

Coroner's Inquests into the London Bombings of 7 July 2005  
Hearing transcripts - 25 January 2011 - Afternoon session

1 (2.00 pm)

2 LADY JUSTICE HALLETT: Mr O'Connor?

3 MR ANDREW O'CONNOR: My Lady, may I start by reading the  
4 statement of Richmal Oates-Whitehead?

5 The statement of Richmal Oates-Whitehead is dated  
6 14 July 2005. As I think you're aware,  
7 Ms Oates-Whitehead died a little over a month later on  
8 17 August 2005.

9 LADY JUSTICE HALLETT: Sorry, before you do read it,  
10 Mr O'Connor, is this the statement where there is  
11 a caveat?

12 MR ANDREW O'CONNOR: My Lady, there is.

13 LADY JUSTICE HALLETT: The fact it's being read does not  
14 mean that its entire contents are accepted?

15 MR ANDREW O'CONNOR: That's the case, my Lady, and I was  
16 going to draw particular attention, as I read the  
17 statement, to one particular issue that we will come  
18 back to in other evidence.

19 LADY JUSTICE HALLETT: Thank you very much.

20 MR ANDREW O'CONNOR: The statement reads as follows.

21 Statement of MS RICHMAL OATES-WHITEHEAD read

22 "I make this statement with regards to my  
23 involvement in the London bombings which happened on  
24 Thursday, 7 July 2005.

25 "I am a qualified doctor and work for BMJ Clinical

1 Evidence. I have been a doctor for 15 years."  
2 My Lady, that was the issue, the question of  
3 Ms Oates-Whitehead's qualifications, as to which we will  
4 hear a little more evidence in due course.

5 LADY JUSTICE HALLETT: Thank you.

6 MR ANDREW O'CONNOR:

7 "On Thursday, 7 July 2005, at approximately 7.00 am,  
8 I was on the third floor of BMA House, which is situated  
9 on Tavistock Square. I was busy preparing for  
10 a promotion interview. I was aware throughout the  
11 morning of people phoning, stating that the Tubes were  
12 rubbish. At approximately 9.50 am, I heard an enormous  
13 bang. I could see what I would describe as large pieces  
14 of paper or confetti fluttering from the air. Rumours  
15 swept through the building saying there was a bomb  
16 within our building, so we evacuated.

17 "I grabbed my stethoscope and made my way outside.

18 I was in company with another doctor, Dr David Tovey.  
19 As we went out, I was aware of a female walking up the  
20 steps of our building. I believe she may work in my  
21 building. I could see she was very upset. I will refer  
22 to her as A. I turned her round to evacuate her.

23 Dr Tovey and I went out the back door and made our way  
24 round the front. Police were in attendance and were not  
25 allowing people near the bus.

1 "I made my way to the County Hotel where injured  
2 persons were. I would describe these people as  
3 priority 3 cases. My role here was to assess people.  
4 There was also a nurse present and other first aiders.  
5 I believe I treated about 12 or 13 people here.  
6 I remember two in particular who I'll refer to as B and  
7 C. I will refer to them later in my statement.  
8 "A police officer then approached me and requested  
9 I assist with evacuating the wounded from the bus as  
10 there may be another bomb. The urgency was such that  
11 these people had to be moved regardless of injury.  
12 I approached the bus from the rear nearside. There  
13 appeared to be a big gap, then just seats. The entire  
14 back of the bus had gone. I could see organ and body  
15 parts on the footway. I remember seeing clearly a whole  
16 liver and what I believed to be four right arms.  
17 I stood on the bottom deck of the bus entering from the  
18 middle doors. I could see a male on the left-hand side  
19 of the bus in a seat. DC Perry has shown me a diagram  
20 of the bus and I have placed a letter D where I believe  
21 his location was."  
22 My Lady, could we have on the screen [INQ8952-2]?  
23 My Lady, just pausing in the statement for a moment,  
24 you will see that this is a plan of the upper deck of  
25 the bus. Notwithstanding that, the D that you'll see

1 there would appear to be consistent with the position of  
2 Sam Ly or certainly insofar as it was on the nearside of  
3 the bus. As you will recall from the other plan, he  
4 was, in fact, sitting several seats further to the rear  
5 of the lower deck of the bus.

6 LADY JUSTICE HALLETT: Sorry, just a minute.

7 MR ANDREW O'CONNOR: Perhaps we could have the other plan?

8 LADY JUSTICE HALLETT: Is this consistent? There's  
9 obviously a question mark as to how much reliance I can  
10 place on any of this, but:

11 "I stood on the bottom deck, having entered from the  
12 middle doors. I could see a male on the left-hand  
13 side."

14 That, if she's come in the middle doors and on the  
15 left-hand side, is either likely to be looking down the  
16 bus towards the rear at the offside or it's on the  
17 left-hand side and going towards the driver. I'm not  
18 sure that it is consistent with Mr Ly, is it?

