

SECOND DAY.

TRIBUNALS OF INQUIRY (EVIDENCE) ACT, 1921.

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS
AT THE PUBLIC INQUIRY

into

INCIDENT AT DUNBLANE PRIMARY
SCHOOL on 13th MARCH, 1996

before

THE HON. LORD CULLEN

on

THURSDAY, 30th MAY, 1996

within

THE ALBERT HALLS,
DUMBARTON ROAD, STIRLING

.....

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.....

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APPEARING:- THE LORD ADVOCATE (The Rt. Hon. The Lord Mackay of Drumadoon, Q.C.), Mr. IAN BONOMY, Q.C., Advocate Depute, with Mr. J.C. LAKE, Advocate, for the Crown;

MR. C.M. CAMPBELL, Q.C., with MS. L. DUNLOP, Advocate, for the families of the deceased children, the families of the injured children, the children absent from class, Mrs. Harrild and Mrs. Blake;

MR. A.T.F. GIBB, solicitor, Edinburgh, for the representatives of Mrs. Mayer (deceased), and the Educational Institute of Scotland;

MR. M.S. STEPHEN, solicitor, Glasgow, for the Association of Head Teachers in Scotland, and Mr. Ronald Taylor (Headmaster);

Mr. M.J. JONES, Q.C., for Stirling Council and Others;

MR. J.A. TAYLOR, Solicitor Advocate, Edinburgh, for the Central Scotland Police;

THE DEAN OF FACULTY (Mr. A.R. Hardie, Q.C.) with MR. G.C. KAVANAGH, solicitor, Glasgow, for the Scottish Police Federation.

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THURSDAY, 30th MAY, 1996.

SECOND DAY.

10.05 a.m.

JOHN OGG, (Recalled),

EXAMINATION CONTINUED BY MR. BONOMOY: At the end of yesterday we were dealing with the way close relatives were informed of the events as far as affecting their families. Just to complete the picture, can you tell me first of all whether you feel that the police in general in Central Scotland have learned from the problems which arose in that particular connection? - Yes, I would say we have.

Are there any particular lessons you can tell us that have been learned or anything that you feel might affect the way that you deal with such a situation in the future? - I think if the same thing or something similar happened we would note the names of the injured as they went away. I would say also that communications could be improved by using radios.

In this particular instance was there an officer in charge of communication? - No. Chief Superintendent Moffat is responsible for communications in the Force.

Was he assigned to particular duties at this Inquiry that day? - Yes, he was dealing with matters at Headquarters.

What about on the spot? Is there anything to be said for having someone in charge of communications on the spot? - Quite honestly I don't think it would have helped.

Now, there are a couple of things I want to clarify from yesterday. We heard some evidence of the cutting of the telephone wires affecting the surrounding houses, at a pole? - That is correct.

Now, can you confirm for me that the white van in which Hamilton arrived was actually parked right at that pole? - Yes.

And/

And that was a van, registration number M394 KBO? - That is correct.

Now, as the morning progressed how many Central Scotland police officers were involved in the investigation in the course of the day? - The actual investigation of the incident?

Yes? - Both?

I think we could divide it into stages. On the actual day handling the emergency how many police officers were involved? - I would say there would be over a hundred.

From later that day and over subsequent days when you were investigating the circumstances? - About 65.

And up until now how many have continued to be involved? - At this present moment about 20 officers as of today are involved in the investigation. That 65, however, was only reduced last week.

Going back to the day itself, in the immediate aftermath, from 10.15 onwards, what were the up to one hundred officers doing? - They were employed in cordon, at the locus, taking statements, at the hospital, at the mortuary and at Headquarters.

Were some officers involved in actually dealing with the removal of bodies from the gymnasium? - Yes.

And assisting with the injured being taken to hospital?
- Yes.

Now, did you also oversee a search of Thomas Hamilton's house? - I did.

At what address? - 7 Kent Road

Is that in Stirling? - Yes.

In the course of the search in his house was any camera equipment found? - I think it was.

Was it of a very minor nature? - Yes.

No/

No indication of a camera business operating at that stage from the house? - No.

Were there further magazines for ammunition found in the house? - Yes.

Could you look at the book of photographs, PHOB25, photograph 17? Have you got that? - Yes.

Where was that photograph taken? - In Thomas Hamilton's house.

Was that during a search by the police after these events? - That is right.

What part of the house are we looking at here? - That is the lounge.

What are we seeing there? - Cases of bullets, some cartridges, some sticky tape. He had taped magazines with sticky tape for quick loading, with different coloured tape at the back and front.

Where were the pliers actually found? - They were found in his bag in the gymnasium.

Do you know how many more rounds of ammunition were found in the house? - I can't recollect.

Another officer will be able to confirm that for us? - Yes.

We can see there there are boxes in a metal box. Do these contain ammunition? - Yes.

I think in the course of your further enquiries into this you learned that a number of letters had been sent by Thomas Hamilton in the days immediately before the 13th March? - That is correct.

One of these was sent to Buckingham Palace? - That is correct.

Could you look at Production D88? Now, is that a communication that was recovered from Buckingham Palace? - It is.

Is it dated 7th March, 1996? - It is.

With/

With a number of items attached to it?

- That is correct.

Which are also letters? - Yes.

Is there an envelope with it? - No, we did not recover the envelope.

So the envelope was not recovered. Can I take it your enquiries did not establish exactly when this was received at Buckingham Palace? - No.

It is addressed to "For the Attention of Her Majesty the Queen"? - That is correct.

Now, if the first page of that could be put on the imager can you confirm that it comes from 7 Kent Road, Stirling? - It does.

With the phone number? - Yes.

And it is addressed to "Your Majesty"? - Yes.

Can you read the beginning of it? - "I understand you are Patron of the Scout Association, and in that capacity I would like to make you aware of my long-standing complaint against the Scout Association".

Read on to the next paragraph, please? - "Over 20 years ago, as a young man of about 20 years of age, after my time as a Venture Scout, I was asked to become a Scout Leader, which I did with enthusiasm and in a fair and competent manner. I was at that time, however, somewhat disillusioned with the general management which existed in this District at that time. After a period of a year, I was offered a better position by District Commissioner J. Don within the Association in Mr. Don's nearby District of Hillfoots, which I accepted. However, my transfer was refused by Scottish Scout Headquarters without any explanation. D.C. Don approached my previous D.C., Mr. R. Deuchars, and as a result of this reported in confidence to me that Mr. R. Deuchars was attempting to have me branded as a pervert. When Mr. Don demanded justification of this, Mr. Deuchars' only response was that I was 'friendly' with the boys. Mr. Don remarked that a Scout Leader was supposed to be/

be friendly with the boys, and as a conclusion Mr. Don reported to me that he had nothing on me but he may cause me considerable damage if unchecked."

Does it then go on "In what I consider to be a breach of natural justice, Mr. R. Deuchars then submitted a confidential report on me in line with the Policy Organisation and Rules of the Association. I know that no child has ever made any complaint of a sinister or sexual nature against me, but D.C. Deuchars, together with the A.D.C. Mr. Samuels and the G.S.L. Mr. McKenzie, visited and interviewed every child in my old Group, including especially everyone who had been a member and left. Nothing of a sinister nature came to light. However, in a bid to justify his actions, Mr. McKenzie reported that Mr. Deuchars had sought to create innuendos about me with the statement: 'Why is he so enthusiastic? Think about it'. Mr. J. Don referred to jealousy as the likely cause."? - That is correct.

Can you read the next paragraph? - "My attempts to approach Scottish Scout Headquarters were ignored, and I could get nowhere, since I was blocked from all angles. I was unable to get any response as to whether or not I was blacklisted or informed about details of the confidential report by Mr. Deuchars. As time passed numerous and various reports were received that Mr. Deuchars was passing information within the District Scout area that I was a pervert, which was passed to the public in an underhand manner".

I think if we go over the page, it says "Over the past 20 years of youth work this has caused me untold damage, including Council, Police and Social Work investigations where they had acted as a direct result of information received in absolute confidence from officials of the Scout Association. Any subsequent investigation was instigated on a whim and without proper complaint, cause or justification. For the purpose of the police complaints procedure, the investigative skills of the police are put into reverse. It seems to be a tactic of the police during any investigation to spread innuendos to as many people as possible and in such a way as to cause maximum damage, and then when their investigation comes to nothing they do nothing about retracting their accusations./

accusations. This has probably been the most damaging of all on the part of the Police and Council."; Is that how the paragraph reads? - Yes.

Can you read the rest of the letter?

- "I have been involved with the Organisation of Boys Sports Clubs for over 20 years, and the rumours circulates by officials of the Scout Association have now reached epidemic proportions across Central Region. As well as my personal distress and loss of public standing, this situation has also resulted in loss of my business and ability to earn a living. Indeed, I cannot even walk the streets for fear of embarrassing ridicule".

Yes? - "All of this and more has been caused by the mal-administration of the Scout Association and their denial of natural justice and duty of care. To some Scout Officials it was simply a ruse to oust a rival Group".

Yes? - "I turn to you as a last resort, and am appealing for some kind of intervention in the hope that I may be able to gain my self-esteem in society. I am, Your Obedient Servant, Thomas W. Hamilton."

That is a letter complaining about the actions of the Scout Association, the police and local authorities? - That is correct.

Do you know whether any similar letter had ever previously been sent? - I don't think there was. We never discovered any.

Can you give us your best estimate of the time when this would have been received at Buckingham Palace? - It would probably be over the weekend of the 9th/10th.

Now, it was copied I think to a number of people? - That is correct.

To the best of your recollection can you tell me who they were? - The Secretary of State, I think it was sent to Bannockburn Primary School, Dunblane Primary School, Detective Sergeant Moffat of the Child Protection Unit, the Family Unit in the police, the Scotsman, the Daily Record -- there were others, but I can't recollect.

Are/

Are you able to tell us when they had received their copies? - I think most of the newspapers received them on the 13th March.

The day of the incident? - Yes.

We will hear some evidence about when Dunblane Primary School received their letter. Now, attached to the letter you quoted there were a number of other documents. Is the first of these a copy of a letter headed "Boys' Sports Club Group Committee", dated 24th March, 1993 and sent to Michael Forsyth, M.P., at the House of Commons? - Yes.

Is the heading of that "Juvenile Crime"? - It is.

Is it commenting on the horrific murder of Jamie Bulger? - It is.

Again/

10.20 a.m.

Again is this a letter complaining about police incompetence? - It is.

And is it the police only that are complained about in this particular one? - It seems to be Central Scotland Police being obsessed with child abuse.

I think it complains also about some of the parents who have made complaints about it? - Yes.

And some of these complaints related to taking photographs? - That is correct.

And it is referring to Clubs in Dunfermline? - Yes.

Did a copy of that accompany other letters that were sent to the media and to other locations? - I don't think so.

I think the next attachment is a letter dated the 18th August, 1995 again from 7 Kent Road, this time addressed to "Dear Parents"? - Yes.

This time mentioning the Scouts, is that right? - Yes.

The Dunblane area? - Yes.

And mentions taking boys from Stirling to Dunblane Rifle Club? - Yes, that is correct.

And mentioning the problem associated with camps held at Dunblane High School? - Yes, that is correct.

There is a bit written at the bottom of that letter, on the bottom of the second page which we see on the imager, Page 2 of the letter "Dear Parents", the 18th August, 1995, I think there is a bit "Dear Mr. Forsyth"? - Yes.

"Prior to October, 1983 70 Dunblane boys attended the Dunblane Club weekly, now there are five of which only one attended the 1995 course/camp. Others are bussed in from other areas to/

to attempt to make up the numbers. Thomas W. Hamilton 11/2/96"; does that appear to be the other letter which is added on to it on the 11th February 1996 to be sent to Mr. Forsyth? - That is correct.

And then was there a copy attached of a letter of 26th January, 1996 to Dr. Robert Ball, Education Convener of Central Regional Council? - Yes.

And then is there a letter dated the 26th March, 1996 from a firm of solicitors? - That is correct.

Sent to Mr. Hamilton which had been copied to be attached to this? - Yes.

Was that to do with his failure to get Legal Aid in connection with a dispute he was raising? - That is correct.

Do you know what the dispute was he wanted to take to law? - I think it was a disagreement he had with the District Council and he wanted Legal Aid to pursue it.

And then is the last item attached to the letter to the Queen one from the "Boys Sports Clubs Group Committee" dated the 28th June, 1993, a circular "Dear Parents" and headed "1993 residential sports training course"? - Yes.

And that is advertising the course and its cost and where it will be? - That is correct.

We have heard already of the analysis or the examination by forensic scientists of swimming trunks which were recovered from Mr. Hamilton's house; now, you oversaw at the search which recovered this? - Yes, that is correct.

There were, I think, 63 pairs of trunks? - There were.

Can you tell us the breakdown in colour? - They were mainly black, I think some blue, a few blue and two or three pairs of red.

These are the questions I have to ask you subject to one thing and this is a matter which obviously/

obviously great consideration has been given to before deciding whether this question ought to be properly asked in the public interest.

I want to ask you about certain conclusions you have drawn about the way in which Thomas Hamilton behaved in the gymnasium. I think you have access to all the statements of eye-witnesses and also to the ballistics and forensic science reports? - Yes, that is correct.

I think you have yourself drawn the conclusion that in the gymnasium there was a group of children who either had been disabled by the firing of the gun or who themselves had been thrown to the floor over whom Hamilton stood and fired his gun? - That is correct.

From a distance which must have simply been the height of his hand above the children? - That is correct.

The only other thing I want to ask you is whether the statements you have read and all the evidence you have considered has enabled you to determine at what point in the school he actually entered? - I think that he entered by the door at the north west end of the school beside the boys' toilets.

Can you go round to the diagram there and the camera will pick up the diagram in the area you want to point to; if we can go back a bit so we can get a better overall view; that is the door which was formerly at the end of the cupboard walkway into the school? - That is correct.

I take it there is no evidence that says clearly that is the way he entered? - No.

And that is a conclusion drawn by you from all the evidence? - That is right, most likely because the traffic was very heavy in the area of the main entrance.

You think he was more likely to be seen coming in if he came in the main entrance? - Yes.

And no one actually saw him enter? - No.

I/

I think if we look at a photograph for the moment which is R3, again that can be shown on the imager and if you could just point to the entrance on that photograph for us? - Here.

There are other possibilities I think, one of which is the main entrance, is that right? - That is correct.

Just point to that please? - Here.

I think there are doorways into the Assembly Hall from the other side, is that right? - There are two emergency fire escape doors.

Can you get in from the outside through these? - It is doubtful because the janitor claimed in his statement that these doors were locked, you can only make an exit from these doors.

BY LORD CULLEN: Just one matter before you go on, perhaps you could explain to me how he would get from the parked position of the van to the door beside the boys' toilet so we can be quite clear what the possible routes were? - The van was parked about here, he went up here, down here and down there and in that door.

That is indicating going round to the west, it must be?
- Yes.

It would be west and swinging round and going east and coming to that entrance? - Yes.

Where that corridor meets a large part of the building?
- Yes, that's right.

CROSS-EXAMINED BY MISS DUNLOP: I would like to ask you some questions about the communication with families on the day; I do recognise that these questions are being posed in hindsight and I hope you accept I am not suggesting that people didn't do their best. You have told us that parents began arriving at the school quite quickly, presumably news was spreading through the community and indeed there was information through the broadcast media very quickly also? - Yes, that is correct.

So parents were coming to the school knowing/

knowing that something terrible had happened but not exactly what or to whom? - That is correct.

Can I take it that you will have been anxious to assure that the time spent by the parents waiting for news of their own child was as short as possible? - That is correct.

Now, you have told us yesterday of your plans in the aftermath and you said that you wanted to have the injured children taken to hospital, then place a cordon round the school, identify the deceased and then institute your inquiry which involved appointing production officers and setting up an administration system; can you tell me where in that sequence informing relatives fitted in? - That was an equal priority with identifying the deceased, we wanted to identify them first before we informed the relatives.

So that would come before the stage you described about appointing production officers and setting up the administration system? - No, that was all happening at the same time but that was a priority, it would certainly come above that but there were many things happening simultaneously.

We know that the parents of children in Mrs. Mayer's class knew that this was the class affected and were taken firstly to a private house? - That is correct.

And were up to the school around lunch time? - Yes.

I think that that was in a mini-bus? - I believe so.

Once they were in the school they were taken to the staff room? - I believe so.

Did you personally go to speak to the parents either in the private house or in the staff room? - No, Superintendent Holden was dealing with that.

Once the parents were in the staff room it is correct that they were taken out of the staff room by the names of their children being called out?/

out? - I believe so.

The order of events was that the injured children's parents were taken out first? - That is correct because we had.....ultimately we were getting the identities of the injured children, information regarding that so we could identify them.

Yesterday we heard Dr. Beattie said that even the most seriously injured child could give his own name? - Yes.

Were you aware of that? - Yes.

Now, can I take it that you do accept that the surviving children wanted to see the parents? - Yes.

And also that the priority for parents of an injured child was to be with that child? - Yes.

We know, because you have told us, that the names of the children leaving in the ambulance were not retained; can I take it you accept that that meant that the process of reuniting the parents with the injured children took around three hours? - Yes.

If parents were arriving at the school shortly after 10 the process of telling the parents of injured children.....? - I think the children.....it was just after 12 we started to tell them when we had that information but there was a delay, yes.

If, in fact, there was a suggestion that some of the parents of the injured children were not told until after 1'clock about what had happened to their children then it would be about three hours? - That is correct.

And that, in the circumstances, is quite a delay? - It is.

Turning to the bereaved parents is it your understanding that they were taken from the staff room one family at a time? - I think they were/

were taken out in groups of three or four.

The families.....? - The families of the deceased.

Yes? - Yes.

Could you be mistaken about that? - Superintendent Holden was dealing with this.

That is something we can ask him? - Yes.

Now, the timings you gave for that process, could you be wrong about that, would that have been rather later than you suggested yesterday? - No, I think information came from the liaison officers, that was the source of my information.

Might it be the case that, in fact, there was still parents waiting to be told by half-past 3? - I don't think so.

Well, might you be wrong about that? - I am only going from the information that has been given to me, Superintendent Holden was dealing with that and that certainly from the victim profile we drew up and from the information, that is where I took my information from, 2.30 was the last.

Well, you suggest that Superintendent Holden would be in a better position to explain about the times? - He will know firsthand.

But if parents were to say that some of them were not told until around 3.30 you are personally not in a position to contradict that? - No.

So at that stage it follows that some parents had been waiting for around five hours for news? - I find that difficult to believe.

I think if that is correct it does follow, does it not? - It does follow.

Do you know if some of the parents in the staff room had other small children with them to look after? - Yes.

Obviously/

Obviously that would pose particular difficulties for them? - Yes, it would.

You told us yesterday that at the scene the Chief Constable was present as indeed were you as a senior officer? - Yes.

If during the period of hours when the parents were waiting for news, if they asked for a senior officer to go and speak to them and were told that no one was available can you explain why that was if you and the Chief Constable were present? - No, I can't explain that but as I say Superintendent Holden was dealing with that aspect.

Did anyone come to you and ask that you go and speak? - No.

You described yesterday the setting up of liaison teams for each family? - That is correct.

And in the case of parents of a child who had died that team included two police officers and a Social Worker? - That is correct.

So those individuals were briefed concerning what had occurred prior to the parents being told? - Yes.

Is that part of your contingency plan for a disaster such as this, that others should be told before the relatives of those involved or was that something that was simply decided on that particular day? - That was something that was decided on that day and reason was to provide a better service to the parents.

Do you accept that that fact also of others knowing before the particular families might cause distress to some families? - If it did I can assure you it was the exact converse, the reason it was done; it would be so there would be a professional social worker along with a police officer when the parents were informed.

You were asked by Mr. Bonomy if you would be looking at some aspects of the matter in retrospect? - Yes.

Is/

Is that something that you would be prepared to look at? - Yes.

If I could just turn very briefly to one other matter; you spoke of items that had been found in Hamilton's home? - Yes.

I simply wonder if you found a typewriter or a word processor? - No, there was nothing at all like that.

Are you able to explain by what means these typewritten letters were produced? - Yes, they were done at the University.

Was there somebody who did them? - Hamilton took them up to the University and had them word processed.

CROSS/

10.40 a.m.

