

T of E Ref 57



CHEMICAL DEFENCE
EXPERIMENTAL ESTABLISHMENT
Porton Down, SALISBURY, Wilts.
Telex: 47525 Telephone: Idmiston 211, ext.

Please address any reply to
THE DIRECTOR
and quote:
Your reference:

28th May, 1968.

R.L. Dixon Esq.,
Secretary to the Tribunal,
Room 5A. 108,
Social and Comparative Studies
Building,
University of Essex,
Wivenhoe Park,
Colchester, Essex.

Dear Mr. Dixon,

... I enclose a brief statement of the incident of
May 7th as I saw it. If I can be of any further
assistance, please let me know. I will not be avail-
able however from June 8th - 28th.

Yours sincerely,

Thomas D. Inch.

TDI/GC

T.D. INCH.

The lecture, to a group of scientists, had only just started when we were interrupted by the demonstrators. The Chairman apologised for the intrusion and we waited until most of the demonstrators had entered the lecture room. When the room was reasonably quiet, I was reintroduced and I rose to recommence my talk. At this point I was interrupted by the leader of the demonstrators who proceeded to read out the indictment. It was immediately suggested to me by the Chairman (or by some other member of the chemistry staff) that the meeting be abandoned. I suggested that we delayed this decision for a few minutes in the hope that after the initial outburst I would be allowed to give my lecture. After a few minutes however I formed the opinion that in the prevailing atmosphere, any attempt to lecture would be unsuccessful. The Chairman then announced that the meeting was closed and that I was leaving. At this point the students began to press forward and mustard was thrown over me by a student who identified himself to me as Peter Archard. I attempted to leave the lecture room and managed to reach the corridor outside, although the students attempted to make me stay to hear the indictment. The corridor was tightly packed with students and further progress was made impossible by students who locked arms together.

At this point, and in order to prevent the demonstrators clashing with the chemistry students, I attempted to answer some questions and to present the students with some facts to replace some of the dubious information they had at their disposal. It was soon apparent that the atmosphere of the demonstrators was such that they were prepared to twist any statement I might make to fit their own philosophy. This opinion has since been substantiated by remarks attributed to me by the press. When the police arrived, I was pleased to make use of their assistance and to leave the University of Essex. The students at all times attempted to prevent the police clearing a path for me.

Although, as I have indicated, at one stage I was prepared to talk to the demonstrators, I soon realised that I was not fulfilling any useful purpose. At no stage did I suggest or agree to a return to the meeting room. I was not myself particularly intimidated by the demonstrators but I felt that their attitude was such that any speaker who was of a slightly nervous disposition could have been badly shaken by the events of May 7th.

It is difficult for me to see why the Tribunal should be confused about the title of my lecture. I remember seeing posters advertising my lecture (I believe these posters also carried the correct address of my establishment) as being on "The Chemical and Biological Properties of Toxic Chemicals". As was stated in a letter to the Secretary of the Student Chemical Society (31st October, 1967) I intended to discuss the properties of selected classes of chemicals such as organophosphates and atropine-like compounds, with particular relevance to their stereochemistry and mode of action. Since the lecture was not given nor were its contents disclosed, the subject matter can be of no consequence to your Tribunal. The title was chosen after consultation with the Secretary of the Student Chemical Society in response to a request from the Society that the Chemical Defence Establishment provide a speaker to discuss methods of chemical defence.

Thomas D. Inch.

28-5-68.