19 MR ANDREW O'CONNOR: My Lady, if one starts with the plan --

20 LADY JUSTICE HALLETT: Leaving aside she's got the wrong  
21 deck.

22 MR ANDREW O'CONNOR: The deck is wrong, that's the first  
23 point, although, as we've seen from the photographs, by  
24 this time, certainly towards the rear, the top and  
25 bottom deck had collapsed into each other. If one looks

1 at the position D, what one can say is that it is on the  
2 correct side of the bus to be Sam Ly. It is two or  
3 three seats too far forward. In fact, it's three seats  
4 too far forward to be Sam Ly, but it is on the correct  
5 side of the bus and it is next to the window.

6 As far as the left side of the bus, my Lady, from  
7 where she entered the bus, as you say, it would have  
8 been on the right. He was sitting on the left-hand side  
9 of the bus as one looked in the direction of travel.

10 LADY JUSTICE HALLETT: But this plan, because it's the upper  
11 deck, has no middle doors.

12 MR ANDREW O'CONNOR: No, my Lady.

13 LADY JUSTICE HALLETT: I don't feel I can place any reliance  
14 upon that observation at all.

15 MR ANDREW O'CONNOR: Well, my Lady, I'll read on in the  
16 statement. Perhaps we can keep the plan on the screen:

17 "Directly behind him was a female. I have marked  
18 her position on the diagram with a letter E."

19 You can, my Lady, just see the letter E in the seat  
20 behind the seat that was marked letter E:

21 "Both these persons were on the top deck. I could  
22 reach them from my position."

23 My Lady, just for ease, I will skip to the end of  
24 the statement and read a line in which lady E is  
25 described. She says:

1 "The person I have labelled as E was a black female,  
2 early 20s, black curly hair. She had a head wound and  
3 believed broken neck."  
4 Resuming, she says:  
5 "I pronounced the female E as dead at 10.13 am. She  
6 had no seat, I believe possibly a broken neck."  
7 My Lady, clearly there is an issue as to whether  
8 that person may have been Shyanuja Parathasangary:  
9 "With the help of firemen and police, we placed  
10 people on to table-tops and evacuated them off the bus.  
11 I believe I evacuated six or seven people. I went to  
12 the courtyard of BMA House where all the priority 1  
13 cases were. These were the people off the bus. I was  
14 aware a female had died here. I began assessing people.  
15 I remember one female called Emma. She had a rigid  
16 abdomen, chest pain. I will refer to her as F. We had  
17 to move people back in the courtyard as police informed  
18 us that there would be a controlled explosion nearby.  
19 I believe we were in the courtyard for about one and  
20 a half hours. I clearly remember a plane flying  
21 overhead and all of us looking up, fearing the worst.  
22 Police instructed us previously to turn off our mobiles.  
23 We were again instructed by police to move people, so  
24 using table-tops we moved people to a meeting room.  
25 This room is called the Hastings room. Here I continued

1 to treat people for at least two to three hours until  
2 they were conveyed to hospital. We debriefed ourselves  
3 and I left the building at approximately 15.15 hours.  
4 "I would describe priority 3 cases as the walking  
5 wounded, priority 2 cases as seriously injured and  
6 priority 1 cases as critical. The female I have  
7 labelled as A I would describe as black, English,  
8 mid-to-late 20s, shoulder-length, dark-coloured hair.  
9 The person I labelled B I would describe as a black male  
10 wearing a grey suit, heavy build, approximately 5' 11"  
11 tall. He had a very nasty eye injury. He was quite  
12 agitated and wanted me to clear his eye up. The person  
13 I have labelled C was a black female, large build, about  
14 48 to 55 years old. I believe she was suffering from  
15 shock. She also had chest pains and cuts. The person  
16 I labelled D I would describe as possibly Chinese or  
17 Japanese. He had a very nasty leg wound, right leg. He  
18 was about 20 to 35 years and had floppy, black hair.  
19 Dr Tovey treated this male.  
20 "The person I have labelled as E was a black female,  
21 early 20s, black, curly hair. She had a head wound and  
22 believed broken neck. The person I have labelled F was  
23 called Emma. She was 21 to 22 years, small build, long,  
24 blond hair, wearing faded jeans. I remember cutting off  
25 her bra to treat her. I would describe this as blue and

1 pink lace, half-cut, underwired. I cut through the  
2 centre of it."

3 She describes the fact that she exhibits the diagram  
4 of the top deck that we have seen and she gives the  
5 exhibit number.

6 My Lady, she then goes on to describe what she was  
7 wearing as:

8 "One black jacket, a pink top, purple skirt and  
9 a pair of red shoes and a green stethoscope. I wore all  
10 of these items when treating people from the bus."

11 She then gives a little further information which is  
12 not relevant for present purposes.

13 LADY JUSTICE HALLETT: Mr Saunders, do you want to say  
14 anything about this statement, because I do understand  
15 how it affects those whom you represent?