CROSS-EXAMINED BY MR. GIBB: Mr. Ogg, as you know, I represent, among others, Mr. Mayer and his family. Can you take it from me that Mr. Mayer's daughter Esther went to Stirling Royal Infirmary about 12 noon and heard about 12.30 someone asking about children in Mrs. Mayer's class, and that she thereafter immediately went to the school and arrived about 1 o'clock. She was I understand put into the staffroom with the parents, but I understand that her father, Mr. Mayer, arrived at much the same time but was put into the library on his own, and was left in the library for some half an hour before he threatened that he would go out to the media to try to find out what was happening, before the police officer who was at the door reluctantly conceded that the worst case scenario had occurred. Have you any information to contradict that information I am giving you? - Yes. My information is that when Mr. Mayer arrived at the school he demanded to know what had happened to his wife, and the officer concerned was D.S. Moffat, and he told him virtually as soon as he arrived at the scene. That is my information -- and he asked for the use of a phone and was given the use of a phone.

I have to say that my information is Mr. Mayer sat in the library for about half an hour before he was told anything. Now, obviously this may be subject to evidence from elsewhere, but only at half-past 1 after he had got it out of the officer there that his wife had died, he spent an hour trying to contact Esther, who was in fact only a few yards away from him in the staffroom -- thinking she was still at Stirling Royal Infirmary? - I'm not aware of that.

And he used a phone in the library? - He certainly used a phone.

And indeed it was only at quarter to 3 that Esther and Mr. Mayer met each other when she was brought through to the library and met her father? - I don't know about that.

Whatever is the position about the children -- and I accept the validity of the difficulty you had -- there was no difficulty, was there/

there, in indicating both to Esther and to Mr. Mayer virtually on their immediate arrival that their mother had died? - There should have been none.

And indeed that doesn't appear to have been done, if the information I have is correct? - If the information you have is correct then that would be the case, but as I say my information is D.S. Moffat told Mr. Mayer immediately he arrived.

Can I suggest that perhaps one thing that could be looked at in this dreadful situation which occurred -- and I accept entirely that you were in a very difficult situation that day -- is that in tragedies such as this a senior officer should immediately be appointed to be the sole line of communication with any people who arrive who may be involved in the tragedy, either as near relatives of the deceased or injured? - We did that that day. Superintendent Holden -- that was his function.

Well, why was it then Superintendent Holden didn't apparently meet with Mr. Mayer, as far as I am aware, at all? - I don't know.

You will appreciate Mr. Mayer and his daughter's concern about the lack of communication? - I do.

And again can I simply endorse what Miss Dunlop suggested to you, that lessons may be learned from this dreadful tragedy about communication? - Yes. We accept that fully.

No cross-examination by Mr. Jones.

CROSS-EXAMINED BY MR. TAYLOR: I wonder if you could remind us what your principal concern was on the 13th March in relation to giving information to the parents? - We wanted to ensure obviously that the information was 100 per cent accurate. We felt we were in a dilemma if we made a mistake and gave out the wrong information. That was heightened just after 12 o'clock when we learned that one of the deceased who was in the Infirmary had been identified as being in the gymnasium as well -- and that caused us great concern.

Just/

Just taking up that point, what steps did you take upon learning about the confusion from the hospital? - We then had to re-identify, so to speak, each of the deceased.

You would be informed of the identity of the child in the hospital, and you would have believed that there was a child of the same name in the gym. Were there any specific steps which you were able to take in relation to carrying out that identification process? - That information came via the incident caravan -- simply the identity of the child or the believed identity of the child in the hospital. We then tried -- as I say, communications were failing at that time on the phone side. We tried to contact officers at the hospital to find out what the identification was at the hospital. I think we had three phone calls and eventually we found it was from a name label in the shoe of the child at the hospital. Unfortunately, as I said earlier in my evidence, we had identifications made -- sorry, we had clothing with name labels which didn't refer to any child in the gym. So we couldn't be 100 per cent certain. So again we had to go back to the staff and ask them to go round the bodies again and try to trace the marks with the class records, to identify all the dead children.

You mentioned there the staff having to go round the bodies again. In fact, how often did you require some members of staff to go round the bodies? - I am sure they went round -- different members of staff, because the staff were breaking down -- understandably so. They did a tremendous job, absolutely unbelievable job, but they were breaking down, and we had to give them breaks in between going to look at the bodies.

Apart from the effect on the staff was there noticeable effect on your police officers attending? - Yes, a great deal of police officers -- it was an absolutely unbelievable situation, and I saw police officers crying.

Now, you told us yesterday that you thought that it would have been insensitive to note the children's names as they were going to the hospital -- and the reference for that, Sir, is page 114. I wonder if you could just elaborate a little/

little bit on that piece of your evidence? - My thought was that the primary concern was to get the injured children to hospital as quickly as possible, because some of the children were very seriously injured - to receive treatment and hopefully save their lives. And I felt it would be insensitive for a police officer to be standing by noting their names as they went. In retrospect, had we known what we now know in hindsight, that there was going to be great difficulty in communications -- had we known then, we would definitely have done that and taken any responsibility for the insensitivity; because in the end of the day we would have been able to inform the parents much more quickly.

I take it in the gymnasium those attending to the children would be carrying out medical processes; is that right? - That is correct.

I wonder if you could have a look at Document Production R27? I wonder if you could have a look at the first page of that document, and without actually reading it out, because of the sensitive nature of the information contained in the document, could you have a look at the last paragraph on the first page and let us know if that is the sort of processes which were being carried out on the 13th? - That is exactly what was happening.

And did you form the view at the time that it would have been inappropriate for the police officers to have interjected with any specific questions? - Very much so.

You referred a few moments ago, and indeed yesterday, to the difficulty which there was in communicating with the hospital, and this morning you talked about encrypted radio. Can you tell us just a little about what that involves? - We do have encrypted radio in the Force, but unfortunately it is very short range -- but it is available. And basically it means that if anyone scans in they can't hear messages being passed because they are coded.

I take it from the answer to that last question that the range was insufficient to enable communication between Stirling and Dunblane? - That/

That is right. We have a few sets which are used for surveillance purposes, but they are short range.

What steps did you take to facilitate communication between Dunblane and Stirling on the 13th? - We tried to use the land line available. The incident caravan was brought to the location reasonably quickly, but again we hadn't mobile phones and normal radio communication -- so we relied mainly on land phones.

And did you make any attempt to increase the number of land lines available? - We did that immediately by contacting BT at Headquarters. The first additional phone line into the school I recollect was about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, but the request was made immediately.

Now, you mentioned yesterday that in other major incidents there has been a delay in obtaining the land lines. Would it be fair to say that on other occasions the media interest has not been so high and that Cellnet facility has been available to you? - That is correct.

Before I leave the topic of encrypted radio, to your knowledge is long-range encrypted radio available in other Forces? - The Scottish Crime Squad have it. I am not aware of any other Scottish Force that has it, but some English Forces may have it.

This morning you referred to the constitution of the liaison teams, and I appreciate that was an area where Superintendent Holden can perhaps help us the most. Can you tell the Inquiry what the thinking behind the constitution of the liaison teams was? - As I said earlier, it was to make the parents -- to reduce the problem as far as informing the parents was concerned. It really was born out of the concept we had for child protection issues, where investigations are done by two agencies, the Police and Social Work together -- specially trained officers from the Social Work Department and specially trained police officers who are jointly trained. And that is where the concept came from, and as far as possible the police officers used and the social workers were child protection trained officers. So it was hopefully to be tactful in understanding the situation that we developed/

developed the teams. The additional police officer was on the understanding that the parents would identify the body to the police and then the police would identify the bodies to the pathologists, and so again it would decrease the trauma.

And you took the view I take it from your evidence that the breaking of the news to the parents would be better achieved if those breaking the news had a briefing before doing so? - That is correct, but it was not only to break the news. The idea behind these teams was to give continuing counsel and comfort, and a point of contact to these families.

And have these teams remained in place up to the present time? - Some of the teams are with the families today and yesterday, and will continue to be with them.

We heard some evidence yesterday that certain advice had been given that the gymnasium should be evacuated because of the concern that Mr. Hamilton's body might have been booby-trapped in some way? - That is correct. I can't remember. I think it was either the ballistics officer or Dr. Tevadia, the pathologist, who suggested something I hadn't thought of, that the body may be booby-trapped. That was about 12 o'clock. But I made a conscious decision then that the MOD, or the Bomb Disposal, normally ask us to evacuate if we have any suspicious devices -- I made a conscious decision that the body had been in position for about two hours at that time, the witness Currie had kicked away guns and so on. So my instructions were the forensic team and police officers shouldn't go near Hamilton's body, it should be treated as a sterile area, but that we should carry on with the process of identification, because I felt there was an element of risk, and I felt any delay -- that had to be balanced against any delay that would have occurred as far as identification was concerned.

Now, a number of comments have been made about the police handling of the conveying of information to the parents in the course of the Inquiry. Have you been aware of these complaints before? - No.

When did you first become aware of them/

them? - Just in the last two or three days.

And what, if any, steps have you taken since being informed of these complaints? - We offered to meet with the families to explain our position and the difficulties we faced that day.

And was the offer of that meeting, to your knowledge, accepted? - No.

CROSS-EXAMINED BY MR. STEPHEN: Yesterday you said that the call which Mr. Taylor had made to report the incident was an ordinary call and not a 999 call? - That is correct.

I think the reference is page 98 of yesterday's notes. Do you know for sure that it was indeed an ordinary call or could it perhaps have been a 999 call? - No, I am almost 100 per cent certain, because it came into our switchboard and not into our control room, and all 999 calls come into the control room.

And is there any log of that? - Yes, we checked on that.

Could I ask you to look at Production R28, in particular the second page of that? This is headed up "Major Incident at Dunblane Primary School Log, 13th March, 1996"? - That is right.

Could you read the first entry from that? - That is a 999 call to the Ambulance Service, which I think was made by Mrs. Eadington or Mrs. Awlson.

That wouldn't be a reference to Mr. Taylor's call? - No. That was a telephone call that was made to the Ambulance Service.

If I could refer you to one other matter discussed yesterday and today, that is with regard to the identification of the injured children who were removed from the school? If I understand your evidence you accept you thought it was inappropriate for police officers to seek identification of the children as they were being taken out of the school? - That is correct.

Do you know if anyone else may have sought/

sought to identify these children before they left for the hospital? - No, I am not aware of anybody doing that.

Is it possible that someone may have done that? - I don't think so. It would have made our task much easier. That first hour was chaotic, as you can well imagine, with injured children being removed and being treated at the locus.

No re-examination.

BY LORD CULLEN: Just one matter. You have expressed the view that lessons can be learned from what happened on the 13th March. Am I right in thinking that these lessons would eventually be expressed in the form of some written procedure, in the event of such an emergency in the future? - That is correct.

Has that process already been carried out, or is it still to be done? - The Inquiry is still ongoing -- I haven't had an opportunity yet.

And who would have the responsibility for reducing such matters to writing? - I would imagine it would be our Force Executive.

The Force Executive? - Yes.

MR./

11.00 a.m.

MR. BONOMY: Sir, the next witness is Ronald George Taylor.

RONALD GEORGE TAYLOR, (46), Sworn,

EXAMINED BY MR. BONOMY: Are you the head teacher of Dunblane Primary School? - I am.

How long have you been in that job? - I have been head teacher at Dunblane Primary School since August, 1993.

I would like to ask you a little about the school itself first of all. I think you should look at the 13th March, 1996. Can you tell us something about the size of the school? - On 13th March, 1996 the school roll was approximately 640 pupils.

How does that compare with other primary schools in the country? - I think it makes us one of the largest primary schools in the country. I know of two other similar sized schools.

How is the population of the school divided? - It is divided into 20 classes.

How many teachers are there? - There are approximately 20 teachers in the school.

How many auxiliary staff do you have? - We have 10 auxiliary staff, and we have cleaning staff.

Now, I think there is a management structure within the school? - Yes.

You are the head teacher. Can you tell us something about the level below you? - There is a Depute Head Teacher, Mrs. Eadington.

What other staffing positions of authority are there? - There are two assistant head teachers.

Who were they? - Mrs. Awlson and Mr. McCombie.

I show you photograph R3. That shows the school/

school as it was on the 13th March? - Yes, it does.

There is a main teaching block which is largely to the upper left-hand side of that photograph? - That is correct.

How many separate huts do you have? - There are five -- I am sorry, six -- separated hutted units, four of which we use as classrooms, the fifth one which is used as the kids' room and the sixth one a music room.

Is there a link between the school, the assembly hall and the gymnasium? - Yes.

On the far side of the building on the left-hand side there is something which stretches out. Is that a hut or is that attached to the main building? - To the rear of the building?

Yes? - That is a hut. Can I go to the photograph?

Yes, please? - Are you referring to this area here?

Yes? - That is the staff room, which is connected to the main building.

By its very nature it must have a lot of doors? - Yes, indeed.

The huts, for example: do they just have one door or do any of them have more than one door? - Most of the huts have two doors, not counting fire exits.

Taking the main T-shaped building, including the gymnasium and the hall, how many ways are there in? I don't mean ways that you can come out. If we could confine ourselves to ways in for the moment? - To the best of my knowledge there are six.

Can you point them out? - The main entrance, this entrance here, there is an entrance in this corner here.

That is at the junction between the link and/

and the main building? - That is correct.

On the far side from the main entrance?

- Yes. There is a door here which allows access.

That is further along, up the photograph, on the main building? - Yes, and two entrances on either side of the staff room block.

In addition to these are there ways out that you cannot get in by, or could not get in by?

- Yes.

Where are they? - There are two in the nursery area here.

That is on the very left-hand end of the main building?

- That is correct: and one along here.

Near one of the other entrances you showed us? - And two off the main hall.

Are these on the far side of the main hall as we look at it? - Yes, indeed.

Can you definitely not get into any of these, or could you definitely not on the 13th March? - That is my impression.

Are these push-bar doors? - Yes.

So you could escape, but you couldn't get in? - Yes.

Is that always the case? - One of these doors is often used as an entrance at lunch time for the pupils who are in the Primary 7 hut here.

Was it the case in March that it was used as an entrance? - Yes, but at lunch time.

Knowing what you know of the whole events, without going into the details, how do you think Thomas Hamilton got in? - I am convinced the police report is correct and that Hamilton entered by this entrance here.

Why do you think that? - Because of the busyness/

busyness of the front central foyer area, and the arrival of parents to the nursery, and there were several parents still in the nursery at that time. I am quite convinced if he had come in the main entrance we would have seen him.

So we can exclude the two exit doors, can we? - Yes, we can.

What was the normal starting time in March for the school? - 9.

For everybody? - The staff's starting time is earlier than that, and most staff arrive even earlier.

But for the pupils? - 9 o'clock.

There is a nursery somewhere? - Yes.

In the main building? - Yes.

What is the starting time for the nursery? - 9.30.

There was clear reference yesterday to some evidence gathered by the police from people on the two roads into the school and coming to the nursery at 9.30. That would explain why there was traffic to the school at that time? - Yes.

Did you have regular assemblies? - Yes.

Can you tell us the sequence of these? - The assemblies take place at the moment on a Wednesday morning, but they are rotational, because we cannot get all the children into the hall at the one time, so we rotate them. On one Wednesday there would be the infants' assembly, which is Primaries 1, 2, 3 and 4, followed by a senior assembly, Primaries 5, 6 and 7. These dates would be rotated in relation to when was the best time for the assembly. On one Wednesday there would be the infants' assembly, that is Primaries 1, 2 and 3, then an assembly for Primaries 4, 5 and 6, and a senior assembly for Primary 7. These dates would be rotated in relation to when was the best time for these assemblies.

How long do the assemblies last? - They vary./

vary. The infants' assembly is often shorter, because the children have a shorter attention span, and the senior assembly often has prize-givings, awards, etc., so it often lasts longer.

On that particular morning, 13th March, I think it was to be an infants' assembly? - Yes.

Lasting from when to when? - 10 past 9 to half past 9.

Which classes attended? - All classes in Primaries 1, 2 and 3.

What were the total number of pupils roughly that morning? - Approximately 250.

How many members of staff? - There would be ten members of staff approximately, including myself.

Would they go into it? - Yes.

Including the Minister? - Yes, indeed.

Yourself and how many? - All nine class teachers plus Mrs. Eadington.

You have heard the suggestion -- well, it was more than a suggestion -- here that the first shot fired was into the stage floor of the assembly hall? - Yes.

Can you tell us exactly when assembly finished that morning? - Approximately 9.30.

So once that finishes how long does it take to evacuate the children? - It doesn't take too long; just a few minutes. The children all exit from the same door as previously with their teachers back to the classrooms.

From what we have heard we are talking about a seven minute spell from 9.30 to 9.37, when the shooting actually started. How much of that spell would be occupied by children going to their classes? - Three or four minutes, I would say.

If this had been a senior assembly, when would it normally have finished? - As I said, it varied./

varied. It would normally have finished about 9.40, perhaps even later. The senior assembly the week before lasted an hour.

Even on an average basis it would have finished after the shooting started? - Correct.

Did you ever meet Thomas Hamilton? - I met him on one occasion.

When was that? - I'm not terribly certain when it was, it was approximately 18 months ago.

Before you met him had you heard about him? - Yes, I had.

How did you come to learn of him? - I learned about him from a number of staff and from one or two parents.

What sort of things did you learn initially? - Initially I learned that he conducted a boys' club based in Dunblane High School, and that there were some concerns about the club itself.

Who expressed concerns to you? - I can recall two parents in particular who expressed concern to me about inappropriate clothing, as I recollect it, and about Hamilton taking photographs.

Do you remember what the inappropriate clothing was? - I would be guessing, but I think it was swimming trunks.

That is a vague recollection? - That is a vague recollection.

And the other complaint was that photographs had been taken of the children? - That is right.

Was there any suggestion that these were indecent? - There was a suggestion that these were inappropriate.

What were the circumstances of your meeting him? - Previously several leaflets had arrived in an A5 format, which gave details about the/

the clubs, and these I had to bin. Subsequently Hamilton came to the school, and I met him in the foyer of the school, and he handed me a further 40 to 50 such leaflets. He asked me to distribute them.

Yes? - He also complained about members of staff who had been driving parents away from his boys' club, and would I perhaps disabuse them of the idea that he was a pervert.

When you binned the first lot, was that instantly they came in, or was it after finding out some more information? - It was probably after finding out some more information.

When you got them in did you go and ask? - Yes, I remember discussing with Mrs. Eadington. Following that I decided to bin them. My understanding is that leaflets had arrived in the school prior to my becoming the head teacher, and that they were also binned.

Is what to do with leaflets like that a decision for the head teacher? - Yes.

Would it be appropriate on occasions to consult the Education Department Headquarters? - Yes, sometimes Headquarters alert one to activities which were perhaps inappropriate, but I don't recall them doing that on this occasion. The staff however were adamant that that had been the practice in the past.

Did you express views prior to meeting Hamilton to parents or members of staff about what should be their attitude if he approached them? - Yes. Some parents asked me about the boys' club, and I said I had heard a number of allegations, but I was unsure about them. However, I concluded from what I had heard that I would not send my own children to the club, and they thanked me for that.

When Hamilton met you and asked you to disabuse staff of the rumours about him did you say anything to him? - I was very neutral.

What did you do with the second lot of leaflets? - I binned them also.

Now, /

Now, to be absolutely clear about the location of clubs, do you remember where the club was that he was trying to circulate material about? - Dunblane High School.

Were there ever any clubs to your knowledge from what you have gathered -- I know you had only been there a relatively short time -- were there ever any clubs of his run in Dunblane Primary School? - To my knowledge, no.

Did Hamilton ever have any role to play in the activity of Dunblane Primary School? - No.

After all this had happened did you ever hear anything further from him? - There were a number of letters which arrived at the school.

What were these? - These were photocopied letters circulated to various people and addressed to various people.

Do you remember who they were addressed to? - To Michael Forsyth, I recall, the Secretary of State.

Any other names that you remember? - Yes, I think I recall one of them was addressed to Councillor Ball.

Could you look please at Production R30, which also has on the back DDH361? Could you look at that first of all? Is that a letter dated 26th January, 1996? - It is.

To Councillor Ball? - Yes.

From 7 Kent Road, Stirling? - Yes.

MR. BONOMOY: Sir, if you have not got a copy of that you will find it attached to the one I referred to earlier.

EXAMINATION CONTINUED BY MR. BONOMOY:
Now, does that look like the letter that you received? - It does.

Does the timing match? - I am sorry?

Does the date match the time when you recollect/

recollect the letter coming in? - I think it does.

That is the end of January, 1996; is that right? -
Yes.

I think it complains about gossip in Bannockburn
Primary School? - It does.

And later in the first paragraph it says "At Dunblane
Primary School, where teachers have contaminated all of the older
boys with this poison, even former cleaners and dinner ladies have
been told by teachers at school that I am a pervert"? - Yes.

Does it go on "There have been reports at many
schools about boys being rounded up by staff and even warnings
given to entire schools by head teachers during assembly"? -
Yes.

It goes on in the second page "I have no criminal
record, nor have I ever been accused of sexual child abuse by any
child, and I am not a pervert"? - Yes.

