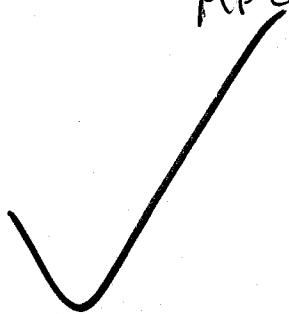


Irvine Patnick, OBE, MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

MP22



24 APR 1989

20 April 1989

Dear Sir Peter,

Hillsborough Stadium Disaster 15th April 1989

I enclose some rough notes which I made yesterday when it became clear that matters which had been reported to me would have to be considered by you.

I have resisted the temptation to edit and redraft my notes as I hope you will agree that they may be more valuable as an almost instant recollection. No doubt the officers concerned will be identified and will give their own evidence to your enquiry which should corroborate what was told to me. I should emphasise that I myself did not sensationalise what I was told. The television interview with me shows that I was restrained. Any sensationalisation of the matter came, as with so many other bad things, from the media.

I will of course be pleased to attend before you or answer any requests from you for further information.

Yours sincerely,

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'I. Patnick', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

The Rt. Hon Lord Justice Taylor,
Hillsborough Public Enquiry,
c/o Home Office,
50 Queen Anne's Gate,
LONDON SW1H 9AT.



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Typed by Irvine Patnick 19th April 1989

15th April 1989 Hillsborough Stadium Disaster

The following are my recollections of the above date :-

" I was in the room I use as an office at home when my wife came to inform me of 'trouble' shown on television at the foot-ball match being played at Sheffield Wednesdays' Football ground and switched on and moved a television set to enable me to watch the scenes.

It became compulsive viewing and I virtually stopped work on my word processor .

It became obvious after several telephone interruptions by reporters to me I should leave home and find out what was happening. My wife informed me that staff were being called into Hospitals.

I left home I am not aware at what time and went to the Royal Hallamshire Hospital parked in Glossop Road and went into the hospital spoke with a Miss [] and inquired if they were OK she implied they were it was very busy and I left just as a physician some one that I did not know offered to help and was instructed to see if any patients could be sent home.

From there I decided to visit Hammerton Road Police Station which I considered would be used by the Police. When I arrived near Hammerton Road the police were assisting traffic , a double deck coach from Liverpool was parked outside Hillsborough Barracks opposite Hillsborough Boys Club on Langsett Road .

I went in to the Boys Club which was crowded with people including police officers who were speaking to people present whom I deduced were from Liverpool . I inquired of a police who was in charge , and he pointed to a clergy man I said Hello to a police officer who recognised me and left and went to Hammerton Road police station which was very busy and after introducing myself to a police constable decided to move off.

The next place to visit was the Sheffield Wednesday Football Ground , I parked in Leppings Lane and went toward the main entrance produced my House of Commons pass and requested to see the Chairman of Sheffield Wednesday Football Club. After a while the person on the door informed me that he had gone home and that admission to the club was not possible.

Leaving the ground I saw a Radio Sheffield mobile transmitter and was invited by David Holmes a political reporter if I would care to do an interview which I did. Robert Jackson Radio Sheffield's sports reporter then spoke with me . They informed me that The Hon. Colin Moynihan MP The Minister for Sport was flying to Sheffield but did not know how or where he would land.

Having a mobile telephone I tried to obtain the ministers mobile telephone number whilst still at the ground the mobile telephone number of the Minister from a colleague David Evans MP but he did not have it.



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Sheet 2 Irvine Patnick OBE MP.

I spoke with my Private Secretary Miss Daphne Hickson at her home in London by mobile telephone. I informed of a paper I had left in a file on her desk with the ministers mobile phone number and inquired how I could obtain this information from the file. She stated that no staff would be on duty to do that but offered to go to her office and then telephone me back with the phone number. She did just that and informed she had spoken to the duty officer at the D. of E. The minister was leaving Biggin Hill at 9.00 pm was in his car and I may just catch him. The time was then about 8.30pm. I went on to the S.Y Police H.Q. left my car on a double yellow line whilst I went in to ask if I may see the Chief Constable I had to show my identity to the officer on duty whom I later discovered had answered a public call for off duty police officers to report for duty he gave me a visitors pass. I inquired where to park and was informed the Police car park was full and so went to park my car elsewhere. I tried to telephone the Minister but was unsuccessful. I then walked back to HQ. and was informed that the Chief Constable was tied up giving TV interviews one crew was with him and another waiting.