16 MR SAUNDERS: My Lady, I would be very grateful, thank you.  
17 May I just make this one observation, that of course we  
18 now know that this lady died from natural causes,  
19 because I know there have been a number of different  
20 representations as to what happened, but we are -- and  
21 I'm grateful to the Metropolitan Police who have  
22 assisted us in being able to confirm the factual basis  
23 of what, in fact, happened there.

24 May I say that, if she had been alive, we would have  
25 asked for her to have been called. We would have sought

1 more details because, as your Ladyship will be well  
2 aware, bearing in mind the last matters my learned  
3 friend read about her clothing, it was a very distinct  
4 outfit she wore that day: pink top, purple skirt, red  
5 shoes and this green stethoscope.

6 My Lady, we have obviously borne in mind throughout  
7 the evidence and in advance all of the witnesses, not  
8 just those that your Ladyship has heard from, and there  
9 appears to be no reference to a lady fitting that  
10 description being on the bus.

11 LADY JUSTICE HALLETT: That's what I thought.

12 MR SAUNDERS: So we would obviously have pressed that, and  
13 bearing in mind other matters -- and we're grateful for  
14 what Dr Tovey has been able to say in his statement --  
15 and a suggestion she makes that he was treating various  
16 people, we would have asked about that.

17 I'm very grateful your Ladyship has allowed us, in  
18 the course of the evidence, to ask every single witness  
19 the one obvious question that this family have had,  
20 which was whether their beloved daughter died  
21 immediately, and we are satisfied, and we hope  
22 your Ladyship is as well, that there is absolutely no  
23 suggestion from any of the witnesses, whether they be  
24 those firefighters and police officers who we know  
25 clearly did get on the bus or those, including

1 Dr Everington, who was beside her at a time when Sam Ly  
2 was being assisted, the ladies at the back of the bus  
3 who had to scramble beneath her legs to extricate  
4 themselves, there is no suggestion whatsoever other than  
5 that Shyanu died immediately, and that's why the family  
6 have been very conscious to ask those questions.

7 So we are in this position, my Lady, that if she had  
8 been available to be called, we would have asked her to  
9 have been, to further make enquiries, but at this stage,  
10 the family are resolved to the fact that all the  
11 witnesses are unanimous in what they have to say.

12 Can I say, because I know Dr Tovey is coming next,  
13 I'll have very few questions for him either, bearing in  
14 mind the detail of his statement, and we're grateful for  
15 that.

16 LADY JUSTICE HALLETT: Because the evidence points sadly in  
17 the way that you've said, the fact that she may have  
18 said she was a doctor, may claim to have pronounced  
19 anybody dead or a broken neck or whatever she's done, as  
20 far as you're concerned, she's plainly made no  
21 difference?

22 MR SAUNDERS: We can see absolutely no difference. Her  
23 claim of being medically qualified or not, which is one  
24 of the reasons why we've investigated as thoroughly as  
25 we have each witness that either mentions or, even if

1 they haven't mentioned Shyanu, were close to her at the  
2 time. That's why the family have always been anxious to  
3 know that there was absolutely nothing more that could  
4 have been discovered as part of this process.

5 LADY JUSTICE HALLETT: Thank you very much. I don't think  
6 anybody else is affected.

7 Sorry, Mr O'Connor, we interrupted you.

8 MR ANDREW O'CONNOR: Not at all, my Lady. May I invite you  
9 now to call Dr Tovey?

10 DR DAVID IAN TOVEY (sworn)

11 Questions by MR ANDREW O'CONNOR

12 MR ANDREW O'CONNOR: Could you give your full name, please?

13 A. It's David Ian Tovey.

14 Q. Dr Tovey, if you could try to keep your voice up?

15 A. Okay.

16 Q. I'm sorry, the microphone in front of you doesn't  
17 actually amplify your voice and it's a large room.

18 A. Okay.

19 Q. If you can speak as loudly as possible, that will help  
20 everyone. Dr Tovey, in July 2005, were you the  
21 editorial director of BMJ Knowledge?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. What, if you can explain it, did that entail?

24 A. So the BMJ Knowledge department was the producer of what  
25 we call evidence-based -- like electronic textbooks,

1 really, for doctors and the public.

2 So one of the products that we produced was called  
3 Clinical Evidence, and that was for doctors, and the  
4 other was called Best Treatments and that was  
5 particularly aimed at the public.

6 Q. So, in fact, the British Medical Journal that we perhaps  
7 have all heard of was something separate again?

8 A. Sorry, yes, the BMJ Group has a number of different  
9 areas of work. The BMJ journal being the one that  
10 people will have heard of particularly. But there are  
11 a number of others of which the Knowledge department was  
12 one of those.

13 Q. I see. You are medically qualified?

14 A. I am.

15 Q. You were, I think, a GP between 1989 and 2003?

16 A. That's right.

17 Q. Was it in 2003 that you took the post at BMJ that we've  
18 just been talking about?

19 A. In -- yes, in September 2003, I left general practice  
20 and moved to the BMJ to become deputy editor on the  
21 product Clinical Evidence.