"I have always run my clubs in a fair, proper and
competent manner and ensured that no child or parent has any
proper or legitimate complaint. Nevertheless, this defamation
coming from the respected source of local primary school staff has
caused untold problems everywhere within the Region and
beyond"? - Yes.

11.20 p.m.

I think that he contributes in the next

paragraph the origin of this when schools became involved in 1983 when an official of the Education Department telephoned numerous schools to warn Headteachers about him? - Yes.

Now, you remember receiving the letter in these terms, do you? - Yes, I do.

I think he then also towards the end of that last paragraph mentions a Dunblane Scout Official, David Vass and talks of his malicious work and he goes on to talk about Mr. R. Deuchars as being at a complete loss to know what all this is about? - That is what it says.

Now, we heard evidence this morning about a letter to the Queen; did you ever see that? - I did.

When did you see a copy of that letter? - I recall that letter arriving on the morning of the 12th March.

Was it that letter only or did it have this attached to it? - As I recall it was that letter only.

Would you look then at the letter which was D88 that I think we saw earlier and tell me if that is the same letter that you received? - Yes, I think that is the same letter.

What did you do with it? - I read it, I recalled discussing it in the secretary's office with a member of staff, I handed it to Mr. Convery, my Assistant Headteacher.

Is that the last you saw of it? - Yes.

Do you know if the police recovered your copy? - I don't think they recovered this particular letter.

It went where it belonged perhaps? - I think so.

Is it possible that the letter arrived on/

on the 11th rather than the 12th or are you fairly confident of your recollection that it was the 12th? - Fairly confident.

If I could turn to Wednesday, the 13th, what time did you actually arrive at the school? - I arrived at the school at 8.15 as I do most mornings.

Any sign of a white van? - None.

Where did you go to when you arrived? - I went to the office area beside the dining room area and into my own room and into the secretary's room.

Through the main entrance, I take it? - Through the main entrance.

By that time have all the entrances to the school been opened up? - Yes.

Who was responsible for that? - The janitor.

Well, even before he arrives are there people who have to open part of the school? - Yes, the cleaners arrive earlier.

You have experience of other schools indeed working with the Education Authority? - Yes.

For how long as a teacher? - Coming up 22 years, 19 years as a Headteacher.

Is it then common practice that the janitor has that primary responsibility? - Yes, it is.

Who was responsible in March for locking up at night?
- The janitor is the security man who checks and locks up at night.

Do the cleaners come in at night as well as the morning? - Yes.

Are they working at night after he has left? - No, he comes back in the evening because of school lets.

He/

He then physically checks? - Yes.

Were there many school lets in March? - The usual number, I am not sure.

Every night? - Almost every night.

Till how late? - 9.30.

And the janitor's job is to lock up? - Yes.

Now, were you in your office from then until 9? - My own office and the secretary's office.

After the pupils began to arrive what were your movements? - I welcomed the School Chaplin, Mr. Pringles, spent some time with him and moved into the main hall.

Was there a hold up in starting assembly? - On that morning there was a minor holdup.

What was the reason for that? - One or two of the classes were a little late in arriving for assembly.

Did you participate in the assembly? - As normal I would introduce the assembly, I would welcome the children to the assembly and hand over to the Chaplin who would normally conduct the assembly.

Did you stay or leave? - No, stayed.

When it was finished where did you go? - To my office area.

Did you have to see Mr. Pringles off the premises? - Yes, I would normally spend a moment or two with the Chaplin prior to his leaving.

Is that what actually happened? - To the best of my recollection, yes.

You then went back to your own office? - Back to Mrs. Topping's office, the secretary's office.

You/

You got a message? - Yes.

What was that? - That a phone call had been received which I had to return.

Did you return? - I went to my own room and returned that call.

This has been timed, that is a call to Mr. Livingston? - Yes.

9.38 something? - Yes.

Is that consistent with your own personal recollection? - Yes, it is.

Were you looking outside when you were making the call? - I was seated at my desk.

Does that face out the window, away from the window? - The window is to my right.

Have you any recollection of looking outside? - Not in the early stages of that phone call.

In which direction does the window from your office look? - It looks on to the playground opposite.

That is in the U-shaped area we can see towards the top of the photograph? - That is correct.

During that call did you realise something wasn't right in the school? - During that call I began to hear some noises.

What were the nature of the noises you heard? - It sounded at first like indistinct bangs.

What did you think at first they came from? - At first I thought they came from the area towards the right of the school, that U-shaped area.

And what was your first reaction or first thought what might be causing the noises? - My first reaction was that builders must be in the school and I remember being slightly irritated because I hadn't been informed that builders were expected.

What/

What happened then? - I continued my conversation and the bangs seemed to be louder and closer.

Did you at that stage then continue with the conversation with Mr. Livingston until something else happened? - That is correct.

What was the next event? - The next event was that Mrs. Awlson arrived at my door, she arrived.....

What was strange about her arriving? - She arrived in a crouched position and she said words to the effect that "There is a man in the school with a gun" and she shouted to me to get down.

What did you do? - From the look in her eyes I realised immediately that something was seriously amiss and I cut off my call to Mr. Livingston.

What did you do then? - I then dialled 999.

There has been some evidence about who you dialled at that point and there is no doubt it was the police; are you clear in your mind it was a 999 call? - In my own mind I am quite clear about that because I have never dialled a 999 call before and I didn't have the number of the local police station to dial.

Did you dial immediately? - Immediately.

Do you remember what you said? - Yes, I said words to the effect that there was a report that someone had a gun and I made the inane comment it might be someone firing off blanks.

Do you know why you said something about blanks? - I don't know, I have never heard a gun report before.

Was that call of any significant length? - It seemed to me to be a lengthy call, that is my impression -- I was becoming quite irritated because I wanted to go and see what was happening.

Was/

Was clarification being sought from the other end? - I seem to remember hearing the number read back to me.

Your phone number? - Yes.

When the call ended what did you do? - I left my room and went into the dining area and to my right I saw Mrs. Awlson attending to Mrs. Tweddle.

Was she already injured? - She appeared to be injured.

Now, did you get any information at that point about where this was happening? - Yes, Mrs. Awlson referred to the gym, it was the gym.

By that time did you realise it was the gym or was there still uncertainty in your mind? - Until that moment there was uncertainty in my mind.

Can we just be clear about the layout now of the area we are talking about and can we come to that diagram on the wall or on the board which will be shown and can we look at the side of the Assembly Hall. Now, there are what looks like steps there and then a passageway along the side of the Assembly Hall? - Yes.

Can you see into the Assembly Hall from there? - Yes, you can, it is a raised walkway and there are pillars.

Were you on that at all? - Yes, after I had got the message from Mrs. Awlson that it was the gym I went round from the dining room area to the double-doors here; at that point I remember telling the kitchen staff that they had better get back into the kitchen because we were unsure what was happening; I continued from here on to the corridor and it was at that point I was aware that Mr. Scott had joined me.

Mr. Scott was a student teacher? - Yes.

Where did he come from? - I wasn't sure at that time.

Where did you go from there? - Together/

Together we went along the raised walkway towards the gym.

Was there anyone else around that area as you ran along? - No.

Was there any noise coming from the gym by then? - I didn't hear any noise until I arrived at the gym door.

Was there still a noise? - I didn't hear any noise until I arrived at the gym door.

I am concerned about the banging noises? - No, I heard no further banging noises.

When you got to the gym door I take it there were still no banging noises? - There were still no banging noises.

So the shooting was over? - Yes, the shooting was over, Mr. Scott had told me at that point that he had shot himself.

He had seen that? - He had seen that.

Can you give us a rough estimate of the time lapse from when you first heard these noises when you were outside and the time Mr. Scott told you that he had shot himself? - About three minutes.

You can sit down now, Mr. Taylor. Did you open the door to the gym? - One of the side doors to the gym is badly hinged and is often half open, I don't recall if it was fully open or not; I burst into the gym.

Now, what faced you when you went into the gym? - It was a scene of unimaginable carnage, it was one's worst nightmare.

Smell? - Yes, the area seemed to be thick with a bluish smoke and the smell of cordite was quite strong.

From where you were could you see right to the end of the gymnasium? - Yes, one can.

From this point I am really concerned to know/

know what people did rather than what they saw and perhaps you could help me first of all by telling me what was your instant reaction or what did you do first of all? - The first thing I did was I noticed there was a group of children to the right-hand side of the gym who were crying and who were obviously less injured perhaps than others; I asked Mr. Scott to attend to these and remove them from the gym.

Was he able to do that? - I left him to do that.

But later on I think you discovered he had done it? -
Yes.

Where did he take the children to? - He took them to the area just outside the gym, the corridor area just outside the gym.

Where did you go? - I ran back to the office area and shouted to someone to phone for ambulances.

And somebody did? - Yes, somebody did.

Who was that? - To the best of my knowledge it was Mrs. Eadington.

Where did you go from there? - I went back to the gym and I remember asking for other adults to come and attend there, to come and help, particularly the kitchen staff who had re-emerged from the kitchen.

Initially when you went back into the room what was your attention drawn to? - The children.

Did you take any action in relation to any child before Mr. Currie drew your attention to focus on Thomas Hamilton? - No, I was moving through the gym and trying to ascertain what was happening and I became aware that Mr. Currie was to my left.

What happened then? - We both continued to move through the gym and it was at that point I noticed Hamilton at the top of the gym, he seemed to be moved; John, Mr. Currie, was further down/

down the gym than I was and I noticed there was a gun lying on the floor beside Hamilton and I asked Mr. Currie to kick the gun away.

May that gun have been in his hand, in fact? - My impression was that it was on the floor.

What did Mr. Currie do? - He kicked the gun which I recall spinning towards him and ending beside a bench in that area.

That would be away from Hamilton's left-hand side? - Yes.

Did you see Mr. Currie do anything else? - Yes, we noticed that Hamilton had a gun in his hand, it is my impression it was his left hand and Mr. Currie removed the gun and threw it to the floor to Hamilton's left.

A similar direction to the first gun? - No, the first gun spun to the right-hand side of the gym as we look at it; this gun was towards the fire door side.

And I think someone else came into the gym at that point? - A voice behind us shouted words to the effect "Leave the gym alone" and I became aware there was an off duty police officer had arrived.

Did other staff come into the gym? - Yes, soon thereafter Mr. McCombie arrived in the gym, three of the kitchen staff were there and Mr. Scott was attending to the children outside.

I don't think it is necessary for the purpose of this Inquiry to ask you what you did in relation to any of the children or what happened while you were doing so but can I just ask you to confirm in general terms that you did try to give help to some of the injured children? - Yes.

Were you aware of police officers arriving? - Yes, I recall the arrival of the two first police officers on the scene.

That would be uniformed officers? - Yes, they were.

Did/

Did that seem long after the incident? - It actually didn't seem very long.

Were you aware of other members of staff trying to do the same thing as you were to help the children? - Yes, I was.

How did the staff cope with that? - This was very difficult; the children outside were being comforted by Mr. Scott and Mrs. Garland and some of the kitchen staff, they were doing a magnificent job, some others were in the gym itself trying to attend to the more seriously injured children; the staff and I just did what we could, they were quite magnificent.

Were you aware of injured teachers? - I became aware at one point; I hadn't looked into the store area of the gym so I moved into that area whereupon I found Mrs. Harrild lying on the floor and Mrs. Blake beside her.

Was anyone giving attention to them? - At that moment, no.

11.40 a.m.

Did help arrive from other staff members? - Soon thereafter I understand that other staff members arrived. I was unable to do very much. I spoke to both teachers and tried to reassure Mrs. Harrild that help was on its way, and Mrs. Blake seemed to me to be attending to her.

Mrs. Blake was giving some assistance to Mrs. Harrild? - Yes.

But both were significantly disabled at that stage? - Yes.

Were you aware of Ambulance staff arriving? - Yes. The emergency services began to arrive.

Now, how can you thereafter remember what happened in detail? Can you remember much? - I have some vivid memories, but the order of events is a little unclear.

Did you also provide, along with other members of the staff, assistance to the paramedics and doctors who arrived? - Yes.

Someone did something about covering the windows? - Yes. During this time a number of men who were strangers to me -- I assumed they were police officers -- with Mr. Currie, had obtained some material which I think had come from the stage, curtains on the stage, and used this to cover the windows on the gym.

Were you involved at any stage with the officers who were in charge of the scene, Mr. Ogg and Mr. Holden, that is police officers? - Yes, but not at that point.

And when did you first meet them? - When the Ambulance service and the doctors had arrived in numbers, I went back to the office area in the school and met Mr. Ogg at that stage.

Your job was really over in the gym, at least? - Yes.

Well, part of your job? - Yes.

Have/

Have you any idea what time it was when you were discussing how to proceed with Mr. Ogg and Mr. Holden? - I am really not sure of the time that was.

What sort of decisions did you make at that stage? - The next priority at that stage was identification, and we realised then the difficulty that that would give us because of the scene in the gym and because of the fact that the class teacher was not available to us.

You give the impression that attention was focusing on identification very quickly? - No, some time had passed till this point - some children had already been transported to hospital.

I am trying to understand your position as best I can. An important or difficult job of confirming that certain children were dead had to be done, and were you present when that was actually being done by the doctor who confirmed that each child was dead? - No.

I take it that too had been done, however, by the time you were discussing things with the police? - I assume so, yes. There was considerable chaos and confusion.

But you knew that the question of identification had to be dealt with? - Yes.

Who said that? Who was the person who said "We have to turn our attention to this"? - I think it was Chief Superintendent Ogg.

What did you think you ought to do then? - The only thing to do was to get members of the staff who may be able to help us, and take them to the gym -- they included the nursery staff that had some of these children the previous year, and Mrs. Eadington who was Deputy Headmistress with responsibility for the infant classes.

Were you personally familiar with any of the children? - I was familiar with the faces but not familiar with their names. I was aware of the names of some of them.

And had you yourself been able to put any/

any names to faces that you saw? - Yes.

And was that a limited number of children? - That is a limited number of children.

Can you tell me then, who were the staff -- the names of the staff you relied on principally to assist in this exercise? - Mrs. Eadington, Mrs. Stewart -- the two Mrs. Stewarts, the nursery teacher and nursery nurse, and Mrs. Isles, another nursery teacher.

Had all the children been through the nursery? - No.

Was there a police officer assigned to take charge of this duty as well, do you remember? - A sergeant.

Is Tatnell the name? - Yes, a Sgt. Tatnell attached himself to me and was of some assistance, some considerable assistance to me. I am unsure if he was assigned to do that.

But he was there? - Yes.

Can you tell the Inquiry the difficulties that you experienced when you actually tried to do this job? - It was a most harrowing time for the staff involved. We had to take staff in and out of the gym on several occasions. It was a very traumatic experience for us.

And at that stage you are relying on eye-witness identification? - Yes.

Did you have to try to move to other ways of ensuring that you were accurately identifying children? - Well, at a fairly early stage I got from the files the record cards of the children involved, and we tried to use them to help us.

Had the register been marked? - The register had not been marked that morning.

So did you know whether any children were absent? - No, we had to rely on the police to confirm that two children were absent that day.

So/

So that was a job the police had to do? - Yes.

And was it common that the register wasn't marked before the assembly? - I am not certain, but the unfortunate coincidence on this occasion of a Primary I class going immediately to the gym, immediately from the assembly area, and having to change prior to going down to the gym, was a factor.

And that could well have been the normal practice, could it? - Yes.

Education is the priority of the school, but we now know that there are other very significant issues which may even be greater priorities. Do you have a view now about the significance of marking the register before anything happens in the school? - Yes. Of course, as I say, under normal circumstances that would have been the case, but the coincidence of these two events was unusual -- because of the rotational nature of the assembly.

Do you think if there were photographs of the children with the children's record card, it would assist at all in a situation like this? - I think in a situation like this it would have been of limited assistance.

Photographs were obtained at some stage in the process? - We provided the police with a class photograph.

I suppose a class photograph can always be kept ready to hand? - Yes.

And photographs taken individually of the children? - Normal practice would be that on alternative years, a photographer would come to the school and take family and individual photographs.

If it was your decision now, would you have individual photographs on the record card? - I would have an individual photograph within the record card. The photographs we occasionally get put on record cards are too small to be of any use.

So you would have larger-sized photographs/

photographs? - I would.

I suppose it is important that they are kept up-to-date, because young children no doubt change more quickly than most of us? - Yes, indeed. I have already asked that the school photographer undertakes this next session.

Was your task hampered at all by the fact that a number of children had been taken off to hospital very quickly? - Yes it was.

I suppose that, taken with the uncertainty about who was absent, would create one difficulty? - It did.

Was there any confusion that you were aware of in the identity of any of the children in the gym? - In what sense?

Well, was there uncertainty that any identification was accurate that you were aware of? - We were uncertain about identities because of the situation I have described. I wasn't aware of anything specific.

Did you make use of clothing and names on clothing at all to try to help? - Yes, it helped, but I felt because of the gym clothing that they were wearing that I should re-enter the gym and check particularly one group of children, the name tags on the back of the shorts.

Can you tell us now whether any of them were wearing clothing with the name tag of another child? - I can't testify to that. I was made aware that was the case.

In the course of the day or on a later occasion? - Later on in the day.

Were you aware of the problem that one child was identified in two different places? - Not at that time.

But you learned again later? - Yes.

Was that later the same day? - I think it was later the same day.

Was/

Was there a child in relation to whom there was no record card? - Yes, there was.

And that was because she was a very recent arrival?
- That is correct. The record cards had not arrived.

Did that cause any difficulty? - That caused a little more confusion. The police were concerned that no record card was there.

Did you yourself have to leave the gym on a number of occasions and go back in? - Yes.

And even after you had done this did you have to assist further in the actual marking somewhere on the floor of the gym of the identity of the various children? - No. By that stage we felt we had almost come to an end of our usefulness. That one last task was carried out by nursery staff and Mrs. Eadington.

But you didn't go back into the gym to do that? - No.

We have heard quite a lot today, and later on yesterday, about telephones. How many telephone lines had the school? - Officially there was one telephone line to the school, which was Central Region policy, I understand. We had a second line put into the library, which we used for Internet purposes.

And could that line be used for ordinary calls? - Yes.

It could be? - Yes.

And was it used that day? - It was used that day.

In the children's record cards there would be a contact name, address and telephone number, should the parent be uncontactable in an emergency? - That is correct.

And in relation to all the children was there such a contact? - I am uncertain as to that, but it would be normal practice.

That/

That is the general position? - Yes.

And presumably the way you communicate is by telephone? - Yes, that is right.

That system no doubt works if one child in an emergency has to be taken home, or indeed even perhaps a class in an ordinary emergency need to be taken home. How did it work on this day? - The police had taken over the issue of telephones, and it was a matter for them, but it was clearly a huge disadvantage to only have access to two outside lines at that point. I was aware, however, of some considerable activity by BT engineers, who were busy installing outside lines.

I don't suppose you know of any instant answer to this problem? - More telephone lines in schools, which we have at present.

How many do you have now? - I think, because we have an outside telephone line to every classroom in the school and various other areas, we have somewhere in the region of 45 lines now.

So there is now a line to every class? - There is.

Is that a situation unique to your school? - I think it is.

And is that because of the events there? - Yes.

BY LORD CULLEN: And can I ask, is that through a central switchboard, or is that separate lines, or what do you mean? - Separate lines.

EXAMINATION CONTINUED BY MR. BONOMOY:
Now, we have heard evidence that an attempt was made to cut off your phone line, which didn't work? - Yes.

I suppose on any number of future occasions the same attempt could be made. Would you see any advantage in having a mobile or Cellnet phone in the school? - Yes, indeed. The senior staff in the school currently have mobile phones too.

Is/

Is that something which has been introduced since 13th March? - Yes.

Security of the school I suppose can be looked at under a number of headings. There is the physical security of the building at night when you leave. Were you happy that that was adequate prior to this incident? - Yes.

But then there is the question of visitors to the school. Can I ask you first of all if anything has changed since 13th March? - Yes, we have a visitor badge entry system.

Prior to 13th March did you have any particular arrangements in place for visitors? - Visitors were encouraged to report to the Secretary's Office.

How were they encouraged to do this? - This is normal practice in all schools. I can't recall if the signs requesting parents to do that were still in evidence, but they were there at some stage.

Picture someone arriving with leaflets he wants the teacher to distribute -- prior to 13th March how did he know where to go? - The front entrance looks directly on to the Secretary's Office, with a small badge.

So it is made obvious in your school? - Relatively.

Now what do you do? - Now, because there is an entry badge system, signing in and signing out.

And is that done at the Secretary's Office? - It is done immediately inside the front door.

And is there someone there attending to that? - At the moment there is.

Who is that? - We have a community policeman, P.C. Stark in attendance at the school all the time.

