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TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

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ROYAL COMMISSION INTO BRITISH
NUCLEAR TESTS IN AUSTRALIA

MR JUSTICE J.R. McCLELLAND, President
MRS J. FITCH, Commissioner
DR W.J. JONAS, Commissioner

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

AT BRISBANE ON TUESDAY, 9 OCTOBER 1984, AT 10.00 AM

Continued from 8.10.84

Secretary to the Commission

Mr John Atkinson
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THE PRESIDENT: Yes, Mr McClellan?

MR McCLELLAN: Your Honour, before I call the first witness this morning, Mr Toon, can I call upon the Commonwealth in relation to a subpoena or a summons served with respect to certain documents. The summons was dated 28 September 1984 and I think Mr McIntyre is in a position to respond.

MR McINTYRE: I produce a Department of Defence file number PC334-331 and some associated lists of correspondence.

MR McCLELLAN: Thank you. I think, Mr McIntyre, there were some tapes also, were there not? Do you have those?

MR McINTYRE: If the commission will excuse me.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR McINTYRE: I think the secretary of the commission has been given those previously.

MR McCLELLAN: I think the document you have offered contains a transcript of those tapes; is that right?

MR McINTYRE: That is correct.

THE PRESIDENT: What are the tapes?

MR McINTYRE: Tapes of interview.

MR McCLELLAN: Legitimately obtained and not over the telephone?

MR McINTYRE: Yes.

MR McCLELLAN: I call Mr Toon.

ERRON TOON, sworn:

THE PRESIDENT: Sit down, Mr Toon.

MR McCLELLAN: Can you tell the commission your full name, please?---Erron Toon.

I think you live at 23 Eidesvold Street at Keperra, Queensland?
---Keperra.

And I think you have provided a statement through your solicitors to the commission; is that correct?---Yes.

Do you have a copy of that statement?---Yes.

You do? I wonder if you might just have it in front of you?
---I would like to lodge a protest on the non-payment of expenses incurred at the commencement of the Royal Commission in New South Wales to the executive committee members of the Maralinga and Monte Bello Atomic Ex-Servicemens Association. Their hypocritical cry-baby Prime Minister through the Attorney-General are demanding that letters
- - -

THE PRESIDENT: That will be enough of that, Mr Toon. I will not allow anything further of that?---We want payment, your Honour.

You are not going to say it here. We are not here for that.

MR McCLELLAN: I want to take you to your statement, if you would not mind. On the first page you indicate you joined the Army in 1954 and for a time you were at Wagga undergoing training, and then I think you received some training in military engineering and explosives, and that occurred at Casula in New South Wales?---Yes.

Is that correct?---Yes.

And then in 1955 you were informed that you were to go to South Australia?---I was informed I would not be going.

Yes, but I think you were informed originally you would not be going and then later you were informed you would be; is that correct?---Yes.

And I think at the time that you went to South Australia, were you aware that the atomic tests had been occurring in South Australia?---Not at that time.

When did you find out that atomic tests had been occurring in South Australia?---When we went to Emu in January 1956.

Before you went to Emu in 1956, were you given any training in matters relating to radiation?---None whatsoever.

After you arrived in Emu - in Maralinga, you record the fact you went to Emu on one occasion?---More than one occasion.

Well, more than one, was it? How many times did you go to Emu?
---Five, maybe more. We stayed there for two or three days.

You indicate when you went there you were involved in the recovery of equipment, vehicles, and tinned food. What sort of equipment were you involved in recovering?
---Vehicles, small farm tractor, a steel hut, a

warehouse full of tinned food, various other items like Tumbling Tommies for the sewerage system.

Anything else?---44 gallon drums; hundreds of other items: piping, sheeting, sand-bags.

I take it you were there with a number of other people, were you?---Roughly about 40 or 50 members of the 7th Independent Field Squadron.

And what, a number of trucks as well?---Mostly Willy jeeps and landrovers. We reclaimed all the vehicles that were left at Emu by 7th Independent Field Squadron in 1953.

You say the stuff you recovered at Emu, you believe was coated with plutonium?---Yes.