22 Q. I see, and you then remained at the BMJ until --

23 A. I remained at the BMJ until December 2008, when I moved  
24 to my present job.

25 Q. Just tell us what your present job is, please?

1 A. I'm the editor in chief of something called the  
2 Cochrane Library.

3 Q. I see. As at 2005, then, you were medically qualified  
4 but hadn't actually been in practice for a couple of  
5 years or so?

6 A. I hadn't seen -- I hadn't seen patients professionally  
7 from September 2003.

8 Q. I see. On 7 July 2005, in the morning, you were at work  
9 in the BMA building?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. You describe in the statement that you provided to the  
12 police that, at about 9.30, or around that time, you  
13 were having a meeting on the second floor of the BMA  
14 building. Is that right?

15 A. I think it was the second floor, yes.

16 Q. Can you remember what the meeting was about and who else  
17 was there?

18 A. I remember that Fiona Godlee and Charlotte Pesridge, who  
19 are colleagues of mine, were both present. There may  
20 have been other people which I can't remember. It was  
21 about whether we would start a new project. I could  
22 tell you more, but I suspect --

23 Q. That's probably enough, at least at the moment.

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. We know that the number 30 bus, a bomb on the bus

1 exploded outside the BMA building at 9.47 that morning.

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Was your meeting that you've just described still in  
4 process at that moment?

5 A. Yes. From my memory, the -- I'm pretty sure that the  
6 meeting room had no windows, it certainly had no  
7 external windows, but we heard the blast very clearly  
8 and quite close to where the room was there's a large  
9 stone balcony on the second floor of BMA House  
10 overlooking Tavistock Square and Upper Woburn Place, and  
11 we, along with lots of other people, streamed over to  
12 the balcony to see what was going on and, as we are  
13 getting there, people are already turning away,  
14 obviously distressed.

15 Q. It's obvious from what you say that, when you heard the  
16 blast, you thought that something had happened down in  
17 Tavistock Square?

18 A. Yes, I mean, I remember somebody saying, "That wasn't  
19 thunder, was it?", and it was very clear that this was  
20 louder and somehow different from thunder.

21 Q. When you went to the balcony, did you have a view over  
22 Tavistock Square, including the bus?

23 A. I did.

24 Q. What was your reaction then?

25 A. Like everybody else, I was really shocked, that doesn't

1 seem to quite cover it, but it was an extraordinarily  
2 shocking, distressing thing. And I don't remember that  
3 I looked at the -- at this scene for very long and,  
4 along with other people, I turned round and moved away  
5 from the balcony, and moved towards the back -- and  
6 essentially moved along with other people, exited the  
7 BMA House.

8 Q. Leaving BMA House --

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. -- was this because, at this point, you were being told  
11 or asked to evacuate the building or was it simply  
12 a sort of group movement towards the exit in response to  
13 the blast?

14 A. I've been thinking about that, and I just can't  
15 remember.

16 Q. It may be, of course, that it started as a general group  
17 movement and at some point you were told to leave by --

18 A. I have always thought that we were somehow moved that  
19 way, but thinking about it, I can't see how somebody  
20 would have got there so quickly. So I think I have to  
21 say I don't remember.

22 Q. You were on the second floor, you recall?

23 A. The balcony is on the second floor, yes.

24 Q. So there would have been a few flights of stairs to get  
25 down to ground level?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. As you describe, were you then still with the people  
3 that you'd been in the meeting with?

4 A. As I remember, I was still with Fiona Godlee. I don't  
5 know what happened to Charlotte. And I think in the  
6 statement, as I say, I -- somewhere along the line,  
7 I don't think she was in the meeting, I also met  
8 Richmal.

9 Q. You've described then that you and Fiona Godlee were  
10 making your way to the exit?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. But by that point, there were a number of people doing  
13 the same thing?

14 A. Yes, lots of other people heading in the same direction,  
15 yes.

16 Q. It was during this process you say you recall you met  
17 Richmal Oates-Whitehead?

18 A. That's exactly right.

19 Q. I just want to ask you a few questions about her, if I  
20 may.

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. We have a record that her job title at the time was as  
23 clinical editor of the BMJ.

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Although it may be that what I mean by that is not the

1 British Medical Journal itself, but the organisation  
2 you've described?

3 A. No, she never worked on the BMJ journal itself. She was  
4 a clinical editor on Clinical Evidence.

5 Q. Was she, as it were, one of your staff?

6 A. She was.

7 Q. You mention in one of your statements, I think, that, in  
8 fact, she had the desk next to yours in the BMA  
9 building?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. We know, I think, that she had started to work at the  
12 BMA in early 2005. Is that your memory?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. In fact, you had appointed her?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. You've agreed with me that she was the clinical editor  
17 of the BMJ?