Do you think, in the long run, it is a good/

good idea to have a policeman at the door of every school? - No, it is not.

So what is going to happen once the initial circumstances die down? - Obviously the security of all schools will be reviewed, but in our school we have a new security system being implemented at the moment which will eventually cause a single entry access door.

And when that happens will there be somebody at the door? - Hopefully there will be a bell system, with a redesigned office area so that the office staff can overview the front door to check on the identity of everybody who arrives.

So by signs people can be directed to the one entrance? - Yes.

At the entrance there can be a sign saying that you ring a bell? - Yes.

When the bell rings someone can answer? - Yes.

And attend to the person who wishes to come into the school, find out why he is there, and give him a badge if he is to be permitted entry? - That is correct.

Is that something that you now consider to be essential? - I think in our position, my answer is yes.

Do you think that it is essential in all schools? - I can't answer for all schools, but I would certainly recommend that this system be actively pursued.

Do you think it detracts from the atmosphere that we hope to have in primary schools? - It may do, but there are greater considerations than that.

Well, is it impossible really to ask you about how, having someone at the door, or a system like this would apply, or be felt, in a school which hadn't suffered, and continues to suffer, in the way yours does? - I think all schools throughout the land suffered from what happened here.

But/

R.L. Taylor

Cross-examined

But do you think it is right to look at Dunblane, see what is necessary there, and apply that all over? - It may well be that the experience that we gain with our security system could be made available to all schools.

Are there any other security arrangements being installed in the school? - We have a camera system at the moment.

Covering/

12 noon

Covering where? - It covers the majority of the school grounds, particularly the entrance doorway.

Where are the viewing screens? - In the janitor's office.

Is there someone manning them throughout the school day? - No. As I understand it it is a specialised system, and the pictures are beamed directly into Police Headquarters.

Are there further security arrangements being installed at the moment? - Yes; the locking systems which I mentioned earlier, and also as part of that the emergency doors are linked into a buzzer system so that if the emergency doors are opened inadvertently the janitor would be alerted.

Now, I take it you have continued to have playtimes? - Yes.

And children go outside? - That is correct.

Do you see that as an essential and necessary part of the school day? - Yes, indeed.

I suppose the camera system would give some reassurance while the children are outside? - Yes. They also have playground supervisors; but an extended camera system would be very useful.

Who are the playground supervisors? - Parent helpers.

How many do you have? - We have five currently.

Prior to the 13th March did you have parent helpers? - Yes.

Do you know whether parents who take on these responsibilities or have the opportunity to do so are vetted or checked in any way? - Yes. These are parent helpers who are employed by the local Education Authority.

Do you know whether the local Education Authority/

Authority do anything to check their background?

- I think their criminal backgrounds are checked.

Do you have personal knowledge of whether the check is wider than simply a criminal record? - I wouldn't know.

Even before the 13th March do you know if there was any check even on criminal records? - Yes, I think there was.

To be absolutely clear about the use of the telephones, before the police took over responsibility or control for the phone lines was there any opportunity to use the phone to contact parents of the class you knew had been involved in this? - There would have been some opportunity in the early stages, but very quickly the phone became very busy.

Do you know if anyone did actually phone any of the contact numbers? - I don't think so, but I am not sure.

Is there a fax in the school? - Only subsequent to March 13th.

What was the reason for introducing it? - To increase the communications system. It was just part of the system that was installed.

It is to improve communications, I take it in connection with safety? - In connection with all communications.

I take it one way of improving the communication with parents in a class like this would be to get information to the Education Authority and ask someone with a lot of phone lines to do something about it? - Yes.

That is always assuming they have not turned up outside the school? - That is correct.

But introducing such a system, where do you contact the Education Authority, would at least spread the load and increase the opportunity for communication? - It would.

CROSS/

CROSS-EXAMINED BY MISS DUNLOP: If I could just ask you one or two brief questions about identification. You referred to names of clothing, and you were specifically asked about a child wearing clothing which had a different name? - Yes.

Do you know if that was in fact the name of an opposite sex sibling? - I am sorry, I don't know.

In so far as the child for whom there was no record card is concerned, is it in fact the case that that child had begun school with the other members of the class the previous August? - I am not certain about when the child had joined the class.

If I could suggest to you that the child began school with all the other children you would not be in a position to contradict that? - That is correct.

But for some reason her record card has not been filled out? - That would be most unusual.

Finally in relation to identification, were you aware of one set of parents of an absent child phoning in early on to make clear their child was at home safe? - No, I was not aware of that.

Turning to school security, you obviously have a number of years' experience, and indeed I think you stated you had some 19 years as a teacher. Is your new system like anything you have ever seen in any other school? - No.

Finally, if I could ask you for some information about Dunblane, how many schools are there in Dunblane? - In Dunblane at the moment we are the largest primary school. There is an Episcopalian school, St. Mary's, and just outside Dunblane is a small rural school called Kirkton Primary School, and there is also Queen Victoria's School.

So within Dunblane itself there are four schools; is that correct? - Yes.

CROSS/

CROSS-EXAMINED BY MR. GIBB: It might be helpful if you express any view you might have on the question of vetting of those who participate in after-school lets. Do you take any part in perusing any applications received for evening lets in your school? - No. Let applications are sent directly to the Region. These are applications for the use of the building outwith school hours, which is quite different from after-school, extra curricular activities in which I would be involved.

Have you any view as a member of the education profession as to whether there are any steps which could be taken to vet those who are involved with children in evening lets? - Obviously I think the system needs to be tightened up considerably with regard to any adult who has any contact with children.

I think there is a fairly stringent vetting procedure in relation to teachers; they all need to be members of the General Teaching Council? - Yes.

I think you indicated your playground supervisors are also checked? - Yes.

And you have a statutory requirement to provide supervisors in the playground? - Yes.

Is there a Scottish Criminal Records Office check done on other members of your staff, as far as you are aware? - Yes, indeed.

Do you consider it appropriate that a SCOR check should be done on anyone involved in evening lets or anyone involved with children? - I think anyone involved with children, whether in schools or on our premises, should be subject to such checks.

Is it your view that those involved in church activities, whether Sunday activities or Cubs or Scouts, should be vetted? - Yes.

Do you think it is also appropriate that where evening lets are involved that the local school should be asked for any view as to whether the let is suitable or not? - Yes.

I think that did not happen before? - That/

That does happen on occasions.

CROSS-EXAMINED BY MR. TAYLOR: Are you able to recollect the time when the school records cards were produced on the morning of the 13th? - I am quite unspecific about when that would be, but it wasn't very much later, after the Emergency Services had arrived in numbers.

You say when they arrived in numbers. I think the first of the Emergency Services was arriving round about 10 o'clock; is that correct? - Yes.

Are you able to say roughly how long after that.....?
- It could have been half an hour after that: at 10.30-ish.

If I could now turn to the topic of school security, would it be fair to say that some schools will be located in built-up areas and other schools will be located in fairly open country environments? - Yes.

And we also have schools who will vary considerably from the small country school to the large City Centre school? - Yes.

That will involve different sizes of school rolls, and also it will involve different geographical regions? - That is correct.

Could it be the case that a security provision for one school might be inappropriate as a security provision for another school? - Specific systems may well be inappropriate, yes.

Does it follow from that that in order to arrive at a constructive view as to what ought to be the security provision in any school it requires each one to be examined and assessed individually?

- I think that would be appropriate. I would also imagine that the authorities would wish to consult fairly widely about the position of individual schools.

CROSS-EXAMINED BY MR. STEVEN: Can you tell me what if any instruction was given to you, or guidance, by the Region in relation to matters of security prior to the 13th March of this year? - I/

I can recall no such guidance.

Do you think you should have had some form of guidance from the Region or their successors? - Yes, indeed; and that is beginning to happen.

Can you tell me briefly what the position of the school was on the 13th in relation to the people visiting the school, or if someone was found wandering in the school? - The normal practice would be that any adults on the school staff would approach the stranger and try to determine what the purpose of them being there was. It is very difficult with a large school. It is one of the duties that the janitor for example has.

Moving on, do you think there is anything you or your staff might have done or would have done differently on the day which would have given more assistance to the injured children? - I think the staff that day in relation to the children did absolutely everything that they could, even beyond all expectations, and we have taken considerable comfort from the fact that any that survived did survive.

Lastly, can you tell us how the children and the staff are now getting on with it? - The children have shown resilience and are getting on very well, and so are the staff; but it is very difficult and continues to be difficult.

RE-EXAMINED BY MR. BONOMOY: You were asked about the record card that was not there. Can you tell me what the system is for ensuring that we do get record cards for children who are transferred from somewhere else? - In normal circumstances contact is made with the Authority to request that cards are forwarded. The length of time this usually takes varies.

And that is done by school staff, a secretary? - Yes.

And it would be I suppose up to her to follow it up if there was no response? - Yes. The problem is that the response varies considerably from one Authority to another.

MR. BONOMOY: Sir, the next witness is Agnes Awlson.

AGNES/

AGNES AWLSON, (47), Sworn,

EXAMINED BY MR. BONOMY: I think you are one of the Assistant Head Teachers at Dunblane Primary School? - That is correct.

And you held that position on the 13th March of this year? - Yes.

Now, you have been at the school a while, I think; is that correct? - Yes, since 1988.

Have you been the assistant head teacher throughout that period? - I have, yes.

So you transferred into that post? - Yes.

On the 13th March when did you arrive at the school? - About quarter past 8.

Just as usual? - Yes.

Assistant head teachers have administrative duties? - Yes.

Class teaching responsibilities as well? - This year I have a class as well as being assistant head teacher, yes.

Do you teach all the time? - Four days out of five.

Did you have a class that day? - Yes, I did.

Between 8.15 and 9 were you in the classroom or somewhere else? - After I arrived for work I usually check my mail, say good morning and then go to my classroom, and that is what I did.

Where is your classroom? - It is one of the three Primary 7 mobile huts.

We have got the photograph still on the screen. That is the white hut with the grey roof, between the main building and another dark-roofed hut towards the top of the photograph? - Yes.

And yours is the middle of three classes there?/

there? - Yes.

I think you had someone else walking along with you?

- I had a student teacher, Mr. David Scott, working with me.

Your class wasn't involved with assembly?

- No.

But somewhere after 9 o'clock they were going somewhere else? - At 9.30 they were booked into the art room for an art lesson. Mr. Scott was going to take them.

Where is the art room? - In the main building, opposite the Primary 7 huts.

Going back to the photograph, you would leave the middle of the hut and go more or less straight across the photograph itself to the join between the main building and the gate that is used to gain entrance to the administration.....? - Yes. There is one door that is always left open, what we call the library door; the other door is the fire exit, so it is more or less like that.

It is more or less at that angle shown in the photograph? - Yes.

And that is where your class would have to troop up to? - Yes.

Did you part company with them at some stage? - I was behind them. Mr. Scott had gone ahead, and I was locking the doors.

Did the children go straight across? - No, they were lined up, and I instructed them to walk across, that I would be behind them.

Had/

12.20 p.m.

Had somebody forgot something? - Well, I reached the library door and one of the boys in my class had been sent back by Mr. Scott to fetch a pair of scissors from the classroom.

Did you have to go back in again? - No, I just said to him "You know where they are, the top drawer, just go and get them".

Did he have to take the keys? - No, it is the cupboard door which has my handbag that I locked, not the classroom door.

Did you carry on into the main building? - Just after I had spoken to this boy I heard noises and I was alerted.....I didn't know what they were, very sharp noises.

Were you still in the playground? - We were still in the playground.

Midway between the two? - No, almost on the veranda just before going into the library door.

So you were more or less at the main building? - Yes.

And you heard what sort of noises? - A sharp metallic noise, several of them.

Can you give us your best approximation of the time? - Well, my RE class finished at 9.30, the art room was booked from 9.30; I kept the class back a few minutes and then instructed them to cross the playground so within five minutes, five or six minutes I would think.

So 9.30 is a fairly accurate stab at the time when this all started? - Yes.

When you heard the noises what did you do? - I looked towards the direction from which the noises were coming, I heard other noises after that, very faintly screaming noises, and then the metallic noises started again.

Did you know approximately where they were/

were coming from? - I knew it was coming from the region of the gymnasium.

So having worked out where they were, having heard not only the metallic noises but the sound of children -- --? - Yes.

What did you do? - I went through into the library door, through the school and straight up towards the gymnasium.

Were you on that stepped walkway along the side of the hall? - Yes.

That is the same road as Mr. Taylor eventually takes?
- Yes.

How far did you go? - Almost to the swing-doors at the end of that raised walkway, they were open and that is also.....I didn't go as far as the gym doors.

What did you do when you got to that point? - The noises were still going on and I saw what I thought were cartridges lying outside the gym doors and I realised something dreadful was happening and I turned to raise the alarm.

You had realised obviously by that time there was shooting? - Yes.

Is that the point at which you realised there was shooting? - Before that I remember feeling irritated and angry that workmen should be causing some alarm to the children; I was going to investigate that; it wasn't until I actually drew near to the gymnasium I realised it was something much worse.

When you were at the swing-doors and stopped was this banging still going on? - Yes.

What did you then do? - I turned and went back to Mr. Taylor's office very quickly to raise the alarm.

Now, he described you as being crouched down when you went into his gym? - Yes.

Was there any particular reason for that?/

that? - I thought whoever was doing this, I didn't know if it was one person or what, I thought they may have been threatening the safety of everyone else in the school.

You thought he may be behind you? - Yes.

What did you do when you got to Mr. Taylor's office? - I went in and said.....I can't remember the exact words, that someone had a gun and get help.

What did Mr. Taylor do? - He was on the telephone, he looked up and immediately put the telephone down and lifted it again.

Were there still noises at that stage? - I can't recall.

Did you then leave Mr. Taylor's office? - Yes.

Where did you go? - I went out into the corridor and I looked to my right and saw Mrs. Tweddle lying on the floor.

Was she conscious? - She was.

Did she look injured? - Yes.

What sign was there of injury? - She was lying on her back and her hand was behind her head and there was a lot of blood.

Were there any children around? - One of the other members of staff was just going through one of the other doors with her class and I called to her to get her children on to the ground and to hide in the corner.

What did you do about the member of staff who was injured? - I went into the janitor's room, got some paper towels; she didn't want to move her hand from behind her head and I placed some towels under there and comforted her.

How long were you with her? - Two or three minutes.

Where/

Where did you go from there? - I realised that Mrs. Tweddle was not going to lose consciousness, she was talking and another member of staff came and took over and I went up to the gym.

Before you got to the gym did you meet somebody coming back the way? - Mr. Taylor was coming out of the gym; he said to me "Have you been in there" but I said "It's all right".

Did you go in at that point? - Yes.

You would see the same sight as he would? - Yes, some of the injured children had already been removed and were in the corridor as I approached the gym.

When you went into the gym what did you try to do? - I tried to help the children who were injured, establish the kind of injury, tried to remember my First Aid training to make sure all the children who were injured were able to breath and stayed to comfort as much as I could.

Was it immediately obvious to you that some of the children were dead? - Not immediately -- as I approached some of the children Mr. Currie, the janitor, said to me "You can't help them, Mrs. Awlson, they're gone".

And then did you realise that some of them were actually dead? - Yes.

Is it also right to say that immediately you went into the gym you were aware that there were certain deceased persons immediately inside the gym? - Yes.

Now, there were children that you could help? - Yes.

Can I take it that is how you spent the time immediately after going into the gym? - Yes, that is correct.

And indeed your contact was with a number of children? - Yes.

Were you aware of other people other than teachers arriving to provide help? - Yes.

Who/

Who were you first aware of? - I think I am aware of some policeman but I didn't speak to anyone and then I was aware of the local practice doctors arriving because I know one of them and then the Paramedics arrived.

And by that time were there also other teachers in the gym giving assistance? - I only remember Mr. Currie and one other member of staff but I know there were others.

Now, so far as the later work is concerned, this is the job of identifying victims -- were you directly involved in that? - No.

Were you involved in giving support to the teachers who were there? - No.

And it was determined that you really couldn't be of practical assistance because there were professional people there what did you then turn your attention to? - I left the gym and went into the Assembly Hall where some of the injured children.....where all of the injured children were being removed to and assisted there until they were taken away.

Did you also stay with Linda Stewart for a period? - Briefly -- Linda was in the gym and she had been asked to stay behind to identify....to help identify the children and I stayed with her, yes.

Can I turn to the situation facing the children in the other classes of which you had one? - Yes.

What attention was then paid to your own class? - My class was with Mr. Scott and Mr. Scott, having witnessed Hamilton commit suicide, asked one of the other teachers to take care of my class while he came downstairs; I didn't know that at the time.

Did you have any further contact with your own class in the course of the morning? - No.

So what were your duties thereafter? - I assisted with reuniting parents with their children; it was difficult because of the layout of the school, it really had to be teachers who knew where/

where the classrooms were to go and get the children.

Could you tell me a little more about how this was done? - Parents were allowed into the corridor at the nursery.

These are parents of children in classes not involved in the incident? - Yes.

They are allowed into the corridor at the nursery? - Yes, and they gave their names and the names of the children and the classes of the children to the police.

Just before we go any further, if we see the diagram -- can you point out to us where the nursery corridor is that the parents came into; if you point to it then the operator will home in on the right part (witness indicates).

So you are pointing to the area which is really adjacent to the main entrance to the school? - Yes.

And that is the corridor there, is it, and we see the word "nursery"? - Two nurseries and the corridor was there.

Where were the parents assembled? - In this area here.

That is in the corridor? - Yes.

That is the point at which you tried to unite pupils with parents? - Yes.

Could you go back to your seat, thank you. So this exercise is undertaken in relation to all the pupils who are in all the other classes unaffected? - Yes.

Can I take it that the pupils had to stay there until the parents came for them? - The pupils had to stay in their classrooms until the parents came for them.

Were you involved in that area, taking the names of the patients and arranging for the children to be collected? - Yes.

Did/

Did you collect them yourself? - Yes.

So you would go to whatever class a child was in because of your knowledge of the school and bring that child to meet the parents? - That is correct.

Now, how long did that all go on for? - I could only do it for a short time because I felt as though I was going to.....I needed to sit down so what I did was I went to some of the older classes and I asked a member of staff to assist.

So other staff became involved in the job you had been doing up until that point? - Yes.

Now, can I take it that this job took a long time? - I am not sure.

You don't know how.....? - I don't know how long it took.

Obviously it depended on word getting to the parents to get to the school? - Yes.

And we did hear something about communication difficulties, difficulty with communicating with parents? - Yes.

Now, Mrs. Awlson, just to be sure that I covered all the ground, can I ask you whether there is anything that you want to say about the security arrangements either at the time for visitors or that have now been introduced? - I feel reassured at the system that is being introduced and the way that visitors are met and have to wear badges, that helps me a great deal because in the past when I have not had a class it has been part of my job to ask if I can help anyone that I don't recognise in the school so now I know that they are recognised as visitors and have badges.

Now there is no doubt that no one should expect to be recognised unless they have a badge? - Yes.

There are obviously additional measures in force when somebody has entered and so on and that must give you a feeling of added security? - It does.

Do/

Do you think the camera system is of benefit? - Yes, it is quite clear.

CROSS-EXAMINED BY MR. GIBB: Just briefly as someone who has been involved in education for years have you formed any view as to the appropriateness or otherwise of the vetting of people involved with children outwith normal schooling activities? - Yes, I think it should be done.....I wasn't really aware it wasn't done in the past but I am aware of that now and I would expect it to be done for anyone who is working with children.

JOSEPH HOLDEN (42), Sworn:

EXAMINED BY THE LORD ADVOCATE: You are a Police Superintendent with Central Scotland Police? - Yes.

How many years police service do you have? - 23 years.

I think you are presently based at a police station in Stirling? - Yes, I am a local unit commander.

At this stage of the Inquiry I want to ask you questions about your involvement with the events of Wednesday, the 13th March? - Yes.

Am I right in understanding that that morning you were on duty within Police Headquarters in Stirling? - Yes, I was.

At what time did you become aware that there had been a shooting incident at Dunblane Primary School? - About 10 to 10.

How soon did you decide to go to Dunblane? - Within minutes of that time -- I quickly spoke to Chief Superintendent Matchett who directed me to be the senior operational representative or uniformed representative to go to the school.

Who gave you that instruction? - Chief Superintendent Matchett who is my direct superior.

And/

And apart from being directed to being the senior uniformed officer there did he give you any other instructions on what you were to do when you got there? - No, I was just to make my way there and take command of what was appropriate on my arrival there and we had very little information about how serious the incident was.

What time was it you arrived at the school? - About 10 past 10.

By that time had other police officers arrived? - Yes, I entered the gymnasium from the store room and I immediately saw Detective Chief Superintendent Ogg and Superintendent Winning within the gymnasium.