Now, can you tell the commission of any reason for that belief?---A lot of the vehicles were painted yellow, and they told us to be careful, to only drive them for two hours, but I drove a red International truck from Emu to 43 Mile Base. That was the vehicle I found out later on that the scientists used to go into the two bomb sites immediately after the bomb blast.

Can you tell me who told you to be careful with the vehicle? ---The adjutant, 7th Independent Field Squadron.

Do you remember his name?---Yes - Lieutenant Norman Sharpe.

Sharpe, was it?---Yes.

Was he your commanding officer?---No, he was the adjutant - 2IC.

You say the vehicles you recovered were painted yellow, were they?---Some of them.

Some of them?---Other vehicles had a circle with an R on them.

Circled with an R?---Yes.

And who told you to only drive the vehicles for two hours? ---The adjutant.

Was that command obeyed?---No, not to my knowledge.

Why was not this obeyed?---Well, the chaps - it took nearly a day to travel from Emu to 43 Mile Base.

Well then, do you recall clearly that that command was given even though it was known that you were going to have to spend hours longer driving the vehicles?---Yes, the chaps drove them longer. They went down to the

railway line, did a bit of sight-seeing, and things like that in them.

So, how long did it take to drive from Emu to Maralinga, in a truck?---Well, it took us nearly all day when we first went there. It was over 100 miles on a bit of a dirt track.

Can you explain to me then how it is, if you have been given an order that you were not to drive the truck for more than two hours, you could expect to get a truck from Emu to Maralinga?---Well, they had some some 7th Independent Field Squadron vehicles that took us to Emu. They were swapping over drivers and things like that.

Did they make arrangements to swap over vehicles on the way?
---No, I do not think so. It was all done any old how.

Are you sure you were told to drive them for only two hours?
---Yes.

Are you sure of that?---Yes. At Emu we were - the yellow ones, the vehicles that were painted yellow.

Did you take any of the yellow vehicles back to Maralinga?
---To the 43 Mile site, not to the Maralinga Village. It was only getting built at that time.

I see, and you took some yellow vehicles from Emu back to 43 Mile Base, did you?---Yes.

How long did that journey take?---Mostly all day.

All day? You say the area was guarded by Commonwealth policemen?---Only one Commonwealth policeman, mid-way between 43 Mile Base and Emu.

Midway between 43 and Emu?---Yes.

And was he stationed in a hut there, or what?---Yes, a bit of a, like an outhouse type of thing.

Was it permanent accommodation for him?---No, no. He used to travel down to Watson at night. He was the only policeman guarding Emu from the western side; no one was guarding it on the eastern side.

Do you remember his name?---Yes.

What was it?---Bell, from Gladstone, New South Wales, I think he lives.

Was he a constable or - - -?---I do not know. He was an ex-army infantry bloke and he was not too happy about us going into Emu.

Well, you see that map on the wall behind you, it is a map of Maralinga. Do you see that?---I cannot see Emu on it.

Well, this is exhibit 4; you see the Maralinga village is shown on that map?---Yes.

And there is a road running down to Watson; do you see that? ---Yes, we were about here somewhere.

That is a map of Maralinga itself?---43 Mile Base was out here; it was north of Roadside.

North of Roadside, was it?---Yes.

You are pointing to an area just near the words North Base; would that be about right?---I am not too sure, see, where they have an airstrip there, there was an air strip at 43, a dirt airstrip, so they might have renamed it. They did not call it the Hendon airstrip when I was there.

And the policeman that you say was stationed out between there and Emu, how far away from that location where you say 43 Mile was, would the policeman have been? ---He was halfway to Emu.

Halfway to Emu?---You have not even got it on the chart.

And he was only there during the daytime?---Yes, he went home at night to Watson.

How long would it have taken for him to drive from where he was stationed down to Watson?---I do not know. I would not have a clue.

It would be a couple of hours, at least, would it not?---Well, it was four hours maybe. No roads - he could have taken a short cut and went down overland.

You have a clear recollection of this policeman, do you?---Yes.