18 A. She was a clinical editor. There's a team of about six  
19 or seven editors, some of whom were clinical editors,  
20 therefore with medical background, and some were  
21 epidemiologists, without a medical background.

22 Q. I see. She was, though, a clinical editor?

23 A. Clinical editor, yes.

24 Q. So one of that group of people who had a medical  
25 background or were thought to have a medical background?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Can you tell us something about what her job was and  
3 what she did on a day-to-day basis?

4 A. What Clinical Evidence did was try to get across the  
5 range of medicine, look for all the evidence that had  
6 been published to answer given questions. So a certain  
7 drug in, say, Parkinson's disease, and we had external  
8 people who tried to do that work for us, and then it  
9 came back into BMJ and the job of the clinical editors  
10 was to edit it to check that it was right, to look back  
11 at the research papers, and be clear that what was being  
12 written was valid, and to try to put it into something  
13 readable.

14 Q. She performed that task?

15 A. She performed that task.

16 Q. Presumably, you had an overview of the task that she was  
17 performing?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. As at July 2005, she'd been working with you for six  
20 months or so?

21 A. Yes, I think she started in the first week of February.

22 Q. Would it be fair to say that, by that stage, you had  
23 been working with her long enough to form a view as to  
24 whether she was able to do her job properly?

25 A. The tasks that we were asking her to do, she was --

1 I had a view that she was perfectly competent to do  
2 that.

3 LADY JUSTICE HALLETT: Was that on the basis you believed  
4 her to be a doctor?

5 A. I did believe her to be a doctor. In some sense that  
6 was immaterial, because the work that she was doing  
7 didn't particularly require her to be a doctor, so my  
8 basis for being satisfied was that she was doing the job  
9 I was asking her to do adequately -- competently.

10 MR ANDREW O'CONNOR: In terms of formal requirements for the  
11 job --

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. -- is it right that you required someone, to do that job  
14 of clinical editor, to have a medical degree?

15 A. Yes, the job description would have said a medical or  
16 a pharmacy degree.

17 Q. You believed that she did?

18 A. I believed she had a medical degree.

19 Q. Just to be clear, when you say you thought she was  
20 a doctor, is that what you meant, that she had a medical  
21 degree?

22 A. Sorry, that's exactly what I meant, yes.

23 Q. Of course, another slightly different meaning of the  
24 term "doctor" is that someone holds a PhD.

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Did you ever require someone doing that job to have  
2 a PhD?

3 A. No.

4 Q. Did you believe that Richmal Oates-Whitehead had a PhD?

5 A. No.

6 Q. After the events of 7 July, did you have reason to doubt  
7 whether, in fact, Richmal Oates-Whitehead had had  
8 a medical degree?

9 A. We did. We received communication around 5 August that  
10 made us question whether she had a medical degree and,  
11 indeed, some evidence that made it look to us highly  
12 suspicious that she did not have a medical degree.

13 Q. Did you take steps to investigate that information?

14 A. We did. We -- I obviously informed my seniors and we --  
15 that was on the Friday evening of 5 August and, on the  
16 Monday morning of 8 August, we had a meeting at which we  
17 agreed that an investigation was appropriate and we  
18 initiated that straightaway.

19 Q. You initiated the investigation on 8 August?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. As I said to her Ladyship a few minutes ago, in fact,  
22 Richmal Oates-Whitehead died only a week or so later, on  
23 17 August.

24 A. That's right.

25 Q. Had those investigations been concluded at the time of

1 her death?

2 A. Well, we hadn't had any contact -- we had early contact  
3 with Richmal at which she offered her resignation. But  
4 we'd collected quite a lot of information, but we hadn't  
5 had further conversations with Richmal to discuss the  
6 findings.

7 Q. You say "findings". Had you reached at least  
8 provisional findings by that point?

9 A. I think that we had reached provisional findings, yes,  
10 because we had had contact from the academic  
11 institutions where she claimed to have had this  
12 qualification and it seemed clear that the information  
13 that we'd had was not accurate.

14 Q. I see. Can I take you back, then, to the events of  
15 7 July?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. You describe meeting Richmal Oates-Whitehead, as the  
18 building, as it were, was being evacuated or at least  
19 was evacuating itself.

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. I think it's right to say that you left the building by  
22 the rear exit?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. What did you do then?

25 A. Okay, so as we came out of the building at the back, we

1 funnelled -- we -- I and lots of other people, but Fiona  
2 was with me certainly at that point, and funnelled  
3 northwards, and then to the left, back on to -- it would  
4 have been Upper Woburn Place.

5 Q. Just pause there for a minute. I think the route -- we  
6 can take you to a map, if we need to, but I think  
7 basically the route you're describing is going out of  
8 the back of the building and then walking back towards  
9 Tavistock Square almost?

10 A. We went north rather than south. You can't get there  
11 south because there's a cul de sac. So essentially, we  
12 took the quickest route back to Tavistock Place, yes.