And/

12.40 p.m.

And they and other officers I think were dealing with the situation within the gymnasium? - Yes, they were.

And did you have any discussion with Mr. Ogg and his colleague as to what role you would play? - Not at that moment. I made my decision at that time that my responsibility was to secure the school and the exterior of the school.

And did this involve establishing some form of cordon?
- Yes. Very quickly we tried to establish a cordon -- certainly within the next five or 10 minutes -- a cordon around the perimeter of the school grounds, as well as an inner cordon on the four outer corners of the school building.

I wonder if you could look please at some photographs? Perhaps we could look first of all at RI, which I think is one which shows an overhead view from some distance? - Yes.

You recognise that view? - Yes I do.

Can you indicate to us where you established the outer of the two cordons you referred to -- you can go to the imager and with a pencil or pen indicate it to us? - The first cordon -- what manpower we had, we utilised, and I took the decision that we would immediately have someone on the four corners, which basically would cover the inner entries to the school. With the manpower left I was trying to establish a cordon which would take in that type of area. That wasn't clearly established for something like 10 or 15 minutes, on the arrival of more officers, because it was quite an extensive cordon, and our priority at that time was to try and have a line-of-sight cordon.....

If we could go over that step by step, I think you have told us first about the inner cordon, and that involved establishing officers at the four corners of the blocks of the school building; is that right? - Yes. It was to cover the four corners, and to also try to cover the four basic entries that I knew about at that time.

What was the purpose of that cordon? - Very/

Very quickly we had a crowd gathering here of possibly parents, possibly relatives, possibly other onlookers; and we also were having the first arrival of media as early as 10.30, 10.25.

So you are pointing at this stage to Doune Road, and the entrance into the school building from Doune Road? - Yes. That was becoming the natural collection point for people arriving at the school. Now, the inner cordon is at the four corners of the school buildings. Where did you seek to establish the outer cordon? - Having sent officers to these four corners what I intended to do was to bring the cordon out towards the outer entrances of these pathways, and then to cover that garden there -- I didn't successfully achieve that. Chief Superintendent Matchett, the officer I mentioned earlier, arrived 10 to 15 minutes later, and he took over that responsibility with the arrival of reinforcements from uniformed officers.

So when the outer cordon was eventually established, as I understand it, it was at the street entrances to the pathways leading to the school building; is that right? - Yes, but as I was aware, there was two pathways where I am pointing, and also two pathways on these corners, towards the south of the school.

But as far as Doune Road entrance or exit was concerned, then, how far up could parents and relatives, and anybody else, get before they came face-to-face with the cordon? - In the very early stages I believe my recollection is that they were actually -- persons had reached almost just short of the janitor's house; but when we quickly established the cordon, it moved back to the actual entrance from Doune Road.

Perhaps you could resume your seat. It is not an uncommon phenomenon that when a tragic incident occurs, such as a train crash, the collapse of scaffolding, an incident at a football ground, or something of that nature, people tend to congregate, for a variety of reasons, many of them perfectly bona fide -- they are concerned that some of their loved ones may be involved. Does the Central Scotland Police have any form of written instructions or protocol which officers are expected to/

to follow when coping with this aspect of the incident, namely the management of the large number of people and members of the public who tend to congregate? - There is no distinct written protocol. Each incident would be seen as different -- particularly the type of incident we were dealing with that morning. It would be the responsibility of I, as senior officer who was trying to achieve that type of control, to brief the officers involved and assure myself that they were aware of how to deal with these people. A lot of these people became very necessary to us -- not just parents or relatives, but there were a lot of people coming to help. We had midwives and nurses and people arriving from health clinics. So it was important that we were able to -- "vet" would be too strong a word -- but to be able to pick out those people who were coming forward to give assistance, who could be of assistance to us.

So as I understand it the procedure followed by your Force is that the senior officer there, based upon his general training and experience, requires to set up the procedures there and then? - Yes.

And that the officers that are present, who are either sent to assist him, or requested by him, come to assist him and set up a procedure which sets up this cordon and allows people who are to be admitted through this cordon -- whether they be medical people or whatever, but to keep out other people who have a legitimate interest to be around, but who have no requirement to go through the cordon? - Yes. It is very important.

Do we understand correctly then from what you have told us that following upon this outer cordon being set up there was a constant traffic of people coming whose identity had to be clarified and then allowed through to assist with what was going on? - Yes. In the very early stages there was traffic of people coming through because that was people who were arriving to assist, all sorts of people. There was a fairly dense crowd very quickly.

That was the next matter I was going to ask you about. I think you mentioned some time before half-past 10 not only had parents and relatives/

relatives and some of the children turned up, but there appeared to be members of the media as well? - Yes.

By 10.30, which is some 20 minutes or so after you arrived, how large a crowd do you estimate had congregated in the general location of the Doune Road entrance? - My recollection -- I would estimate somewhere between 200 and 300 people were there about 10.30.

And would it follow therefore that people such as the ambulance and the police cars and medical staff's cars who had to get in and out had to negotiate their way through this large crowd? - Yes.

People, we stress, who had every right to be there, and perfectly understandable reasons for being there? - Yes.

We will come back to the detail of this in a moment, but can you point out to us please the house which I think was used at one stage during the course of your work? - I eventually used two houses, but the first house that I used was this house here on the east side of the drive.

And the second house? - The second house was the white house immediately opposite on the west side of the drive.

And were these arrangements made by the occupiers being approached and asked if they would make their premises available? - Yes. I spoke to both occupants personally.

Well, we will come on to the detail of that in a moment. Now, can you recall when it was that you became aware of the identity of the class that was involved in this tragedy? - I am vague in my recollection whether it was before I first went down at 10.30 or just minutes later -- somewhere about 10.30 to 10.40.

And by this stage there was this large crowd congregated there? - Yes.

By this stage you would appreciate that it was your responsibility to deal with the parents of/

of the children in that class? - Yes. I was given the responsibility of that.

And also the relatives of any adults who may have been injured in any way? - Yes.

And I assume also the parents and relatives of any other children that might in some way have been injured, whether physically or otherwise, as a result of what had happened? - Yes, that is right, and also in the very initial stages I was also responsible for these other parents and relatives of pupils who were in here, and for the remainder of the school.

Yes. Well, that is another point which we could maybe just deal with now. In addition there was the problem that in this very large primary school there were a large number of other classes and a large number of children who were physically within the building, apparently physically safe, but whose parents were outside in increasing numbers, unaware precisely what had happened? - Yes, that is correct.

Now, we know as a matter of fact that the school kept record cards with certain details of individual children's or parents' contact telephone numbers. What was your understanding that morning as to whether any use was being made of such documentary material with a view to contacting the parents in Mrs. Mayer's class? - I was aware that within the temporary incident office that Detective Chief Superintendent Ogg had set up, that these were the primary sources of reference early on in the incident. I observed these types of documents within that office and in the office of Mr. Taylor, and there was conversation and reference to these documents.

So you knew that they physically existed? - Yes.

But were you aware whether any use was being made of the information within them to contact the parents by positively phoning them or sending officers round or anything of that sort? - Not at that stage. They were being used, but during my observations there was inherent difficulties with using the cards in combination with the class register/

register, which hadn't been used that morning. It seemed to me that difficulties were being experienced that the officers involved didn't know who was all within the class that morning at half-past 9.

Yes, but was the purpose of the officers using them at that time to assist in identifying those who had been killed and injured?
- Yes.

Was that the sole purpose, or were they also being used for the purpose of trying to contact the families.....? - No. The decision, as it appeared to me, was that the cards, the records, were being used to identify those deceased and injured.

Yes. So you were faced with the practical problem of this increasing number of parents and relatives, some of whom would certainly include the parents of the children in Mrs. Mayer's class, and others would include the parents of children in other classes? - Yes, that is correct.

Now, faced with that situation, what steps did you take to identify, and if appropriate -- I was going to use the word "segregate". That is possibly the wrong word to use. But what steps did you take to take to one side those who were the parents of children in Mrs. Mayer's class? - I saw that as my first task, and I confirmed personally with Detective Chief Superintendent Ogg that it was Class I/13, and that it was Mrs. Mayer's class. And these were the pieces of information that I would use to first of all try to separate those parents from the mass of parents. I then arranged for the first house that I indicated to be used to put the mass of parents and relatives, parents or guardians of children who were at the school, to be placed within the grounds of the house, and within the house itself, because there was ever-increasing states of distress ongoing at that point, and some of the people within the crowd required water, they required to be in a place indoors. So I secured that house and I asked the police cordon to envelop that house within the perimeter cordon, so in effect we pushed the cordon out to get those people within the cordon, and secure within the cordon from people outside.

So/

So if we can just try and be quite clear about this, the first house you used was the one to the left of the driveway as we look down the photograph? - Yes.

And as I understand it you used the grounds of the house and the house itself? - Yes.

And parents and relatives -- anyone who had a legitimate interest in caring for and being responsible for children were invited into these grounds and into the house; is that right? - Yes, that is correct.

Can you tell us at what time approximately that was done? - It would be shortly after 10.30 that we first used that house.

And this invitation I understand was extended without any distinction between the parents of Mrs. Mayer's class and the rest of the parents? - That is correct.

And I think you also said that you simultaneously made arrangements for the police cordon to include the grounds of that house? - Yes.

That would mean, though, that those who did not fall to be invited into the grounds, the normal onlookers or members of the media, were not far away -- just over the wall? - Yes, some 20 yards away.

And all of this must have been an extremely distressful business for all the parents involved at this stage? - Yes, it was very intense.

Because not only were they aware that some sort of incident had occurred, they were extremely uncertain as to whether their particular child or children were involved? - Yes.

And this was all taking place in the public gaze, with members of the public and the media, perfectly understandably, taking a very close interest in what was going on? - Yes.

THE LORD ADVOCATE: Sir, this might be a/

a convenient time.

LORD CULLEN: Yes. We will adjourn now till 10 to
2.

THE LORD ADVOCATE: Before we break off, could I raise one matter? I have discussed this informally with my learned friends -- but subject to your permission, Sir. I would wish to deal immediately after lunch with the evidence of Agnes Watt, who will be in attendance then. It would involve interrupting the Superintendent's evidence, but I understand there to be no objection to that.

LORD CULLEN: I am quite content that should
happen.

1.55 p.m. After an adjournment for
lunch.

AGNES WATT, (64), Sworn,

EXAMINED BY THE LORD ADVOCATE: Do you stay
at an address in Raploch in Stirling? - Yes.

I think you live alone at that address? - What? No.

Do you live there with someone? - No, I live on my
own.

Have you stayed in your present house for a number
of years? - Yes.

Am I correct in understanding you were born in
Glasgow? - That is right.

And following upon your birth you were adopted by
James Hamilton and Mrs. Kathleen Hamilton? - That is right.

Your mother, Mrs. Kathleen Hamilton, died some ten
years ago, but I think your father, James Hamilton, is still alive; is
that correct? - Yes.

And does he live locally to you? - Yes.

In 1950 did you marry a man by the name of Thomas
Watt? - Yes.

Shortly after your son's birth I think you and your
husband separated; is that correct? - Yes, that is right.

And you never lived with him again? - No.

Upon you and your husband separating did you go
back to stay with your parents at their then address? - Yes.

I think you decided to support yourself and your son,
and did this involve your going out to work whilst your own mother
looked after your son?
- Yes.

After a period of time, a year or so, I think/

think a family decision was reached that your own parents would adopt your son and effectively take over the care of him? - Yes, that is right.

And was it at that time that he took on the surname of Hamilton? - Yes.

A few years later, by which time your son was around eight or nine years of age, did the whole family move to the Stirling area? - Yes.

I think whilst your own parents remained there permanently, occasionally you worked away from Stirling, in local hotels in the Region? - Yes.

In the fullness of time did your son find out that you in fact were his natural mother? - Yes.

And that his grandparents had in fact adopted him? - Yes.

When your son left school what did he do? - He worked in the Council.

In what sort of job? - What do you call it? Architect.

In the Architects' Department? - Yes.

Was there also a time when he was involved in running a woodcraft shop in Stirling? - Yes.

Am I correct in understanding that you remained in fairly regular contact with your son right up until the date of his death? - Yes.

And over the years, even when you were working away from Stirling you and he still remained in touch with each other? - Yes.

Do you recall how long ago it was when your son found his own accommodation in which to stay? - He stayed with my father and my father left and went somewhere else to stay. He was staying there himself at 7 Kent Road.

So for a while he stayed with your father, James Hamilton? - Yes.

But/

But then your father went off to other accommodation, leaving your son in the address in Kent Road? - Yes.

In the last few years of his life how regularly would it have been that you saw your son? - Oh, quite often.

As often as once a week or more often than that? - Maybe twice a week: and then he always phoned me at night to see I was all right or was at home.

Did he phone you each night? - Every night.

Every night you spoke on the phone? - Yes.

Did he come and visit you from time to time? - Yes.

Did you visit his house? - At first, but not.....

Not latterly? - No.

I take it you met him by chance in the street from time to time? - No, he would phone me to meet him, and we used to go for a meal.

Now, can I ask you a few questions about things over the last year or two? What did you understand to be your son's source of income over the last two years; was he working, as far as you were aware? - No, when he gave up the shop he was buying and selling cameras.

After he gave up the shop he was involved in buying and selling cameras? - Yes.

Did he make any money out of that, as far as you were concerned? - Yes.

That gave him some income? - Yes.

Did he have any other sources of income, as far as you understood? - No.

Do you know whether he was in receipt of Social/

Social Security Benefit of any sort? - I don't know.

Was he ever in a position to give you money from time to time? - Yes.

How often did that occur? - Every time he had a wee sale of cameras he used to come and give me something.

What sort of sums are we talking about?
- £50.

If he sold some cameras and made a bit of a profit he might on occasions give you up to £50? - Yes.

How did he go about buying and selling cameras? Did he operate a shop, did he do it by advertising or mail order? - I couldn't tell you.

In the years up until the time of his death what impression did you form as to whether he was able to make ends meet or whether he was short of money? - I used to give him money if he was short.

What sort of amounts of money would you give him? - About £30 or something.

How often would that be? - Not very often; about twice.

So there were a very few occasions when you were able to give him something? - Yes.

Was this after he complained about being short of money? - Yes.

Were you aware whether or not he had any debt due to anybody? - No.

What about friends that he had? In recent years did he ever appear to have girlfriends or lady friends? - He had a girlfriend, but she got too serious, and he didn't want to know.

How long ago was that? - Oh, that was a long time ago.

In/

In recent years was there any friendship with members of the opposite sex? - I couldn't tell you.

You were unaware of any? - Yes.

I think we understand he had some involvement with boys' clubs? - Yes.

What did you understand that to involve?
- He just said he was going to a club. I didn't know anything about clubs.

Do you know how often he went there? - No.
Or where the clubs were? - No.

We know as a matter of fact that he owned a number of guns and ammunition. Were you aware he had an interest in guns? - Yes.

Over how many years was that? - Oh, it was a long time. I didn't know he still had them.

Had you ever seen these weapons? - Once.

Where was that? - In his house.

In recent years do you know whether he went to gun clubs or shooting ranges to shoot? - Yes, he said -- he usually said he was going to a rifle club.

So he talked about going to rifle clubs on occasions?
- Just once. I didn't know if he was still going or not.

Over the years up until the time of his death did you and he have any serious arguments or disagreements about anything? - No.

A number of years ago was there some problem involving telephone calls which you had received from your son? - Yes.

How many years ago was that? - That was a good few years ago. You see, I am a diabetic, and he said there was an ambulance coming for me to take me to -- oh, where is that place again?

A/

A hospital of some sort? - Yes.

Whereabouts is the hospital? - Inverness.

How many years ago are we talking about? Two or three years ago, or more than that? - About four years ago.

How many of these phone calls were there?
- I think there were just two.

Were you upset about the phone calls at that time? -
Yes.

But I think any problems associated with them blew over; is that right? - Yes.

I have asked you about whether he had any lady friends. What about male friends? Did you ever see him in the company of other men? - There was one used to come to his house, James Gillespie.

Was he the only one you were aware of, or were there others? - I don't know of any.

In the last few weeks of his life did you notice anything unusual about your son? - No.

Was he talking about anything different from what he normally talked about? - No.

Did he come and visit you any less frequently than he used to do? - He always came.

So he kept coming as normal? - Yes.

Did he telephone you as normal too? - Yes.

During these last few weeks did he make any mention of any debts that were due by him? - No.

We know he sent a number of letters to people over the years. Were you aware of that at that time? - No.

In the last few weeks of his life did he mention anything about letters to the Queen, to the Secretary/

Secretary of State or anything in that connection? - No.

Did he make any complaint about the Local Authority or headmasters or the Scouts or anything of that nature? - No, he never mentioned anything.

Now, I want to ask you a few questions about the few days leading up to the date of his death. We know he killed himself on Wednesday, 13th March. Do you recall him coming to see you on the previous Sunday? - No, he came on the Tuesday.

Had you seen him on the Monday? - Aye, down the town.

You had met him in the town? - Yes.

Was this by arrangement or by chance? - By chance that time.

What did he tell you about what he was doing that day? - He never said. Oh, on the Monday he said he was going to the University.

Did you know why he was going to the University? - No.

And then you said on the Tuesday he came to see you; isn't that right? - Yes.

What time of day was that at? - 6 o'clock. No, about 2, because he went away at 6.

During the course of the afternoon? - Yes.

Was he at your house for a number of hours? - Yes.

What did he do when he was there? - He had a bath and something to eat, then he sat and blethered, then went away.

Was it his practice sometimes to have a bath at your house? - Yes, because he didn't like a shower.

It/

It would not be uncommon for him to have something to eat either at your house? - No.

During this "blether" as you have described it, what do you remember you talked about? - My father.

Was your son upset or annoyed in any way at talking about your father? - No.

After he left that night did you talk to him again on the telephone? - No. It was me that phoned him.

So you talked when you phoned him? - No. I couldn't get anybody. The police were there at the time. He usually phones me when he goes away. I was wondering why I didn't get a phone call. I waited till the Wednesday, and when I phoned the police were there.

Your phone call was not till the next day? - Yes.

And by the time you phoned his house the police were involved in the situation? - Yes.

2.15 p.m.

I asked you about what he had been saying about his grandfather on the Tuesday afternoon and as I understand it it was a perfectly normal conversation at that time? - Yes.

In the past had there been any difficulty between your son and your own father? - Yes, they didn't get on.

In general terms what was the cause of the disagreement? - I can't tell you, I don't know, they just kept arguing; you see, my Daddy drinks and he used to come in and Tommy would be in his bed and he used to wake him up and start arguing with him.

Were the arguments between your son and your own father the reason why your father moved out to his own house? - I couldn't tell you whether that was it.

BY LORD CULLEN: Can you tell me how many years ago it was when your father moved out, very roughly? - I can't remember, sorry.

SHEILA SUTHERLAND, Sworn:

EXAMINED BY THE LORD ADVOCATE: I think you reside at an address in Stirling, is that right? - Yes.

And are you a friend of Mrs. Agnes Watt? - That is correct.

Have you been a friend of hers for a number of years? - Yes, I have, for 10 years.

During that time did you meet her own son, Thomas Hamilton? - Yes.

How frequently would you see him? - About once a week, something like that, not very often.

What did you understand Mr. Hamilton to do for a living over the last few years? - I thought he was just unemployed but apparently he was selling/

selling cameras and buying them and things like that, running boys clubs -- that is all I knew of him.

We will come to the boys clubs in a minute; as far as his income was concerned do I understand correctly that he was basically unemployed but he had some income from buying and selling cameras? - Yes.

During your conversation with him what impression did you get as to whether he had enough money to live on or whether he was short of money or what? - No, he sometimes borrowed money from his mother but not very often.

Did he ever complain to you about being hard up? - No, sometimes he would say "I am a bit short this week but I will manage".

Did he ever complain to you about having debts which he couldn't pay? - No.

Did you get any impression as to how much money he made from buying and selling cameras? - No.

Now, you mentioned about boys clubs? - Yes.

What did you understand about Mr. Hamilton, as far as running boys clubs was concerned? - He said it was more or less to keep boys off the streets and for something to do.

Was this something he did every week? - Yes.

Whereabouts were these clubs? - I thought they were just in Stirling but apparently he was all over.

Did he ever make any complaints to you about how people in authority such as the police or local authorities reacted to his involvement in boys clubs? - No, never.

We have learned already in this Inquiry that he wrote a number of letters about boys clubs and his involvement with them? - Yes.

Were/

Were you aware of that? - No, neither Mrs. Watt or I knew anything about that.

Did you ever see him in the company of other friends that he had? - Just that James Gillespie, that was the only one.

How often was he in Mr. Gillespie's company? - I only saw him about two or three times.

