

DR. ROBERTS GIVING EVIDENCE

- Q. The main period we wanted to find out more from you about is the time when Dr. Inch had left the meeting room and got into the corner in the lobby. It seems that you were near him?
- A. I was the only member of staff there.
- Q. From the time he left the meeting room, were you accompanying him through the bar.
- A. I Was about five yards behind. There was a bit of a rush through the bar and he couldn't find a way out through M11 and by the time I got there, there was a cordon already forming.
- Q. We have heard that Dr. Inch went through the bar and at the end of the bar was intercepted by demonstrators who had come through from the other door.
- A. I didn't see that.
- Q. Also we have heard he went up the corridor and in his way were a number of demonstrators and also Mr. Davis.
- A. I was, as I said, about five yards behind.
- Q. But were there demonstrators between you and him?
- A. Yes.
- Q. We then heard that Dr. Inch stopped at the foot of the staircase in M10.



- A. It is true his progress was certainly impeded from then on and events were confused until he managed to struggle to the corner but I didn't witness all of this.
- Q. Would it be in accordance with your recollection that he might have been impeded for some little time on his way up and particularly at the bottom of the staircase. Stopped as it were by one or two demonstrators and asked questions?
- A. I was aware of a great deal of jostling in this area before he actually got into the corner.
- Q. We have heard that while he was being questioned among the confusion at M10 at the bottom of the staircase, he was taken in hand by someone who appears to be you and escorted him through the door into M11.
- A. I was doing my best to protect Dr. Inch, but I would say taking him in hand. I just wanted to stay relatively close to him.
- Q. At that stage, just before you got into the lobby, you say that you were the only friend in the vicinity.
- A. As far as I was aware. I didn't see any other member of the chemistry staff though later I could see Mr. Gordon.
- Q. Dr. Inch made his way through the door into M11 and it seemed that you were close to him at that stage.
- A. Yes I had caught up to him. I was only a few paces away.
- Q. By the time he and you got through the door, was the lobby already filling up with demonstrators?
- A. Yes.
- Q. In your opinion, why was it that Dr. Inch was unable to get out of the lobby, say, through the corridor and out of the door?



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- A. It was already blocked by demonstrators.
- Q. As you were close to him, do you remember if you had it in mind to lead him out through some convenient exit if you could?
- A. I had already realised that this would probably be impossible. The demonstrators had already crowded in. I don't think they had formed the barrier at this stage. It is difficult to say at what point it was formed. It was very shortly afterwards.
- Q. We get the picture, which certainly ties in with other evidence we have heard, of you and Dr. Inch having got into M11, unable to proceed because M11 was filling up with demonstrators. Can you say how it was and why it was that Dr. Inch got into the corner?
- A. I think he was trying to edge his way along the wall as this appeared to be the freest passage and he ended up in the corner.
- Q. We gather that when he was seen to be in the corner or near the corner, the cordon formed, taking advantage of his position, but we get the impression that he wasn't in any way pushed into the corner?
- A. No. I must say that at this stage there was no violence at all. Before this it was mainly jostling, no violence as far as I could see, just a question of stopping him from proceeding.
- Q. When Dr. Inch was in the lobby, did he try to push a path through and was pushed back?
- A. He was evidently intent on getting out of the corridor.



- Q. Two things could have happened. He could have been unable to proceed and stopped in the corner, without in anyway being in physical contact with the demonstrators who were in his way, or he could have tried to get through and he was pushed back into the corner.
- A. I think he was aware of the situation and stayed put in the corner.
- Q. And once in the corner, certainly until the arrival of the police, he stayed there and was not manhandled in any way?
- A. That is correct.
- Q. We gather that for a short time after he got into the corner there ~~were~~ <sup>was</sup> continuous chanting of slogans?
- A. This chanting, I think, had been going on for some time prior to this and this continued but very shortly after the cordon had formed, further ~~indictments~~ <sup>indictments</sup> were read.
- Q. When you say 'shortly': Was it more in the nature of fifteen seconds, or more in the nature of a minute?
- A. Probably half a minute.
- Q. You mention the suggestion that the meeting be moved back to the committee room. It seems to be Professor Gordon who actually made the suggestion.
- A. No, it was a student at first. Professor Gordon agreed. I couldn't see the student but it came from the back of the lobby. There was some effort to do this although the passage into the bar was completely blocked. But almost at this time the police came in.



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I had already observed them some way down the lobby but it was just after this suggestion had been made that the police moved in.

Q. Would you say that the general reaction to that suggestion was yes or not.

A. I think there were a number there in favour but I couldn't say that everyone was desirous that it should happen.

Q. Speaking more generally now taking first the period when Dr. Inch was in the corner to the arrival of the police, we have got fairly complete evidence of the way in which it proceeded, and we know also that one or two members of the staff who tried to get into Dr. Inch, were certainly obstructed by the cordon. Is there anything of significance that you observed while you were in the lobby at that time.

A. The general atmosphere was hostile. There were cries of "Murderer" which I thought was quite intimidating. The actual questions, I quite remember them all, but one of the more certain questions was concerning the sale of sarin to the U.S. I must confess Dr. Inch seemed a little flustered at this stage and he seemed to be under some pressure in my opinion. There were other questions but I couldn't be sure of them.