I again telephoned the minister who answered I explained the situation looked grim offered him and his press officer accommodation if they were staying and inquired of the place the helicopter they were to travel to Sheffield by would be landing. He did not know but requested I should meet him and the police would know his place of landing.

Radio Hallam rang me for an interview I took a note of the number and stated I would call up afterwards.

The PC on duty rang the Chief Constables staff officer and then informed me that the Deputy Chief Constable would be coming to see me in reception. The Deputy Chief Constable Peter Hayes came to see me and I inquired where the minister was to land. he was unaware of the visit but thought other Ministers were probably visiting tomorrow (Sunday morning). He checked out if the Minister of Sport was visiting Saturday confirmed this and would be landing at the Niagara Ground. I inquired how long the flying time was- we discussed this -and I concluded an hour and a quarter plus.

I thanked him handed back my visitors pass and left the building I telephoned Radio Hallam agreed to be interviewed and then walked up to the station and gave the interview. Jim Greensmith the head of news at the station then inquired if the minister was visiting which I confirmed he asked where he would be landing which I declined to give but after further inquiry indicated it could be on the football ground side of the city. He informed me the Prime Minister and the Home Secretary were to visit the next day.

I left Radio Hallam and went to Niagara Ground and arrived at the SY Police Transport dept. and wearing casual clothes was challenged by a police officer I my produced my identity and requested information on the helicopters landing site he directions which were the sports ground just at the rear of the building. I then went by car to the ground and parked.



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Sheet 3 Irvine Patnick OBE MP.

It must have been then around 9.30 pm. . some while later police cars arrived and moved on to the sports field and manoeuvred into position made a cross with on the ground with headlights and set the blue lights going .

I locked my car and moved towards the senior police officers who were gathering. A Chief Superintendent David Duckworth whom I knew from my years as a senior member of South Yorkshire County Council when he had a lower rank asked if I would go and speak with some of the officers that had been on duty at the stadium , he stated they were down in the dumps . This I readily agreed to . Someone who I think was a senior officer came toward the Chief Superintendent and attempted to console each other.

I moved into the building there were many officers I noted a sergeant and a superintendents' crown on jackets amongst those present they were sitting around in groups they were wearing police sweaters it was very quiet and my reception I would describe as 'frosty'.

I moved away from them and was greeted by a Sergeant not on duty in mufti who was on sick leave I had met during my South Yorkshire Council days. We spoke I inquired if he was better when an officer detached himself from a sitting around a nearby table and said words to the effect I quote 'Did I want to know the truth' I indicated that I did and the following is my recollection . I was taken back to his table and from police officers around this table I heard the following which I will try to convey just as I heard it :- 'Some of the supporters were pissed out of their minds . They were pissing on us while we were pulling the dead and injured out they were swearing at us kicking and punching us and hampering our work'. One seated showed me the marks of the kicks on his left trouser leg and the marks on his skin. Another one informed how the crowd had lifted up a Police horse how the fans had been crawling beneath the horses and inquired if I was like him and gave them a wide berth I affirmed this

One said ' I picked up a girl she was dead she was in my arms her blouse was torn she had no bra on her breasts were exposed when someone shouted at me throw over here we'll fuck her. It was booze that did it-you speak up for us tell them in Parliament what happened. '

I I was advised by senior officers to take what had been said 'with a pinch of salt '. The lights of the helicopter indicated its arrival and I left to greet the minister and introduce him to the Senior police officers present. I informed the minister of what I had heard.

On Monday the press were telephoning me with 'stories' they had heard and on Tuesday 18th April the media were on to the story of looting, violence and drink and could I confirm this. Some calls were taken by my secretary and not returned by me . Despite the fact on those two days I did not speak to some newspapers and yet some took and printed a garbled tale. On the 19th of April a Graham Boon of Whites News Agency asked if I could confirm the police had found dead bodies outside the ground I could not and asked why after a telephone conversation yesterday with a colleague Peter Moxon some comments had been attributed to me the day before which I had not made. He apologised and informed me it had been garbled by others that had used it. That sameday a reporter from the Sheffield Star a Jane? Gott asked if I had heard a police horse was badly injured with over 100 cigarette burns on it I informed her I could not

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Sheet 4 Irvine Patnick OBE MP

~~Eventually after being sickened by the 'myths' that had sprung up about the disaster I repeated the story in part to the media in order to correct the rumours circulating the police officers had related to me.~~

I am not aware of names ranks or numbers of the officers but do believe they were telling me the truth.

What a reporter says I said, is always open to misrepresentation.
For a true record of what I said, the television video recording
will no doubt be available.

S. Patnick

20.4.89.