Did he ever talk about anyone other than Mr. Gillespie as being a friend of his? - No.

In recent years did he run a motorcar? - No, he used to hire a van when he needed one.

He was able to drive? - Yes.

And occasionally he hired a motor van? - Yes.

But otherwise he just used public transport? - That is correct.

A number of years ago do you remember some problem involving Mrs. Watt and her son about telephone calls? - Yes.

What do you recall about that? - Well, to me it seemed as though it was more or less schoolboy humour.

What did you understand had been going on? - I thought it was rather silly.

What had the son been doing? - Well, he had discovered she was diabetic and he phoned her.....he called a friend to phone her and tell her that she was going up to a clinic in Inverness but I just told her that couldn't happen because the clinic is here.

Was this something that had upset Mrs. Watt? - Yes, it is, very much so.

Was it at that time that there was a disagreement between the mother and the son? - Yes.

Did/

Did that blow over? - Yes, it did.

In the last two or three years of his life how would you describe the relationship between Mr. Hamilton and Mrs. Watt? - Very good.

From what you could see was there any difficulty between them? - No.

Did you know Mrs. Watt's own father, James Hamilton? - Yes, I knew him.

Did you ever see him in recent years in the company with Thomas Hamilton? - No, never.

What sort of relationship did you understand they enjoyed? - Very bad.

What was the cause of the problem? - The father's drinking.

Now, a further matter I want to ask you about is the question of Thomas Hamilton's ownership of guns? - Yes.

Were you aware that he owned a number of guns? - I knew he had four rifles, I have seen them in his house but I didn't know about any other guns; he had licences for these.

For how long had you know he had a number of rifles? - Two or three years anyway.

How many times had you seen them? - Only the once.

In his house? - In his house, yes.

And where in his house were they? - They were kept in a sort of locker like an Army foot locker and chained up and padlocked and kept in a cupboard.

How did you come to see them on that occasion, did you ask to see them? - No, we were talking about one of my neighbour's having an air-rifle to shoot pigeons and he said "I have got a rifle" and he took us into show us it.

And apart from that occasion were you ever/

ever with him when he talked about guns and ammunition? - No, we didn't even know he belonged to a gun club.

In the last few months of his life you continued to see him approximately once a week? - Yes, just every now and again; sometimes we used to meet him up the town.

Did you notice any change in him over this period of time? - No.

Did he appear to be angry about anything? - No.

Or upset about anything? - No, a complete mystery.

Did he complain about local authorities or members of Parliament or anything of that nature? - No, never at any time.

Mr. Lake, Advocate, for the
Crown read Mr. James
Hamilton's statement to the
Inquiry.

"I am 87 years of age, widowed and reside alone at the above address. I am a retired Heating/Ventilation Engineer. Thomas Hamilton is my grandson, although my late wife Katherine and I adopted him in 1952 as our son. My wife Katherine and I were married in Glasgow in 1927 and at that time we stayed in various digs in the East End. In 1928 my wife and I legally adopted a baby girl, Agnes, and we moved to a house in London Road, Parkhead. During the War I rented a house at Mordant Street, Bridgeton. When the War ended I rented a house at 37 Bellrock Street, Cranhill, Glasgow. My daughter Agnes married Thomas Watt on 8th December 1950 and they moved into a house in Lily Street, around the corner from Bellrock Street. Thomas Watt was employed as a corporation bus driver at the time. Thomas Hamilton was born on 4th October 1952 and shortly after this Agnes and Thomas Watt were divorced. As a condition of the divorce my wife Katherine and I adopted Thomas and he and Agnes moved in with us at 37 Bellrock Street, Cranhill./

Cranhill. Thomas first attended primary school in Glasgow. On 10th May 1963 my family, that is my wife Katherine, Agnes and Thomas Hamilton moved into a house at 11 Upper Bridge Street, Stirling which I had purchased. When we moved to Stirling Thomas initially attended the Territorial School in Cowane Street then moved to Riverside Secondary School. There was never any problems with him at school either from a truancy or behavioural position. Thomas left school when he was 15 years old in 1967. He began working in the draughtsman/architects office of Stirling County Council where he remained for about three years. On 29th January 1968 we moved to a house at 24 Queen Street, Stirling which I had bought. I subsequently sold 11 Upper Bridge Street, Stirling on 14th March, 1968. Again it was myself, my wife Katherine, Agnes and Thomas. In 1970 Thomas, then 18 years old, purchased premises in Cowane Street, Stirling and opened a do-it-yourself shop. The shop was known as "Wood Craft". I cannot remember Thomas having any major medical problems, he was never in hospital, he only had the usual children's illnesses. He was a member of the Boys Brigade, I think he was in the company which met at the Old Baptist Church at the top of Station Road. This was when he was at school, but I do not think he was a member long. I did not know that he was a member of the Scouts. I do remember that he was a member of the Rifle Club which met in a hut in Irvine Place, Stirling, when he was 16 years old, again he was not a member long, the hall was pulled down shortly after he joined. I never bought him any firearms, air pistols, rifles or the like. I never saw any firearms in the house. On 1st May 1974 we moved into a house at 39 Forth Crescent, Riverside which I had bought, I sold the house at 24 Queen Street, Stirling on 24th June, 1974. It was whilst we were staying in Forth Crescent that my wife Katherine told Thomas that Agnes was his natural mother and that we had adopted him, until then Thomas had thought of Agnes as his sister. In fact after he had been told he still treated Agnes as his sister. Agnes moved out of Forth Crescent, Riverside, having got a house of her own, she moved in there on the 11th March 1985. This left myself, my wife Katherine and Thomas staying in the house. The reason I had bought this house was because my wife Katherine had developed angina and the house was on the flat and was easier for her to get about. She was in a wheelchair by that time. In 1987 I think/

think it was about 16th February, I sold the house at 39 Forth

Crescent, Stirling and was allocated a house at 7 Kent Road, Stirling. The reason I sold the house was that my wife's condition had deteriorated and she was confined to a wheelchair and 7 Kent Road, Stirling, was on the ground floor and had a wheelchair access ramp. We moved into 7 Kent Road on 15th February, 1987. The tenancy of 7 Kent Road Stirling was in my name. My wife Katherine died on the 24th August 1987 at Stirling Royal Infirmary. On 6th June 1988 I signed a joint tenancy of 7 Kent Road, Stirling with Thomas. I was never aware of Thomas being a Scout Leader, I never saw him with a uniform and he never mentioned it in the house. In all the time that I lived with Thomas I never once saw him with any guns in the house, I never knew that he had any. Thomas always had his own bedroom. I was aware that Thomas was involved in running boys clubs and he spent all his time with the Clubs, he started running the Clubs shortly after he sold his shop in Cowane Street. I think that was the reason he sold the shop, it was too much like work and interfered with his other commitments. I had no involvement with his shop at all. Thomas was always a very calm person, certainly in the house, there were never any moods, tempers. He never showed any violence at home, he never raised his hands to me at any time. I never knew Thomas to ever have a girlfriend, he never went out socialising, never went dancing or out drinking. I do not think he ever drank and he never smoked. He had his own friends to visit at Kent Road, but I never took any interest, I do not know who they were. When they came they would either go into Thomas' bedroom or into the living room and I would go to my bedroom. On 24th August 1992 I moved out of Kent Road and into sheltered housing accommodation. The reason I moved out was that Thomas began to take over the whole house, he moved all my personal possessions and items of furniture into my bedroom, some pictures I had on the wall and my telephone and other personal items. I just could not be bothered with it all and went to Stirling District Council and they arranged for me to move. I did occasionally see Thomas in the street in Stirling or in the Thistle Centre, but we just ignored each other and walked on, I never stopped to speak with him. In all the time Thomas stayed with me I never once had anyone, either from groups or organisations, nor individuals come to the door/

door with any complaints about Thomas' behaviour or concerns about

the Clubs. About 1.30 p.m. on Wednesday, 13th March 1996 I heard about the shooting incident at Dunblane Primary School. I was sitting the Thistle Centre, Stirling, just amongst a group of other elderly men when one of them mentioned it. It was only when I went home about 3.00 p.m. that day and two reporters were at the door and began asking questions about Thomas and looking for photographs, that it dawned on me that Thomas was the person responsible".

JOSEPH/

2.35 p.m.

JOSEPH HOLDEN,

EXAMINATION CONTINUED BY THE LORD

ADVOCATE: I wonder if we could please have back on the imager the photograph we were looking at this morning. I think it was RI? Mr. Holden, when we broke off before lunch we were discussing the situation whereby at your request the parents and the relatives and carers for the schoolchildren, in a large group, had been invited to go into the grounds of the house to the left of the entrance? - Yes.

And by so doing detach themselves from the other members of the public and the members of the media who were out in Doune Road? - Yes, that is correct.

Can you just remind us of approximately when this took place? - That was occurring approximately about 10.30, 10.35.

Can you just remind us whether by that stage you were aware that it was Mrs. Mayer's class that was involved? - Yes, I was aware.

When you invited the parents to move into the grounds did you give them any indication as to which class was involved? - No, I did not, not at that time.

Was that a deliberate decision on your part? - Yes.

And could you explain to us why, at that stage, you treated them as an omnibus group? - Yes. There was two main reasons for my judgment at that time. One was that I would confirm, first of all, that information that I had received, that it was Mrs. Mayer's class and (2) that I had nowhere that I could secure or put the parents of Mrs. Mayer's class having made that announcement; because it was such an obviously emotional, plus disturbing news, that I was going to give them, that I had foreseen that I would have to have some place to put them and to cater for their distress, even more so than what was occurring in that first house.

Tell/

Tell me this, how many officers did you have physically available to you in that house at that time? - There was quite a number. There was at least two of Inspector rank and certainly several uniform constables available at that point.

At this stage members of the media would perfectly understandably be pressing for information to be given to them? - Yes, I believe so.

Who was responsible for dealing with these requests? - Certainly at 10.30 or 10.35 I was not aware of any designated officer at that point, but to be fair I was immersed in the problem I had at that time.

Do you, however, have some recollection of members of the media clamouring for information in this general area? - Yes. I was aware of photographers taking photographs from Doune Road towards the crowd that were within the house and without the house, and I was aware of other journalists there.

In the fullness of time was a particular officer or officers delegated responsibility for dealing with the Press? - Yes, quite quickly after that.

And when they were carrying out this job where did they do it? - I think eventually as the morning went on, perhaps towards lunchtime, Victoria Halls in Dunblane was used. Precisely when that development took place I do not know. I was also aware prior to that the gathering in Doune Road had been briefed by Detective Inspector Mather, and quite soon thereafter Chief Inspector Munn from Strathclyde.

I may be wrong here. I am relying on my own recollection, but I have some memory of senior officers and possibly also the Chief Constable being interviewed by members of the media at this junction around lunch time that day? - I know he was interviewed quite early on in the day. I was not aware of where that had occurred.

Now, when you invited the large group to go into the garden grounds of this first house, at that stage did you give any indication as to whether or/

or not there had been fatalities? - No, I did not.

Were you aware at that stage there had been fatalities? - I had been within the gym and I had been informed that there were fatalities within Class I/13. I was not sure of my information -- that had been the first burst of the information I had got within quite a frenzied incident room some 20 minutes before.

So was it a conscious decision on your part not to mention fatalities at that stage? - Yes it was.

And can you explain why you took that decision? - Principally because I didn't want to mention Class I/13, and I didn't want to give out information that I wasn't sure about. And I took the decision to tell those persons that a serious incident had taken place and that I would leave the house, confirm what information I could, and return as soon as possible.

After you had got them all into the grounds -- I take it they all wouldn't get into the house? - No.

So you had to speak to some of them outside; is that right? - Yes.

With members of the public and the Press over the garden wall? - Yes.

Did you explain to them who you were? - Yes, identified myself, because I was in plainclothes at the time.

As a superintendent? - A superintendent, yes.

And did you indicate to them you would go up to the school for further information? - yes, and I would be their contact.

You made mention of some police inspectors, two police inspectors? - Yes.

Were they in uniform or in civilian clothing? - Yes. Everyone else was in uniform that/

that had a specific function that day. I wasn't. I was in normal dress.

What about the Inspectors? Did they remain down in this garden ground till you returned? - Yes, they did.

At this stage was any consideration given to moving the outer cordon further out, so to speak -- by moving it further along Doune Road in both directions? - I am not sure about that, because I had moved from being responsible for the cordon, having handed that function to Chief Superintendent Matchett, to becoming responsible for the parents. But I am aware that the cordon -- rather than the cordon, traffic control, was becoming necessary in Doune Road from what I observed from the house.

So that part of your responsibility is passed to another officer? - Yes.

Now, having returned to the school did you see Mr. Ogg again? - Yes. I went to the room in the foyer.

And when you spoke with him again was there any further discussion about the identification of Mrs. Mayer's class as being the class involved? - Yes. I asked the specific question could I have it confirmed that it was Mrs. Mayer's class, and it was Class I of I3.

Was there then some discussion as to whether the parents of these children should be informed of that fact? - Yes.

And what was the upshot of that discussion? - It was agreed that I should go back and separate Class I/I3 parents or relatives, and to move them to a house, or some other premises that they could be cared for whilst we catalogued who was there, and whilst identification processes were ongoing -- which had just about commenced when I entered the incident room, which would be just before I think about quarter to 11 or 10 to 11.

So by the time you were effectively authorised by Mr. Ogg to separate out the parents of Mrs. Mayer's class from the other parents? - Yes.

You/

You were aware that the process of identifying the victims was under way? - Yes.

But was clearly not completed? - Not at all. It had only just started, was my impression when I entered the room.

You talk about having another house or a building. Was that then identified by you? - Yes. I left the school and made my way to what I saw as an appropriate building on the opposite side of the track.

And you got permission from the occupiers of that, to use that? - Yes.

Who was responsible for inviting or arranging for the parents of Mrs. Mayer's class to move from one set of grounds to the other? - I took that responsibility, and went back into the first premises, and I addressed those gathered outside from the steps of the house, and I also repeated the same address within the lounge of the house -- quite a large room within the house -- in which I informed those present that the children affected by the incident were those in Class I/13, Mrs. Mayer's class.

This was obviously another extremely stressful moment for the parents concerned? - Yes, very much so.

And without in any sense wanting to identify any criticisms or anything at this stage, the fact of the matter was that this was having to take place partly in the open air, with a large number of people in the garden, strangers out in the street and members of the media looking on? - Yes.

At this stage did you make any mention of fatalities? - No. I made a judgment that I wouldn't do that until I had the parents of the children in Class I/13 within the confines of the second house.

So that was another conscious decision by you? - Yes.

And then was it necessary for the relatives concerned to move across the entrance road into/

into the grounds of the other house? - Yes, with the assistance of the officers that were there.

And all of this having to take place under the eye of the media, which was increasing in number by the moment; is that right? - Yes, it did.

With the benefit of hindsight, clearly there might have been some scope for moving the Press back a bit? - Yes. I couldn't say "No" to that, but I think that the cordon did the best possible, and that the Press were only partially on the road at the time. My announcement, for what it was worth, wasn't a shouted announcement. We were very much aware of that problem at that point.

Yes. I am just trying -- I am not seeking to point out criticisms or argue them, or defend them? - No.

I am just trying to examine possibilities. Clearly one thing that might be worth looking at in the future is that in a situation where the relatives of some form of incident or tragedy have to have distressing information conveyed to them, one matter the police might bear in mind is the need to keep onlookers, whether they be members of the public or the media, sufficiently far away as not to impinge on those who are directly affected? - Yes, absolutely.

Now, can you assist us please as to approximately what time it was that you managed to move the parents and relatives of Mrs. Mayer's class into the second of the two houses? - Yes. I think that was about 11 a.m. or thereabouts, approximately -- perhaps just after 11.

Were you yourself physically present when this transfer was taking place? - Yes. I accompanied the parents because I wanted to give them further information once inside the house.

It would be practicable to get them all inside the house? - Yes. It was a large house.

And that would get them out of the immediate vision of those who were out in the street? - Yes it did.

Before/

Before we come to deal with that aspect of the matter, can we just deal briefly with those parents who remained in the first house and in the first grounds. Did you yourself have any continuing involvement with them? - Within my address, when I had announced the Class I/13 information, I addressed the rest of the parents but I think to be frank -- I think it was lost in all the confusion after my announcement of Class I/13 -- was that we would come back and inform those parents of when their children would be available to them and where their children were within the school.

And when you say it was lost -- the understandable anguish that occurred when you dealt with Mrs. Mayer's class? - Yes.

Had the effect of making it less easy for others to take in what was being said? - Yes, and also there was quite a noise as well.

And thereafter, dealing with this larger group, if we could, was a procedure set up whereby individual children within the school would be re-united with their parents and carers who were in the first house? - Yes. That process was started later on that morning, and came under the command of Chief Superintendent Matchett.

Do you, from your own knowledge, know how long it took to complete? - It was quite a lengthy exercise. I observed the process that was ongoing while I was doing my other duties, and it would be a very rough estimation, but I am of the mind that it took some two or three hours.

But you yourself had no direct involvement? - No.

Well, if we could return to the much more important group, namely the parents of Mrs. Mayer's class, and for the purpose of taking in more detail the evidence that I would like to take? We are now inside the second house. You are there with other police officers? - Yes.

And all of the parents of Mrs. Mayer's class that you had spoken to had come with you? - Yes.

Did/

Did you by that stage know whether you had the parents of all the children who had been in the class that day? - No, I did not.

You didn't know one way or another? - No.

What did you feel it appropriate to tell them at that stage? - I felt it appropriate that I tell them what I knew at that point, and what that was was that a shooting incident -- a man had entered -- sorry, I think I said a person -- I am not sure -- a man or a person had entered the gymnasium and had discharged a firearm and that there had been fatalities and injured -- seriously injured.

Did you at that stage know how many children had been murdered? - No.

You knew that some children were dead? - Yes.

And that at least some of the other children were injured, some of them very seriously injured? - Yes.

Were you aware whether any of the children were uninjured at all? - No.

So your state of knowledge was that some were killed and some were injured, in certain instances very seriously? - Yes.

On that being said to the parents, did any of them appear to have any information as to the number of children who might be dead? - Yes. A man, or a male person, which I assume was a father, immediately said that he questioned -- or he asked me to say that there was 12 dead, 12 deceased. And I asked him "How do you know that?" and he told me that a radio broadcast -- either he had heard or he had been told that a radio broadcast had numbered the dead as being 12.

Now, what sort of time are we talking about for this? - I think we are talking about 11.15 a.m., or 11.10 a.m.

Do you yourself know as a matter of fact when/

when information was given to the media about the number of fatalities? - I don't.

Do you have any knowledge as to whether as a matter of fact the radio and television were by 11.15 or 11.30 broadcasting numbers as to who might have been killed? - No, I couldn't say that.

Looking back on the situation with which everyone had to cope that morning -- the parents, the police officers and those who were asked to assist -- did it make matters any more difficult for all those involved that the members of the media may have been in the position to broadcast details of numbers killed and injured before the relatives of those who had been killed and injured were being informed of what had happened? - Yes. I mean, I was quite shocked at the statement made by what I assume was a father; and it certainly didn't make my job -- I didn't know that information. That information could have been correct, and I didn't want to deny it. I just didn't know that information, so it did make my job much more difficult at that point.

We may touch on this later -- in fact, we will touch on this later on as we go through the events of the next few hours -- but certainly from my understanding of the situation there is no doubt that statements were being given to the media about fatalities before individual families were finally informed. Does that accord with your understanding? -

It/

2.55 p.m.

It seemed to be, that morning -- that was the first instance that I experienced.

I want to be quite clear of this, out of fairness to all concerned. There must be an issue which requires to be addressed as to whether it assists those responsible for bringing news to the individually affected families whether they do that before any formal statements are given to the media? - Yes. I felt quite heavy that I was the person responsible for giving the information to these parents, and very early on that morning an announcement like that affected my credibility with the parents about whether I was giving them the information I knew at that point.

Now, having told the parents what you have described did you then inform them that you intended to go back up to the school to endeavour to obtain more information? - Yes, I did.

Clearly if there was to be a senior officer responsible for giving information to the parents that day you were that individual? - Yes.

You had been instructed to assume that responsibility, you had done so, and you had made clear to the parents that you were the senior officer who would be dealing with them? - Yes.

There were however other officers on the premises with you? - Yes.

Do you remember who they were? - At the point of address I think Detective Sergeant Allan Moffat was within the hallway, and I think Inspector Ross was outside the house.

Still dealing with the time you were at the house, were any other people allowed admittance to that house, by which I mean Ministers, doctors, nurses, or whatever? - Personally I was aware of two other midwives or nurses in uniform who were inside the house. I was very soon thereafter aware of Clergy having arrived, and I think one doctor had arrived.