- Q. Would you say about forty people, in the lobby.
- A. I'd rather say about thirty to thirty five but it is very difficult to be accurate because they were crowding in the doorway. It was absolutely packed, apart from the cordon.
- Q. Apart from the fact that there were a great crowd of people in a small room and apart from the nature of the questioning which must have been hostile, were there other factors in the situation which made it seem intimidating?
- A. No. There were no threats of violence against Dr. Inch but ~~from~~ the actual tone of the questions and the subsidiary shouts of "Murderer" created hostility.
- Q. There was nothing particularly that you noticed about the front cordon that struck you as more hostile or more shocking than the rest of the crowd behind?
- A. No. I must say I found it difficult to distinguish their aims and I wasn't sure whether they were preventing the crowd from coming in on Dr. Inch or stopping him from leaving. There were no questions that I remember from the front cordon, they behaved simply as a wall. All the questions seemed to come from behind.
- Q. Would you agree that Dr. Inch's answers by and large were audible to the crowd?
- A. Some were and some weren't depending on the fact that some students anticipated what he was going to say and drown him.
- Q. Turning now to the arrival of the police. Did you remain in the



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lobby after the arrival of the police until they came out?

A. Yes. As soon as the police arrived a certain number of the students sat down and there was a certain amount of turmoil in the police reaching Dr. Inch and this had the effect of forcing the rest of us back towards the bar entrance. From there on it became every man for himself. It was a violent crush and the most frightening part of it.

Q. I have put it to some witnesses in this way. You have about eight policemen trying to make their way through the crowd and no doubt inevitably knocking some of them on the way. You have the crowd trying to obstruct the arrival of the police and later on you have pushing. Dealing with the arrival first, was the confusion purely as you would expect with a situation of this nature or did you witness any more unpleasant incidents or any kind of violence?

A. From where I was situated, which was on the wall opposite the place of entry of the police, I couldn't really see what happened to the demonstrators sitting down. I was aware that they had sat down but the cordon was still functioning and I couldn't really see what happened. There <sup>was</sup> quite a good deal of scuffling.



- Q. As they came through the standing demonstrators, did you notice any student or demonstrator shout at the police?
- A. No, but one student was being particularly obstructive but by that time I had been forced back towards the bar door and I couldn't be sure of what went on from then. My back was towards the police at this stage.
- Q. Presumably they had to break through the front cordon?
- A. Yes. I think this was one of their main difficulties.
- Q. Then it seems that there was a period when the police themselves were hemmed in with Dr. Inch?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Did the cordon reform around the police?
- A. I wasn't aware of this at all.
- Q. It seems that they had to wait a minute or half a minute before they extricated him?
- A. I would say perhaps longer than that. It seemed longer because there were certain demonstrators in the bar entrance that just refused to budge, even though it was apparent that people were in acute discomfort, and they would not relent at all. Q. Could it have been a couple of minutes?
- A. Quite possibly.
- Q. I don't know what you saw of the extrication of Dr. Inch by the police?
- A. Very little. He was taken back ~~by~~ through the corridor. That is my impression. By that time I was out in the restaurant foyer. In fact I had mounted the stairs by that time in M10 to get out



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of the way.

Q. Do you have any clear recollection of the extent of the confusion and the way in which he was got out of the door?

A. No, except it was very confused. My impression was that they were trying to go the other way but this was only by sounds and shouts.

Q. Did you notice Dr. Bowden taking part in helping the police get Dr. Inch out?

A. No. I didn't see him at all.

Q. Looking back on it, given the number of people in that very small room and the contrary aims which were pursued, was the confusion less, in fact, than one might have expected? Could it have developed into something more serious?

A. I think it could have developed into quite a serious situation, particularly towards the end when the barrier at the door were not relenting at all and the people were piling in from the lobby. I think it could have been a very nasty situation indeed. Had anyone fallen or come to the ground, then they would have been trampled on.



- Q. Going back to the lecture room, were you close to the door, as Dr. Inch was trying to get out.
- A. Probably three or four ~~y~~ards. In fact I was very close to Dr. Inch when the mustard was thrown, some of it spilled over me.
- Q. Can you say whether or not you were aware that Dr. Tillett was by Dr. Inch's side more or less through out this particular confusion.
- A. I couldn't really say because my attention was distracted by the throwing of mustard.
- Q. Could you say whether you observed Dr. Tillett going out with Dr. Inch?
- A. No. At that stage I didn't. There was again a general scuffle in the doorway. There were scuffles behind me as well.
- Q. You in fact managed to get out among the first behind Dr. Inch?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Do you have any idea of whether you had left Dr. Tillett behind in the lecture room, or would you be unable to say.
- A. I would be unable to say. I wasn't aware of Dr. Tillett in my immediate surroundings.
- Q. Do you remember hearing any talk of the police?
- A. None whatsoever.
- Q. Did you observe the efforts made by the porters, Mr. Davis and Mr. Wyatt to get Dr. Inch out of the room?
- A. I couldn't say. I was aware that someone was attempting to get him out but I couldn't say who.
- Q. Could you state what <sup>was</sup> the nature of the prevention of getting them out?
- A. A general scuffling and blocking.



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- Q. What I am saying is that you can stop a man leaving purely by standing in the doorway generally obstructing in a passive sense or you can actively take part in people being dragged away, preventing people from helping and the like. Could you differentiate?
- A. No. Obviously as soon as pushing starts, people are pushed back.
- Q. Did you happen to notice the student who was acting in a most threatening manner? What was the nature of the threats?
- A. Dr. Tillett was concerned for the occupants of the room and that it was filling up rapidly and I think he was trying to limit the numbers coming in. This particular student. Dr. Tillett tried to usher him out whereupon he reacted very violently and very rapidly with his arms. Almost like breaking out but there was no question of Dr. Tillett forcing him to leave. But Chandler seemed in a very excitable manner. I have noticed this afterwards, I was sitting near him in a general meeting and he seemed very excitable then.
- Q. Your description of his movement was that he pushing aside Dr. Tillett, which doesn't convey to me to be threats?
- A. This is what it appeared to be to me.
- Q. Did he say anything?
- A. He may have done. I wasn't close enough to hear.