Did you speak to him?---No - I only spoke to him when he was guarding the contaminated area at Maralinga village. He would not let me in. I had a clearance to put equipment in that carried the bomb to Marcoo, and he did not want us to return this equipment into the plutonium mixing shed.

That was much later, was it?---That was October 4, 1956 - the Marcoo explosion.

You say that when you were at Emu, there were no Geiger counters and no protective clothing?---None from January until September, 1956.

Did it occur to you that that may have been because you did not need Geiger counters or protective clothing at Emu?
---No one told any members of the 7th Independent Field Squadron a thing.

Did it occur to you, sir, that you may not have needed those devices at Emu?---Well, we had a chap that knew a bit about radiation and he told us that we would all end up with cancer if we were not too careful.

What was his name?---He is in New South Wales; I am not disclosing his name. You have got it on record there somewhere, because he cleared away from Maralinga with a GMC motor vehicle and got over 700 miles to Adelaide before Commonwealth police grabbed him.

I see?---He got a \$20, and brought back to Maralinga.

You relayed an incident with respect to water on the next page of your statement - you see that?---Yes.

And you make a guess as to the reason why you were not able to continue using the original water supply?---Yes.

Can you offer me any evidence to support the guess that you make?---Sir William Penny arrived at 43 Mile Base in June 1956, just before the bomb was exploded at Monte Bello in June. Immediately after he left Maralinga, we were told not to cart any more water from Fresh Bore.

Yes, sir, you have said that in your statement?---Yes.

But you then say it was your guess that he must have had the water tested?---Yes.

And found it unsuitable because of contamination. Now, that is your guess; can you give me anything other than your guess?---No, well, there is underground rivers flowing through the Nullabor there.

Can you tell me of any incident or evidence that might help me to establish that your guess was correct?---Well, everyone thought that Fresh Bore had dried - there was no water coming out of the bore - but I was still filling fire extinguishers there.

Yes, but can you offer me any evidence at all that the water was contaminated?---No.

Further down on the page, you describe a truck that was used, you say, previously by scientists - - -?---At Emu.

Yes, and you say food was kept on the floor and on the seat, and you suspect the truck was contaminated?---Yes.

Now, can you offer me any evidence to support the suspicion that the truck was contaminated?---It was the 3-ton red International from Emu that we were using at 43 Mile Base, and at that time the British scientists were conducting secret trials on the eastern side of Roadside.

But, sir, can you tell me of any incident or evidence that would help me to establish whether or not that particular truck was contaminated?---The inside of the vehicle was filthy dirty. When they left it at Emu they did not even put the windows up. You just about sat on the floor.

It was dirty inside?---Yes, covered in dust and dirt, and the food for the Commonwealth policeman at Roadside was put into that vehicle on the floor and on the seat - anywhere.

But can you help me to find out whether or not it was contaminated? ---I do not know - no one ever checked it.

You then described the returning of equipment to Casula?---Yes. That is very important, too.

Why is that, sir?---A lot of chaps at Casula have died from cancers, and that. Those vehicles - they did not even hose them down at 43 Mile Base. They were returned to Casula in a hurry because the -- part of the 7th Independent Field Squadron was on standby duty building an atomic reactor in New South Wales.

Can you give me any evidence that any of the vehicles returned to Casula were ever contaminated?---Well, they drove around the two ground zeros of Emu.

Can you tell me of any evidence that by the time those vehicles were sent back to Casula they may have been contaminated?---Well, they drove all around through Emu and it is still contaminated to this day.

So the evidence that you can give me is that those vehicles, you say, drove at Emu?---Yes, they drove them all the way home to Casula too.

You record the fact that you were put in charge of livestock?
---Yes.

And you indicate the way in which those livestock were used?
---Yes. They were also fed contaminated fodder from the secret trials at Roadside.

How do you know that, sir?---Well, it was in all the press reports and all that and the fodder was coming from Roadside.

How do you know it was contaminated fodder?---They had their secret trials with their trigger mechanisms at Roadside. I worked there for a few weeks.

But, sir, how do you know that the food given to the livestock was contaminated?---Well, the scientists told us at the Maralinga village to keep well clear of the stocks of hay and that that they had there.