This is in the house itself? - In the second/

second house, yes.

You told me a short while ago that when you first got to the second house you were unaware whether you had all the parents concerned or at least a representative of each family unit with you? - Yes.

Were any steps taken by you to try and clarify that matter? - Yes.

What did you do? - I asked Detective Sergeant Allan Moffat to note who was within the house, which was a difficult task, from the information I had just given them. This took some time, but he later reported to me that all of the parents pertaining to Class 1 -- we couldn't say all the parents were there, because we still had a problem with identification, as the morning went on, of the deceased.

What are Sergeant Moffat's normal duties? - He's in charge of what we term the Family Unit, which is child protection investigations, sexual offence investigations. This is very much a unit of seven people who work in conjunction with the Social Work Department and have special training for sensitive type operations and investigations.

So Sergeant Moffat at least has particular experience in dealing with families and children in difficult situations? - Yes.

Immediately under you who would be the next senior officer? - Inspector Ross, who was the man detailed as I left the house to go to the school to keep the house secure and keep intruders out.

And all the time outside, apart from the ever-increasing group of people who were gathering there would be ambulances going back and forth, police cars and various other vehicles? - Very much so.

Now, having left this second house did you go back up to the school again? - Yes.

Are you able to assist us as to approximately what time you had reached by then? - I think we were just short of half past 11, approximately.

Did/

Did you meet up there again with Mr. Ogg and with the headmaster and others? - It probably is not as simple as that. When I entered the school I became involved with at least two distressed people within the doors of the main school, who stopped me in my tracks for a few minutes, then I entered the incident command in pursuit of the information.

When you say two other distressed persons, do you mean adults? - Yes.

By that time had the process of trying to identify those killed been going on for some time? - Yes.

And we have heard certain difficulties about that, which I don't think we need to dwell on with you. Am I right in thinking you yourself played no physical part in the identification process? - No.

Now, I may be wrong, but I think we have already heard evidence that by 11.30 all the surviving victims had left by ambulance for the Stirling Royal Infirmary? - Yes. From my knowledge of the enquiries and from being involved since then, the evacuation had finished by 11.

Now, would it be fair to say that by this stage because of the practical problems which were being experienced in identifying those who had been murdered the factual situation was that some of the victims were identified, but others were not? - Yes.

This is the position as at approximately 11.30? - Yes.

Now, as a matter of fact it was some time later before any of the parents of Mrs. Mayor's class were informed that their individual child had been murdered? - Yes.

Was any consideration given by you and others at that time as to whether to inform parents individually, as and when you could, or alternatively wait until all the identifications were certain and then begin the process of informing? - I had two concerns at that point, both/

both of which I put to Detective Chief Superintendent Ogg. One was that if we were having problems in identification how were we getting on from the casualty viewpoint with regard to the injured. We discussed that at that point. Both were very problematic at that time, because we were not getting anything back from the Casualty Bureau, and identification of the deceased was so shaky that it was not of the standard that I would have gone back to the parents at that point with.

Yes? - So there were two concerns I was looking at and that he was looking at as well.

Perhaps we could recap on a point we discussed earlier today with Mr. Ogg. As a matter of fact, no details were taken of the identity of the surviving victims as they left in an ambulance? - I am not aware of that having happened.

Clearly if that had been done that would have assisted? - Yes, if we had been definite about any of these persons leaving we could have gone back to the house and got the.....

I am not for a moment suggesting that would have been a complete solution, but if as each ambulance left a record had been kept of who the victim was understood to be, and the factual basis of that understanding -- namely whether the child himself had said "I am Donald McKay" or whatever name, or whether it was "This is believed to be Donald McKay" -- that would have assisted in solving the problem you faced? - It would have.

So the practical problem you had is that as I understand it there were a number of deceased victims at the school, some of whose identities were uncertain; is that right? - Yes.

There were a number of surviving victims at the hospital; is that right? - Yes.

And one deceased victim at the hospital?
- Not until about midday were we informed about the deceased victim at the hospital.

But there was some uncertainty about the identities of some of the surviving victims? - There were two problems: (1) we were not getting any/

any information back from the hospital; and (2) was the uncertainty of the identification of bodies within the gym, which was throwing doubt on the total identification.

And the problem was being aggravated by the communications problem we have had explained to us? - Yes.

I just want to be clear about this so that all those who have an interest can understand the position. Am I correct in believing that even in a situation where you were quite satisfied that a particular victim who had died was correctly identified, there was a conscious decision not to inform the parents of that child until the whole identification process was complete? - To the extent that the seemingly positive identification -- doubt was being thrown on that because of the problems that were being experienced by the attempts to identify the remaining victims.

I will see if I can understand that. Because there was doubt about some identifications you were treating that as casting a doubt, a measure of doubt, on all of them? - Yes. From my observation, that was quite right.

Now, leaving aside the problems you faced in identifying the victims, you then had to evolve a procedure for actually informing individual family units of the particular tragedy that had befallen them? - That was probably my next problem. My first problem that was facing me at that time, just about half past 11, towards 12 o'clock, was the fact that I had a number of parents in the house, time was marching on and I didn't have any information for giving to them. I felt very strongly that we should at least display to them that they were our first priority, and it was at that point that we asked that we bring these parents up and put them within the school.

So were arrangements then evolved to bring this group of parents up from the second of the houses into part of the school? - Yes. I found someone I think was a member of staff there -- I can't recollect who it was -- and the staff room was identified because of the facilities within it, plus there was a separate entrance from a corridor just before/

before the staff room, which was convenient for a discreet entry to the school.

Which part of the school is the staff room in? Can you point it out on the photograph we have got? - I think it is that one there.

So would it be possible to bring them round the side of the building? - Yes. From there there were two passenger transport vehicles from the Ambulance Service drove up and came round and parked here.

If you could just resume your seat, please. Now, what time was this transfer effected? - I think just before 12 or just after 12.

And you say two ambulance transport vehicles were used? - Yes.

Were these vehicles able to get into the grounds of the house? - I am not sure. I wasn't present at the house at that point. Inspector Ross was seeing to that. There was no reason why they could not have.

And to some extent at least this exercise was taking place in the view of those out in the street, members of the public and members of the media? - Yes.

Now, you say you were not present when this took place? - No.

Why was that? - It was because I briefed Inspector Ross and I briefed Inspector Cairns, who assisted him in this task, and I felt it was more important that I be in the incident room, trying to get the information which the parents required.

What time would it be by the time this transfer was completed? - Very roughly I think about half past 12 or after half past 12.

By that stage was there some genuine uncertainty about identification? - Yes. By about 12 to 12.30 we were getting intermittent identification of injured at the hospital coming through in perhaps three's and four's.

Did/

Did you yourself go to the staff room? - No, I didn't enter the staff room. I was in the corridor outside the staff room.

Why did you not go into the staff room? - I had no further information to give the parents at that point, and it was only minutes before information started to come through and we started the process of extracting the parents of injured children, whom we informed, and I spoke to them in a room adjacent to the staff room.

Well, we will come on to the detail of that in a moment. When you first went to the vicinity of the staff room it would be some time at 12.30 or afterwards; is that right? - It may just have been earlier than that.

Some time around 12.30? - Yes.

At that stage there was some continuing uncertainty as to the names of the victims who had died? - Yes.

The parents inside the staff room were at that stage unaware whether their children had been killed or seriously injured? - That is correct.

They were obviously more than anxious for information? - Yes.

Can I ask you, Superintendent, so that we all understand this. At that stage were any steps taken to inform the parents within the staff room that there was this continuing uncertainty about the identities of those who had been killed and those who had survived? - I did not specifically instruct that, and I did not do it myself. I took the view that I should be trying to get that information, and I was within the incident room doing that. I was successful in getting that with regard to the injured.

You/

3.15

You appreciate, as I am sure you do, that the role that I am performing in this Inquiry is to explore the facts, I am not interested in making a specific criticism one way or another, I am just acting in the public interest for the benefit of everyone trying to get at what happened that day and what people were thinking that day? - Yes.

I am sure on the basis of your experience you will appreciate that but the fact of the matter is that from about 12.30 there was this group of parents within the room who were uncertain whether their child was dead or alive and you were aware that there was that uncertainty? - Yes.

And you knew that despite the intensive efforts of police officers, teachers and others there were practical problems in identifying victims? - Yes.

What I want to ask you about is why the problems that medical and other staff were experiencing in identifying victims wasn't conveyed in general terms to the parents as an explanation for the delay which was undoubtedly building up? - There are two comments I would make -- one was we felt that with every minute that went by we would get information that we could go and gives these parents; the second being that, rightly or wrongly in hindsight it wasn't felt appropriate or of any help to go in and say while the uncertainty continued; a mixture of these two things were what was in my mind, certainly.

Now, we know as a matter of fact that the liaison groups were set up to deal with informing the bereaved? - Yes.

And the parents of those who were seriously injured?
- Yes.

And these liaison groups included a mix of police officers and social workers? - Yes.

And around what time were these groups drawn together? - We started to look at that task in running in tandem as an intermittent identification of injured children coming in from the/

the hospital; it would be somewhere prior or just previously to 12.30 or just after; in tandem we started to then have that identification of who the deceased children might be coming in or a positive list of fatalities and we should make the appropriate arrangements for that; the briefing I had been given by Detective Chief Superintendent Ogg was to create these teams of two police officers and one social worker for each family and when we had a list of the family we could allocate the family to a family support team or a liaison team.

Was it your responsibility for sending to the school the necessary police and social work personnel to constitute these teams? - All during that morning there had been police officers sent to the school recording duties and social workers had been sent as part of the major incident procedure; in actual fact we were able to create teams from the numbers that were within the school to a large extent.

So both Police Headquarters and Social Work Headquarters sent along sufficient personnel to constitute I think a three-man team for each family? - Yes, to a large extent we were able to create these teams from personnel at the scene.

After these teams had been gathered together were they briefed by you? - Yes.

What was the nature of the briefing that was given? - It was very very brief because at that point we knew who the fatalities were and that it was a priority to get the teams to the respective families to the identified rooms within the school where the news could be broken to them.

I want to be clear about this; were the liaison teams purely for the families of those who died or were they also for those who were injured for those who had died at that time; it wasn't until later on in the day that there was a creation of a separate team, in fact, some of our deceased liaison officers became involved with the survivors, the injured parties as well.

As a matter of fact who was informed first -- the parents of the surviving victims or the parents of the deceased? - The parents of the survivors./

survivors.

Again I ask you if you could explain to Lord Cullen and all of us why that approach was followed? - I had approached the incident command team and Detective Chief Superintendent Ogg and said I felt that if the deceased identification wasn't forthcoming that we should be tackling it or we should try tackling it from the survivor side of it; at that point in time which was about 12 o'clock there was no identification of any surviving from the hospital because of the communication difficulties; nearer to half-past 12 it started to come in from the hospital confirming the names of the injured children and it was decided that because we had that information quite properly that these parents should be told immediately.

And as a matter of fact how was that achieved? - It achieved by myself going to the staff room but not going into it and asking the policewoman who was within the room to ask for the families to come out by name and they were asked out in the order that we were getting them back from the hospital in blocks of three or four; they came out and I spoke to them within the adjacent room where I was only able to tell them that there child was alive but was injured and in most occasions within Stirling Royal Infirmary; there was one child who was at Yorkhill.

Were any arrangements laid in place for conveying parents concerned to the hospital? - Yes, it was as quick as I was speaking to them a car or an ambulance was driven to the door next to the staff room and parents concerned were taken to the appropriate hospital.

And did people go with them? - I think so but I am not sure about that; the priority was that they were driven; if it was a police car it would be a police officer, if it was an ambulance I would reckon it was only ambulance personnel that were with them.

Now, one comment which was raised this morning when Mr. Ogg was giving his evidence was that at certain parts during that day those who were the parents of the bereaved were seeking information from a senior officer and were not able to get it; as/

as a matter of fact having spoken to the parents in the second of the two houses -- --? - Yes.

It was some appreciable or considerable time later before you saw them again, is that right? - Yes.

You have explained your reasons for the approach you followed but I take it that you would understand the complaints that they might perceive if they were being denied access to a senior officer? - Yes, the senior officer who identified himself to them earlier on, yes.

Would I be right in understanding that if that is the perception and if that is the criticism that was made you and your senior colleagues would be quite prepared to think through the ramifications of the approach you personally followed in this part of that day's activities to see whether an alternative approach might be of benefit? - Yes, we would and I have.

Now, the process of informing the relatives or the parents of the injured children can't have taken terribly long? - No, it was very quick; in saying that perhaps 20 minutes, half an hour.

Now, there is a question I ought to have asked a while ago and my apologies to all concerned for not having done so; what dealings did you have with the relatives of Mrs. Mayer that day? - None, I didn't see Mr. Mayer at all.

As a matter of fact what is your understanding as to who dealt with Mr. Mayer and other members of the family that day? - I recollect it because it was in the process that we were trying to put together that day because Mr. Mayer arrived from outwith the locality having been away from the region and arrived at the school and was spoken to or was received by Detective Sergeant Moffat again who had moved up from the house to the school.

So is it your understanding that it was Mr. Moffat who dealt with Mr. Mayer? - Yes.

Anything/

Anything you know about how Mr. Mayer was dealt with comes second-hand from Mr. Moffat? - Yes.

Well, I think my lord is aware that Mr. Moffat is to give evidence in due course so I won't ask Mr. Holden any more questions on that matter. Could we go back to the staff room please; could you give us an approximate time by which all the parents of the injured children had left the staff room and set off in the various pieces of transport to where they were going? - I think it was between.....if it wasn't 12.30 it would be about 12.45 I think.

Now, there have been some questions raised today about the timing at which the parents of the deceased children were informed of the particular deaths that had occurred; during that day were you yourself making any notes of the times as you went along? - Yes, I was taking notes of the times but it wasn't what I would have called a record of it; what I did was brief these officers who were going to undertake breaking the news to the parents so that they should also have in their statement including the arrival time and they should not the time of notification when they brought the news to the parents.

Just to be clear about this, as I understand it you took a few notes during the course of the day? - Yes.

But not in any sense a full record? - Not at all.

But do I understand as part of your briefing of the liaison teams was that they were informed they would have to provide statements in which they should record, amongst other things, times? - Yes.

Now, am I right in understanding that in preparing to give evidence today you have checked on the timings set out in the various statements prepared by others? - Yes, the statements by liaison officers and parents.

Is your understanding of the time scale within which the parents of the deceased children were/

were informed to some extent at least coloured by what you have seen in these statements? - Yes.

Doing your best to look back to the day itself can you assist Lord Cullen and us all as to your best estimate as to the time at which the process of informing the parents of the deceased children began? - From looking at the records and from my recollection and specifically more dependent on the records or the statements the first notification was at 1.45 and the last notification, although we believe it was incorrect, was at 3.00 p.m. and was more likely to have been at 2.30 p.m.

Just take it step by step, I think before we do this can I ask you a few general questions; I take it in the course of a very difficult day, particularly for the parents involved, this must be the most emotional time for everybody? - Yes, very much so.

Looking at the records the times, as I understand it, run from somewhere -- is it 1.45? - Yes, there is an area of time which we think is an error as well which is 1.30.

Let us take it factually and let's see if we can establish what the factual position is; the records created by those who were asked to prepare statements ran between 1.30 and 3 o'clock? - Yes.

You believe that the first time was an error as being a quarter of an hour too early? - Yes.

Can I ask you why you hold that view? - Yes, because I believe I was briefing the officers and the teams at that time and that the manner or method of leaving the briefing to go and break the news because we had to have three or four teams at any one time going to the staff room and the first batch of times was at 1.45 and 1.30, I believe, is wrong.

So it is because they went in batches -- --? - Yes.

That you think that the isolated incident of 1.30 might be an error? - Yes, because I/

I do believe I was briefing them at that point.

At the other end of the time scale there is one at 3 o'clock? - Yes.

And why do you hold the view that that might be an error? - Because the officer involved said that he went with a liaison officer who he identified from another team in this batch and that batch was at 2.30.

Well, understanding the reasons you have given why you consider there might be an error in these timings the fact of the matter is that there are records created by those involved which describe this exercise as lasting from 1.30 to 3 o'clock? - Yes.

I don't want to go on to any unnecessary distressing evidence but did it take a few minutes for each family for this procedure to be gone through before steps were taken to move on from the place where they were informed of this tragic news? - It varied -- as I observed I wasn't within the room, the separate room, when the news was being broken but some families remained for quite a while and some families wanted to leave immediately, some wanted to leave with the officers or the team that was with them and some wanted to leave without them, there was a complete variety.

I am quite sure we all understand that people react differently in such difficult and tragic situations but when you say some wished to remain for an appreciable period of time what are you talking about -- 10, 20 minutes, longer? - No, perhaps about 10 or 20 minutes.

Now, it may be very difficult for you to do so but if you could leave out of your mind for the moment what you have read in the records and look back to your recollection of that day, what is your best recollection of the time scale over which this very difficult exercise was carried out? - I think I was briefing at 1.30, towards 1.45, so if you were depending on my recollection 1.45 seems to be the earliest for the first notification, that is my honest recollection, I don't think it was that far out from there on.

EXAMINATION/

3.35 p.m.

EXAMINATION CONTINUED BY THE LORD

ADVOCATE: Now, another matter which was very understandably raised earlier today was the fact that some of those who were waiting for news of their child in Mrs. Mayer's class had other children, as I understand it, with them during the difficult hours they had to wait. Were you aware of that? - My recollection is that there were children -- children of perhaps teenage, or 12-year olds, that is my recollection.

Older children? - I think so.

You have told us about midwives and possibly a doctor getting access to the house. What about the staffroom? Were professionals you were in a position to assist given access to the staffroom as well? - I am sure that nurses, and the midwives, accompanied them to the room. I am aware, although I can't positively say, that a doctor was with them; and the reason I say that was that I had a conversation with Dr. Cathcart in the corridor, and it certainly was the intent that doctors would be within the room; but I honestly couldn't say that they were in there.

What about members of the clergy? Were you aware of any of them being around? - I am aware that the clergy were within the house, and I think there was at least one clergy within the staffroom.

From your point of view would there have been any reason for a member of the clergy being excluded from the staffroom? - Only if those within didn't wish it.

Yes, yes -- but you were unaware of any problem one way or another about that? - No, I wasn't aware.

If individual children who were injured had been identified, by whatever means, before they left to go to hospital -- a process which as I understand it was completed by about 11 o'clock -- would it have been practicable for the parents of the child concerned to go with them in the ambulance/

ambulance, do you think? - Had the child been identified, and had the parents been identified, I would see no reason for it not to have occurred, but it would have been very difficult to have achieved that task in the circumstances that were ongoing.

Well, I may be wrong, but by 11 o'clock you were really not in a position to identify those who were in Mrs. Mayer's class? - No.

Let alone individual parents of that class group, were you? - No. I am sorry, I thought you were asking the question if the child had been identified and the parents had been identified?

Yes -- you would need to have identified both the parents and the child? - Yes.

But even if the child had been identified as the ambulance made to leave the school grounds, let us say at quarter to 11, by that stage you were not in a position to identify the parents? - No, because we hadn't separated them from the larger group at that point.

But if on the other hand you had known the identity of the injured children as they left to go to hospital, the probabilities are that you could have reunited parents and child sooner than was in fact achieved? - Yes.

So that would be one clear practical benefit of a procedure which endeavoured to identify injured parties, whether adults or children, when they leave the scene of a tragedy or an accident? - I think, with respect, simply put -- because we would have had a problem with identifying what was a life-threatening injury at that point, and any few seconds' delay would have had ramifications -- but yes.

Well, I am not suggesting it is a complete solution, but certainly something worth looking at? - Yes.

Now, just two final matters. Undoubtedly there were serious problems experienced that day in the identifying of those who were dead, in particular, and also those who were injured. Would/

Would I be right in assuming that not only Central Scotland Police, but other police forces in Scotland will seek to learn what lessons they can as to how to solve the practical problems that were faced that day? - Yes. That is certainly one of the strengths of the police service, that they will learn, and that they do look at real life incidents and see if matters can be learned from the process.

I think Lord Cullen, and those of us who practice in the Courts, will be aware that, although there are individual police forces within Scotland, they co-operate on a large number of matters to do with training and planning and looking at current issues and difficulties? - Yes, particularly in the major incident field.

Another major problem that was faced that day was the question of communication. We have had the suggestions of the need to have further land lines in places like schools, greater availability of mobile phones at situations where incidents or accidents may occur. From your perspective of what happened that day, and on the basis of your experience, do you have any idea as to what might be done to overcome communication problems of the nature that you all experienced? - I think certainly as a senior investigating officer in the Inquiry -- or as depute investigating officer -- I have discussed with the senior investigating officer the fact that it was frustrating that we didn't have a radio communication channel which was secure that we could have utilised with any land lines and Cellnets -- the digital Cellnet, certainly. We could have gone on to a secure radio, UHF or VHF channels. That is not in our possession. There are very few of them in the country because of the large expense, but it is certainly something if we had had a secure radio channel, we would have got on a lot better.

