd back up the street. During this a male, late 20s, round face with goat beard and very short hair, wearing a leather type soft casual waistcoat, was near me and I saw him kick at the injured man I now know as Robert Hamill. The male with the goat beard was moved back as best possible. Other police had arrived at this stage and were standing with Rory Robinson, 20s, short black hair, thin with pointy features. Both these persons were taunting injured people and those that were looking after them. Robinson was moving back and forward across the line trying to get through. I became aware

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of Constable A [REDACTED] having words with a male and went to assist her. This person was wearing a scarf pulled up over his face and a tracksuit type top on. I now know this person as Wayne Lunt. He was taken back to the landrover by myself and Const A [REDACTED]. After this I saw Stacey Bridget with blood around his mouth. I again assisted at the line trying to move the crowd back up towards West Street. Robinson was still in the front line and squared up to me on a couple of occasions when asked to move back, drawing his arms behind him. I also saw P51 [REDACTED] of [REDACTED] in this crowd wearing a soft denim type jacket and jeans, he appeared to be injured. The situation calmed down somewhat after this. I remember during this, a particular group of people I believe R/Cons Atkinson was involved and the male with the goat beard and the leather waistcoat was involved, he was involved in assaulting someone in the group. I tried to get this person off and I had to strike him with my baton. I believe I struck him on the leg. This had occurred during the main fracas but I am not sure exactly when in that. From start to when the ambulance left I would say was half an hour.

SIGNATURE OF WITNESS

A K NEILL

CHECKED AND CERTIFIED A TRUE COPY OF THE ORIGINAL SIGNED :