13 Q. Did you, in fact, get back to the front of the building  
14 and the bus?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. So you got back to a position where you could see the  
17 bus?

18 A. You could see the bus about 50 yards, I suppose, south  
19 of where we were.

20 Q. What did you do then?

21 A. At that point, we were trying to say that -- I was  
22 trying to say, and Fiona was trying to say, that we were  
23 medics, but the police were -- I have this image of the  
24 police coming back towards us north, heading north and  
25 saying "No, you've got to get back, you've got to get

1 back, there may be a second bomb", and as a result of  
2 that, we turned round and walked back, back again  
3 towards the back of BMA House, which is where we'd come  
4 from, and that's where we came across a number of people  
5 who were suffering from cuts and minor injuries who  
6 seemed to be walking but had minor injuries.

7 Q. I see. Did you then spend some time with them talking  
8 to them and providing what assistance you could?

9 A. We did.

10 Q. I think in one of your witness statements you estimate  
11 that period of time as being about 30 minutes?

12 A. Yes, that's pretty approximate, but about that time  
13 I would say.

14 Q. From all the other evidence we've heard, we know that  
15 while you were spending that 30 minutes at the back of  
16 the building what was going on in the front was  
17 immediate treatment of the casualties in the road and  
18 then a process by which they were moved from the road  
19 into the courtyard in the centre of the BMA building?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Did there come a time when you got through the police  
22 cordons and went into the courtyard?

23 A. Yes. After a period of time, I think it was probably  
24 about, as I say, 30 minutes, the back door to the BMA  
25 seemed to open and we -- and this is Fiona and I --

1 walked back into the courtyard of the BMA where we could  
2 see there were severely injured people lying in the  
3 courtyard being administered to by people around them.

4 Q. I see, so you didn't actually get into the courtyard  
5 back in the direction of the bus but, rather, from the  
6 Burton Street exit?

7 A. No, we came from the back of the BMA House.

8 Q. As you say, the casualties at that point were in the  
9 courtyard being attended to by a variety of people, BMA  
10 doctors and some of the emergency services.

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. What did you do in terms of assisting the casualties at  
13 that point?

14 A. We approached -- we approached the group of more  
15 severely injured people and made contact with the people  
16 who, in a sense, were nearest to us, so the right-hand  
17 side, the furthest away from the bus, and there was  
18 a gentleman lying there being administered by two or  
19 three people, and we joined on to that group.

20 Q. Is this the man you refer to in your statement I think  
21 as being an Asian casualty?

22 A. Yes, yes.

23 Q. You describe him as having a serious leg wound?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. I think that, following these events, it has at least

1     been suggested to you that that may have been Sam Ly,  
2     about whom we've heard a lot of evidence.

3     A. Yes.

4     Q. May I just ask you, we know that Sam Ly had a quite  
5     serious injury across his torso where the wreckage of  
6     the bus had been pressing him into place.

7     A. Yes.

8     Q. Do you remember any injury of that sort?

9     A. I don't.

10    Q. We know that he was Australian, although his parents had  
11    been Vietnamese.

12    A. Yes.

13    Q. Does that help you to remember whether it was him or  
14    not?

15    A. I certainly didn't have any recollection of somebody  
16    with an Australian accent, and he was conscious and  
17    talking.

18    Q. I think it's right to say that you've seen a photograph  
19    of Sam Ly since the events of that day.

20    A. Yes.

21    Q. For what it's worth -- and it's been a theme of the  
22    evidence that we've heard, of course, how difficult it  
23    is for people to remember these matters -- is it your  
24    feeling that that was the person you treated or not?

25    A. I have a feeling it wasn't, but if somebody showed me --

1 you know, there are some things he had in common. He  
2 was a male, he was, I guess, mid-20s, a young man, he  
3 had dark hair. In my mind, I saw somebody who was more  
4 Pakistani looking than I think Sam Ly was. But, you  
5 know, I wouldn't want to pretend that I'm sure about  
6 that, because I'm not.

7 Q. Thank you. That's very clear. Was it while you were in  
8 the courtyard at around this time that you met up again  
9 with Richmal Oates-Whitehead?

10 A. It was, yes.

11 Q. Did you have a conversation with her?

12 A. Yes. I mean, in the courtyard at that time there were  
13 relatively few people that I actually knew, so --  
14 Richmal being one of them, so we did talk during that  
15 morning, yes.

16 Q. You'd been separated from her for how long at that  
17 point?

18 A. I would guess 30, 35 minutes.

19 Q. Did she tell you about what she had been doing for that  
20 time that you'd been apart?

21 A. She did.

22 Q. What did she say?

23 A. What she said was that she had gone into the  
24 County Hotel, which is the hotel next to BMA House, that  
25 she'd been asked -- she'd been asked to see some people,

1 she'd seen a gentleman, a man who had an enucleated eye,  
2 she said, and then somebody had approached her and asked  
3 if she would go on to the bus to help there, and that --  
4 but that it could be dangerous, there could be a second  
5 device, and all she told me was that she'd been on the  
6 bus and that it was pretty terrible, and that's the only  
7 detail that I can remember that she said.