Normally I think we would expect police officers to use encrypted radios, secure radios, purely in connection with criminal investigations where one was anxious not to have criminals listening into the police radio traffic? - Yes.

But does it follow from what you are saying that there is another very distinct use, namely in situations such as this after a major incident/

incident or accident, where there is a need for urgent transfer of information, but also a need to keep that confidential until full public statements can be made? - Yes, absolutely.

Because it is, as a matter of fact, perfectly possible for a bona fide radio ham to listen in to police messages? - Yes. It is even more common -- every day of every week there is scanning by various people, and one of the problems we have is the Press and media can do that too.

CROSS-EXAMINED BY MISS DUNLOP:

Superintendent, could I ask you firstly about the possibility that some parents -- parents of children in Mrs. Mayer's class were directed not to the private house when they arrived, but to the Westlands Hotel. Do you know anything of that? - I am not aware of any parents going into the Westlands Hotel, but I am aware of the existence of the Westlands Hotel. For a period that morning it was being used as some sort of reception centre. I am not aware of that happening, but if it did, in the confusion of things, it may have happened.

So if it did happen, it was something that wasn't meant to happen? - Certainly.

You told us that your initial responsibility related to erecting a cordon round the school? - Yes.

You were relieved of that responsibility and given the responsibility of conveying information to parents; is that correct? - For the care and control of the parents, yes.

And you recollect that that was around 10.40 or 10.45? - It could have been even earlier.

Well, until your being given that responsibility no one else had been specifically asked to take care of that? - Not that I am aware of.

So this question of whether the names of children being taken from the scene in ambulances should be ascertained -- that is not a decision that you took -- you wouldn't decide whether that should or should not happen? - No.

And/

And you are not aware of anybody with prior responsibilities, who might have taken that decision? - No.

So there was no question at least as far as you are concerned of you actually making a decision not to take that course? - No. I would say that was not within my remit at that point.

Now, you also told us of the position you found yourself in when a father had information which he had gleaned from the radio, but you were unable to confirm or deny his information? - That is correct.

Presumably the response that you were not able to confirm or deny was that the parent concerned would not be happy with that response? - I am quite sure he thought himself that I knew things I was not prepared to tell him.

So in fact even then there were complaints being made by parents about communication; is that correct? - No -- well, it was a statement he made to me -- "Has 12 children been killed?"

But the parents presumably were not satisfied with your response? - No, I wouldn't say that.

Well, have you not been aware for some time that the parents were not satisfied with the responses that were given to them on that day? - No, not for some time.

Well, when did you first hear this? - I was informed two days ago, I think -- was it Tuesday or Monday of this week; and I saw a document with I think it is eight points on it, and that was the first time I was aware.

Well, you spoke earlier of having a sense of your credibility with the parents being adversely affected. Does that not mean that there was tension about your inability to give information? - Absolutely, yes.

Now, you were asked about whether a senior officer could have spoken to parents when they/

they asked that such a person should be available, and you said that you would think about it, in retrospect, think about that point, and that you had thought about that point in retrospect. Can I take it from that answer that you would treat that matter differently if you were faced with it again? - No, what I meant by that is that, as any person would do, I went over in my own mind those actions that day and the judgments I had to make that day. And one of the concerns that I had was that period of time that those parents were in the staffroom and I wasn't able to gain information that I could have passed to them, or I could have translated that inability to them. I have thought about it several times, or a number of times, and I can't think how I could have.

Perhaps if you could accept that I am not seeking to lay personal criticism upon you, and if you could simply tell me if you accept for the parents to be asking for a senior officer to come and speak to them, and for that request not to be granted, is not satisfactory? - I was not aware of that request.

But please simply consider if that had happened, it would not be satisfactory, would it? - Of course not. If that request had been made and it had been denied that would have been terrible, yes.

Now, once the parents were in the staffroom in the school, you said you had a recollection that among the group there were some older children? - Yes.

Did you know that there was, for example, a very small baby, and that there was also a toddler? - No.

You have no recollection that that group included some very small children? - No.

Who had their own requirements at that stage? - I was not aware of that, no.

As far as timings are concerned, if we could deal firstly with the conveying of information to the parents of injured children, the parents for example who required to be taken to Yorkhill -- they were/

were taken in a police car; is that right? - Yes.

And if I suggest to you that that was in fact in a police car with a siren and blue light, does that accord with your recollection, or is that something you don't know about? - No, I do know about that, because I spoke to the driver and told him to bring his car there, and my recollection was that it was a marked police vehicle.

So that was something that was done at great speed?
- Yes.

Now, how long do you think it would take to get from the scene to Yorkhill under those conditions? - Very quickly, I would think.

About half an hour? - I think probably at the most.

Half an hour at the most? - I would have thought so.

So if there is information that parents arrived at Yorkhill only around 2 o'clock, then that would mean the parents of injured children, at least who were going to Yorkhill, were leaving about half-past 1? - Yes.

And you have confirmed to us that the time between the parents being given the information that their child was injured and their departure for Yorkhill Hospital was very slight indeed? - Yes, according to my recollection, yes.

Now, as far as the conveying of information to the parents who were bereaved is concerned, the times which you have quoted are extracted by you from records made by other people; is that correct? - Yes.

Presumably you have no way of knowing whether the timings were written down after the event, or by whom the entries were made? - The officer who submitted the statement would be the person responsible for the accuracy of the times, and I would expect officers to note times as things are happening.

Given the particular circumstances, however/

however, there could be some margin of error presumably in the records made? - Yes.

Indeed your own sense was that 1.45 as the earliest time would be too early? - 1.30 -- and 1.45 would be a shade short of my recollection.

3.55 p.m.

Your own recollection, without looking at the records, might mean it was nearer 2 o'clock? - Yes.

And that is when the parents were taken privately to rooms to be given information? - Yes.

How many rooms were available for that purpose? - I think there were a maximum of 17 rooms available.

And there were obviously as you have told us different periods of time spent by individual families after they had heard the news? - Yes, I am aware of that, because I was in the corridors and I saw people leave, I saw officers approach and saying they were having to go and make phone calls for people, and people seemed to be leaving between those margins of time.

And it is correct, is it not, that the families were asked to leave the staff room on an individual basis: it was done one at a time? - To an extent. Because we had the information we wanted to get it to them quickly, but it would have been an impossibility for 15, 16 or 17 officers to go to the room at the one time, so we tried to arrange it that perhaps two or three at a time. I would guess on the practicalities of it that one would move into the room, then another one would follow.

If the position is that there was still a family waiting for information at about half past 3 -- that is their recollection -- then given the circumstances on the day, relying to some extent on their recollection, you would personally not be in a position to contradict that? - No, I wasn't there then.

When did you leave? - I left about 3 o'clock. I had been given other duties.

Finally, in connection with the issuing of general guidelines to the Central Scotland Police, you said there were no guidelines dealing with information to relatives; is that correct? - My recollection of that is that I said in relation to a written protocol there was a reference, but that was in/

in relation to cordon duty.

Perhaps I could just confirm with you. The question which I have noted is that you were asked whether Central Scotland Police had a protocol which officers would be expected to follow regarding the management of those selected at an incident. You said no, but you were referring to cordon duties specifically? - To control of those people and cordon duty.

In so far as communications to relatives is concerned, is there any guidance note or any written protocol? - There is general guidance to the Force. There is also the training that every officer would get in his early training period in the first few years of his service. Beyond that I would say no.

Does the training include instructions to keep the time when people are left wondering what has happened as brief as possible? - I am not aware of any protocol or guidance along those lines.

CROSS-EXAMINED BY MR. GIBB: I know the Lord Advocate has asked you if you had any dealings with Mr. Mayor, and you said no. Did anyone report to you Mr. Mayor's arrival at the school? - They didn't report to me. They briefed me later on in the afternoon, or it could have been the next day. It was D.S. Moffat.

Were you aware of Esther Mayor's arrival at the school? - No.

Could I simply comment to you that her recollection is that she was taken to join her father at quarter to 3 from the staff room, and at that point there were still a significant number of parents in the staff room? - I can't comment on that.

CROSS-EXAMINED BY MR. TAYLOR: Can you tell us a little bit about the logistics which were involved in setting up the liaison teams? - Yes. The brief that I got from Detective Chief Superintendent Ogg was to create such a thing, and that two police officers and a social worker should comprise a team.

Yes?/

Yes? - One of the police officers should be chosen with experience not in that type of work, perhaps, but if they had experience in the Family Unit or child protection type of work, that we should strike for that. To a large extent we managed to do that.

Yes? - Where we didn't manage to do that we certainly picked the lead officer in the team for his or her experience or ability to deal with that particular type of task.

Yes? - We then had to develop how we were going to tackle that task. (a) These officers and social workers knew very little about what had happened that morning, so a briefing was necessary, but it had to be a shortened briefing. We tried to create 17 teams, but that required 34 officers plus 17 social workers. We then, because we wanted rather than to break the news one at a time or if we had two rooms two at a time, we decided we would do it simultaneously as best we could. We had to find 17 rooms within the school.

Yes? - There was a particular problem for our liaison team, that when they went to accept or to take their family we had a very simple difficulty in making sure our liaison teams could make their way to the particular designated room, which wasn't a great difficulty but it slowed us down a bit.

How did you overcome that difficulty? - We got hold of two members of staff and one police officer who had had a quick tour of the school, and these rooms had been identified to him. Unfortunately we were slowed down a bit by one of the school staff being unable to carry on with the task, because he had been involved in the incident all day. That is no criticism of him. That is how we managed to do it. We went in three or four groups, with three guides as it were for most of the process.

Now, you have indicated from looking at the records available to you that the last relative of a deceased child was seen at 2.30 p.m.? - Yes.

Was there anything in the records which you looked at to suggest that the last time was as late/

late as 3.30, which has just been suggested to you? - Not at all. 3. p.m. was the latest time that was mentioned.

Reference has been made to the need to take one of the children to Yorkhill, and subsequently the parents of that child were also taken to Yorkhill. Do you know from looking at the records in your role as investigating officer when the parents reached Yorkhill? - I don't know.

At the time when you separated the parents from the group outside the school and took them to the first house I think you indicated you were aware that the class involved was Class 1/13; is that right? - Yes.

Were you aware at that time of any children from another class had been involved in the incident? - No. I had very scant information at perhaps what was the busiest time of that incident that that was the class involved.

Was your understanding at that time that there was a possibility that there could have been children from another class involved? - Yes. I wasn't sure of the information.

Did that factor come into play at all in not separating the parents of the children in Class 1/13 from the other parents? - I was happy in my mind nearer 11 a.m. that morning, when I made my second visit to the temporary command room and spoke to Detective Chief Inspector Ogg and asked him these questions, and he confirmed that to me.

And it was after that that you took the parents of the children in Class 1/13 to the second of the houses you have identified? - Yes.

Now, you were asked by the Lord Advocate if it would have been prudent to indicate to the parents of the class there was some difficulty in identifying the children. If you had given such an indication to them have you considered what sort of response you might have obtained from them? - I have considered it. Actually I don't know what kind of response I would have got. I was more conscious of the fact that I couldn't give them the information, and that the questions I was being asked, /

asked, the answers I would have given them would not have been suitable and would not have satisfied them. I honestly didn't see this as a comfort factor of my appearing in that room for a very few seconds. It would very quickly have disappeared, and probably they would have turned on me, because I couldn't necessarily explain.

If there had been a suggestion from the parents that they might have assisted in the identification, would that have been appropriate in your opinion? - In my opinion, not at all.

You have told us that there were a number of Inspectors who were delegated by you to be with the parents? - Yes.

At what stage was it that they first took up such duties? - At the stage when we moved from the first house to the second house and then throughout the move to the staff room until the liaison officers took over their duties.

We have heard reference being made to a number of Inspectors. Perhaps you could tell us who they were? - Inspector Ross, Inspector Cairns, halfway through the move or between the second house and the staff room, and Detective Sergeant Allan Moffat.

Was there an Inspector Rose involved at some point? - Inspector Rose was involved in the initial stage of moving from the first house to the second house. He had a specific area of responsibility in securing the entrance to the school from Doune Road, which obviously enveloped the second house.

In your terminology does the rank of Inspector come into the category of senior officer? - Yes.

No further cross-examination.
No re-examination.

PAUL HUGHES, (35), Sworn,

EXAMINED BY THE LORD ADVOCATE: I am a Chief Inspector in Central Scotland Police. I have/

have 16 years' police service.

I think you have been responsible for compiling a report into the financial situation of James Watt Hamilton? - That is correct.

Can you have a copy of this document in front of you, please, which I think has got the Production number R32: do you have that? - Yes.

Am I correct in understanding that although this report bears to be prepared by you it merely summarises a considerable amount of investigatory work carried out by officers of Central Scotland Police? - That is correct.

That involves production of a multitude of police statements and financial vouchers of one sort or another? - That is correct.

The purpose has been to present to the Inquiry in as clear a form as possible what was known about Hamilton's financial position in recent years? - That is correct.

On page 1 of the document I think you record that Hamilton held a number of bank accounts, and then you go on to say "This report will show that Hamilton was in financial difficulties, but despite this he obtained a Debenham's account and a Barclaycard account during the latter part of 1993, and that he continued to use both of these accounts heavily during mid-1995 and up until early March of this year"; is that correct? - Yes, that is correct.

And in your next paragraph you expressed that the limited movement within the other bank accounts and the heavy use of the Barclaycard and Debenham's card were a good indication that Hamilton relied on the credit cards for everyday living? - Yes.

The first account you mention is the Trustee Savings account, which has been closed for some time; is that right? - Yes.

You then deal with an account he held with the Royal Bank of Scotland at their branch in Stirling? - Yes.

I/

I think, reading the matter shortly, he had two accounts, one which at the date of his death had a very small credit balance in it of £4; is that correct? - Yes.

And the other was overdrawn to the extent of some £3299.50? - I think if I may direct you to page 27 of my report, in cumulo Mr. Hamilton was withdrawn to the extent of some £3511. That was a combination of figures between an overdraft he had at the Bank of Scotland and one at the Royal Bank of Scotland. He in fact re-financed a loan in July, 1995, which reduced the overdraft in the Royal Bank of Scotland account to some £900, but he still had £2924.07 within the Royal Bank of Scotland on the re-finance arrangement, which had to be taken into consideration. It was not strictly an overdraft: the re-finance arrangement was for the purpose of reducing the overdraft.

4.15 p.m.

I can understand that but I see in the very last paragraph of page 2 a reference to the 14th February 1996 -- should that be the previous year? - Yes, that is an error I wanted to point out, it should be 1995.

The Royal Bank account was overdrawn? - Yes.

And we then see in the next page that he had an account with the Bank of Scotland, again at a branch in Stirling and that too was overdrawn? - Yes.

And then moving to page 4 we see that he had an account with the Clydesdale Bank, is that right? - That is correct.

And what was the state of play with that deposit account at the time of this death? - It had a balance of 3 pence.

So as far as the bank accounts are concerned he was significantly overdrawn at the time of his death? - That is correct.

Page 5, we deal with the Barclaycard position and you go on to detail how this was issued to him in September last year and I think you and your colleagues have conducted a very detailed examination on the use of that Barclaycard in the time leading up to the date of his death, isn't that right? - That is correct.

Amongst other things he seemed to use it regularly for shopping at supermarkets? - That is correct.

What was the financial position with regards to the Barclaycard at the date of his death? - The limit on the Barclaycard had been reached, £1500, by the 8th March 1996.

He was withdrawn there as well? - Yes.

I don't think that we need to go through the next few pages in any detail but you have illustrated/

illustrated various types of purchases by the use of the Barclaycard and some were mail order transactions involving firearms-related equipment?

- That is correct.

You then set out full details of that for us? - Yes.

You have also assisted in identifying the purchase of the pliers which were used to cut the telephone wires? - Yes.

Which were purchased in January 1996? - Yes, that is correct.

You have been able to assist in some of his travel with British Rail in the weeks leading up to his death? - That is correct.

And a place in Bishopbriggs where he frequently had a meal on occasions where he had visited his boys' club? - Yes.

And the next page you go through a great variety of purchases, some to do with his interest in photography and the rest? - Yes.

Could we turn to page 15 which deals with a Debenham account; this had been opened on the 27th November last year and again you carried out, with the assistance of the company concerned, efforts to try and establish what he bought and how much he spent? - That is correct.

They include a fairly large number of items of gents clothing, the sort of things one might buy in a Debenham's store? - Yes.

What was the state of that account at the date of his death? - Withdrawn on debit to the tune of £737.74.

I think you also have carried out an investigation as to what sort of income he had? - Yes.

Did you ascertain from the local authority that he was in receipt of Housing Benefit in connection with his dwellinghouse he rented at 7 Kent Road, Stirling? - That is correct.

I think you made a detailed investigation of the properties he used to own many years ago including one which he sold in Stirling away back in 1985 for the sum of £30,000, is that right? - That is correct.

And he also appeared, away back in the early 1980s, to have owned a boat which was destroyed in a fire, for which he received insurance funds of £24,668? - Yes.

I take it you found no trace of him having any capital invested in any bank or building society? - None.

At the time of his death? - None.

I think in the early '90s there appeared to be some difficulty with unpaid Tax and National Insurance, is that correct? - Yes, that is correct.

That was vouched by a letter which was found in his house? - Yes.

But there was no recent information about that? - No, none.

As far as the receipt of benefit was concerned apart from the Housing Benefit what was the position? - He was on Income Support up until November, 1993 but that ceased after he was reported to the Department of Health and Social Security for running a business from his home and claiming Unemployment Benefit; no further payments were made after that time.

Just to be clear about this, was his business to do with purchase and sale of item of photographic equipment? - Yes.

Prior to 1993 he was in receipt of benefit but that ceased because he had some income from buying and selling cameras? - Yes, that's right.

I think your enquiries also disclosed that he borrowed from a finance company some monies in 1994 with a view to financing his camera business, is that correct? - Yes, that is correct.

And/

And what was the state of play about that loan as at the date of his death? - The second loan that he took out in January, 1994 had a balance of some £1500 and that was added to a third loan he took from the first finance company which commenced in 1995; at the time of his death the combined debt in relation to these loans was some £2350, I believe.

Although he had been making repayment to the finance company concerned there was still substantial money due there as well? - Yes, that is correct.

In general terms what impression did you form as to the success or otherwise of his business in buying and selling cameras? - It certainly appeared that he was obtaining finance to purchase equipment which he was selling on, whether or not he was making any profit in regard to that I haven't been able to establish but I certainly don't think it was a great deal of income he was making from that pursuit.

Did your enquiries also establish that he was in arrears to the former Regional Council in relation to Council Tax? - Yes, that is correct.

And they were involved in certain legal proceedings against him? - Yes.

And early this year did he make a further application to the finance company which had loaned him money in connection with the camera business for an additional loan of £3,000 but that application was refused? - Yes, that is correct.

I think you also made enquiries about the utility accounts such as electricity, gas and British Telecom and found them to be, by and large, in order? - That is correct.

Now, the next section of your report deals with accounts which were maintained in connection with this boys' clubs activity; again a great deal of detail was examined by you; can you just, for the purpose of us all, summarise what the position was with regard to that? - Yes, Hamilton began copied detail accounts on the 2nd May 1988; he started off the account showing a deficit of the sum/

sum of £2663; basically it was difficult to know the accuracy of these accounts because there is no method of testing how accurate the deficit was when the accounts began in 1988; however, we analysed these accounts between 1988 and 1996 and each year he suffered substantial losses, if the accounts are accurate which in cumulo to the sum of £15,907, that appears to be the total altogether.

If the account was accurate there would appear to be a drain on his financial resources from that activity as well? - Yes, that is correct.

Then if we pass to page 28 of your report where I think you seek to summarise the position; you really say that Hamilton was undoubtedly in severe financial difficulties, his total assets and bank accounts and the like amounting to 3 pence while he was overdrawn in cumulo to £3,500, he had unpaid loans of £3,250, he owed the Royal Bank also £3,000 and then you summarise various other debts that you have already described and you describe him as having an overall debt of in excess of £11,000 plus the deficit on his boys' club of £15,000? - Yes, that is correct.

Apart from such money he made from his photographic equipment and such limited income as the boys' club account disclosed could you find any other source of income he had? - None at all.

And as you say at the top of the next page his financial predicament was worsening by the existence of a Sheriff's Warrant in connection with a Council Tax debt and the threat of seizure of any monies and effects in connection with that matter? - That is correct.

Adjourned until tomorrow.

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