8 Q. You said that she told you that someone had approached  
9 her. Did she tell you who it was?

10 A. Sorry, a police officer.

11 Q. I think that, at around the time you met her, you were  
12 involved in assisting a different patient, a female  
13 patient?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Did Richmal Oates-Whitehead, in fact, assist with that  
16 patient or --

17 A. She did. I think that we were both -- I think this was  
18 back in the Hastings room. I think it started to rain  
19 and people had been moved back into the Hastings room  
20 and, whilst we were in the Hastings room, there was this  
21 young woman who broadly fits the description. All  
22 I remember of her was that she had some blood in her  
23 eye, I think in the anterior chamber of her eye, but  
24 possibly around the conjunctiva, and I remember Richmal  
25 saying, "I'm worried about her because her abdomen is

1 swelling and she may have a ruptured spleen, we should  
2 get her urgent medical attention", and I think that we  
3 then -- or she then contacted a -- somebody in a high  
4 visibility jacket, possibly, possibly, with "Doctor" on  
5 the back and arranged an evacuation -- an early  
6 evacuation of that woman.

7 Q. The context then in which you had a discussion with her  
8 about what she had been doing was very much one in which  
9 there were lots of other things going on at the same  
10 time?

11 A. There were lots of other things going on.

12 Q. So did you have a chance to take her up on what she'd  
13 said and ask her for more detail at that point?

14 A. No, not that I remember anyway.

15 Q. Did you, in fact, ever discuss that particular issue  
16 with her again?

17 A. No. I mean, I should say that part of the problem was,  
18 for the two weeks after the bomb, I was mostly out of  
19 the country and, also, nobody was getting back into  
20 BMA House, so there were no -- so there weren't obvious  
21 opportunities where we could have sat and talked about  
22 it.

23 Q. We've heard you mention the casualties being moved into  
24 the Hastings room because it started to rain. The  
25 Hastings room is at the back of the BMA building, isn't

1 it, near to the Burton Street entrance?

2 A. Yes, exactly.

3 Q. Did you remain there while the casualties were being  
4 taken by ambulance to hospital?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Were you there until all the casualties, in fact, had  
7 gone?

8 A. Yes. Once everybody had left the scene, we were taken  
9 into a small room along a corridor from the Hastings  
10 room and briefed by, I think, Peter Holden -- I think  
11 Peter Holden -- and essentially sent on our way.

12 Q. At that point, did you make your way away from the BMA  
13 building?

14 A. Yes.

15 MR ANDREW O'CONNOR: Thank you very much, Dr Tovey, those  
16 are all the questions I have for you.

17 A. Thank you:

18 LADY JUSTICE HALLETT: Mr Saunders?

19 Questions by MR SAUNDERS

20 MR SAUNDERS: Dr Tovey, as you heard me say to her Ladyship  
21 I only have a few questions for you. Can I just confirm  
22 a number of matters, please?

23 I think it's right that Richmal actually also  
24 described being present when somebody received CPR.

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. I think CPR was administered to someone, but they, in  
2 fact, didn't survive.

3 A. That's right.

4 Q. You understood by that -- and it may be her Ladyship  
5 heard evidence of this this morning -- that that had  
6 taken place in the courtyard?

7 A. I have a fairly strong idea that, when she described  
8 that, that it was -- it took place in the courtyard.

9 Q. Thank you. Of the patient that you had dealings with,  
10 in your statement, which her Ladyship has,  
11 of December 2005, you describe the gentleman as being  
12 Asian, not Oriental?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. You've again further explained to her Ladyship that you  
15 had more in mind a Pakistani look than an Oriental one.  
16 But I think also you're able to assist that, for some  
17 reason, in your mind you had, not the name Sam Ly, but  
18 the letter K.

19 A. That's right.

20 Q. That obviously stuck with you those months afterwards.

21 A. Yes, yes.

22 Q. And that you were being assisted in dealing with that  
23 gentleman by a colleague you mentioned earlier, Fiona?

24 A. Yes, and others.

25 Q. I think it's right that you at no stage went out the

1 front to the bus?

2 A. No, I didn't.

3 Q. So you're unable to assist us as to whether Richmal did  
4 go on to the bus or not?

5 A. No, I'm sorry.

6 MR SAUNDERS: Thank you very much, Dr Tovey. Thank you,  
7 my Lady.

8 MS SHEFF: No questions.

9 LADY JUSTICE HALLETT: Any other questions for Dr Tovey?  
10 Those are all the questions we have for you,  
11 Dr Tovey. I'm sorry that your return to practice was in  
12 such terrible circumstances. I suspect that, once  
13 a doctor, always a doctor. But thank you very much for  
14 what you did and thank you for coming to give evidence  
15 before me.

16 A. Thank you very much.

17 LADY JUSTICE HALLETT: Mr Hay?

18 MR HAY: My Lady, may I read the statement of Rachel Harris,  
19 dated 13 December 2005, which has the usual declaration  
20 of truth.

21 My Lady, before I do so, Ms Harris' name will be  
22 familiar to you. Her major incident debrief form has  
23 been referred to a number of times during the course of  
24 these proceedings.

25 My Lady, as you will recall, that debrief form

1 expressed concern regarding the time of her deployment  
2 to the scenes. This statement sheds further light on  
3 the time of her deployment but, more importantly, it  
4 emphasises that the time at which she was deployed  
5 enabled her to convey much needed supplies of oxygen and  
6 fluid to Tavistock Square from Camden ambulance station.

7 Statement of MS RACHEL HARRIS read

8 "I am a state registered paramedic employed by the  
9 London Ambulance Service. I have a BSc honours in  
10 Paramedic Science obtained from the University of  
11 Hertfordshire in 2002. Since qualifying, I am entitled  
12 to attend emergency calls, drive an emergency vehicle,  
13 examine, treat and convey patients to an appropriate  
14 hospital. Paramedics are trained in extensive  
15 assessment skills and can provide treatment using  
16 extended skills and drugs. I was posted to Camden in  
17 2002 and, during my time, have attended a wide variety  
18 of emergency calls.

19 "On Thursday, 7 July 2005, I was due to work from  
20 7.00 to 3.00 out of Camden. I did not have a designated  
21 partner on the day and was due to be single-manned.

22 I was assigned call sign Echo 305 and was informed by  
23 the Divisional Resource Centre that a colleague,  
24 Beatrice Debacker from Islington, would join me when she  
25 was on duty.

1 "It was a slow start to the day and I remained in  
2 the mess room where I watched the TV. At about 9.00,  
3 I saw reports on the TV that there had been power surges  
4 on the London Underground system. It was not clear what  
5 was happening, but that a number of sites were involved.  
6 Beatrice turned up and, soon after, we went to an  
7 injured lady in Holloway Road post office N19. However,  
8 by the time we arrived, the patient had been taken for  
9 treatment by another LAS resource.

10 "We monitored our radio channel which was very busy.  
11 It was very clear that a number of serious incidents had  
12 taken place. I am not sure what time this was.

13 I called up to our emergency operations centre and made  
14 it clear we were available to attend any incident. We  
15 were told to switch to channel 9, the major incident  
16 channel, and wait to be activated.

17 "We remained in our vehicle parked in Holloway Road  
18 for about ten minutes before mobilising to Islington  
19 station. We stayed there for a few minutes and remained  
20 in the area for tasking.

21 "A short time after, a colleague on Echo Charlie 25,  
22 Barry Mays, put through a priority call stating that  
23 urgent supplies of oxygen and fluid were required in  
24 Upper Woburn Place WC1.

25 "At this stage, we were still not aware what had

1 taken place. The radio traffic suggested that an  
2 explosion had occurred near to our location.  
3 I contacted the operations centre and told them we would  
4 be going to get fluid and supplies from Camden ambulance  
5 station before delivering it to the location given.  
6 "We made an emergency run to Camden, Beatrice was  
7 driving. I went to the stores and raided a number of  
8 unused vehicles and obtained several canisters of oxygen  
9 and large quantities of fluid and other intravenous  
10 equipment and burns dressings. The station was empty  
11 except for the administrator.  
12 "Having obtained the equipment, we made an emergency  
13 run to the nominated rendezvous point at  
14 Upper Woburn Place at the back of the BMA building.  
15 I have no idea what time we arrived. We initially went  
16 through an outer cordon where we saw an exploded bus in  
17 front of us. We were redirected out of the cordon to  
18 the back of the BMA building. We were met by  
19 Michael Cole from Islington station who was logging the  
20 attendance of vehicles. He told us to place the  
21 supplies inside the BMA building. There was a corridor  
22 which led to a room which had been set up as a temporary  
23 treatment room.  
24 "On the left of the room there were a number of  
25 tables with bottles of water. A number of casualties

1 had been placed on the floor on makeshift beds and were  
2 being attended to by LAS colleagues, HEMS doctors and  
3 people in civilian clothing, who I assumed were doctors.  
4 There were about ten casualties. Having deposited the  
5 supplies, a man, who I now think is called Jim Underdown  
6 of Friern Barnet NHS, assigned a patient to us who was  
7 to be conveyed to hospital."  
8 My Lady, Ms Harris goes on to explain the steps she  
9 took in detail with that particular patient.  
10 LADY JUSTICE HALLETT: Thank you.  
11 MR HAY: My Lady, that completes the evidence for today.  
12 LADY JUSTICE HALLETT: Thank you very much.  
13 (2.45 pm)  
14 (The inquests adjourned until 10.00 am the following day)  
15  
16