Can you tell me that you know that stock of hay was contaminated?
---Well, only what I was told by the scientists.

No scientists ever told you the hay was contaminated?---They told us that it was contaminated fodder from Roadside.

They told you that?---Yes, and they even gave it to all the newspapers at the time. I have got all the press cuttings that can be produced.

Have you got them here?---I do not have them here. I will produce them for the Royal Commission if they - - -

I think we would like those, sir?---Right.

Can arrangements be made for those to come?---Yes, yes.

Your solicitor would not have them here today?---No.

Perhaps if you could have them delivered, what, later today or tomorrow?---Tomorrow morning.

Thank you, indeed. Can you tell me the name of this scientist, who told you this about the fodder?---I have a rough idea his name was Adams. I am not too sure. I know he had a big mo.

Was he British or Australian?---British; no Australians were there.

Were there not?---I did not see any all the time I was there.

You then record your involvement with the actual explosions and you indicate that there was an explosion that you say occurred on 4 October 1956. I think on that occasion you were located at Roadside?---Yes.

You say you were not given protective clothing?---Not at Roadside, no.

But you would not have needed it at Roadside, would you?---I am not too sure. I am not an expert on radiation.

You do not know. How far away was Roadside from that explosion, do you recall?---No. Well, I thought it was about 38 miles. They got all their distances from the railway line and 43 Mile Base to Roadside was only roughly five miles south of 43 Mile Base. One Tree was 50 miles.

You then record the fact you were asked to go and work near the Marcoo Crater?---We were told. We were not requested or anything. We were told we had to.

And you went to Iwara where you say there was a decontamination centre. Can you see that located on the map?---Just between the airstrip and One Tree; the road went out on the left-hand side to Marcoo.

You are referring to Hendon airstrip?---That is 43 Mile Base when we were there.

Where do you say this decontamination centre was?---It was between 43 Mile Base and One Tree.

Somewhere between 43 and One Tree?---Yes. I thought it was Iwara. They did not put names everywhere.

I will show you another map. On that map there is Roadside located?---Yes.

And Iwara is also located; is that where the decontamination centre was?---Does the road go out to Marcoo from there?

Yes, the road goes out to Marcoo from there?---No. At this place where the decontamination centre was there was a road going to One Tree. It must be this one, Mina.

M-i-n-a?---Yes.

So the decontamination centre you would think was located at Mina, was it?---Yes.

I tender that plan. It can be marked exhibit RC28.

MR JAMES: I have no objection.

MR McCLELLAN: You say the decontamination centre was a carriage like an old railway carriage?---It was an English

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railway carriage mounted on semitrailer bogies.

You were told to remove all your clothing and you were given protective clothing?---Yes.

You say you were not given any radiation badges?---At that time, yes. We were issued with radiation badges in September 1956. When we got to this decontamination centre, they made us remove our radiation badge.

When you refer to a radiation badge, are you referring to that sort of implement?---Yes.

Which is exhibit RC12?---I think it was a different colour but similar.

That is a film badge, is that right?---Yes.

When were you first issued with a film badge?---September 1956.

And when you went to this decontamination centre, did you have your film badge on?---Yes.

And did you keep it on?---No. The British people made us remove it. It was left with our working clothes.

And did you get it back when you came out?---Yes.

Were you issued then with a dosimeter?---No.

You say you were not issued with a dosimeter?---No. I understand the scientist that was with us had one.

The scientist that was with you had one, did he?---Yes.

Would you look at this for me? That is exhibit RC11?---Yes.

Have you seen one of those before?---No - yes, I have seen that before.

Were you ever issued with one of those?---No.

Do you recall other people in your group being issued with this type of implement?---Only the scientists that was with us and then they stated that they were faulty. They were not properly zeroed.

You say you went into the area in an open yellow truck?---Commer.

Driven on a bitumen road?---Yes.

That bitumen road you say is beyond - - -?---That was the bitumen road to Marcoo.

I wonder if you could show me on the map how far along the road to Marcoo you say there was bitumen?---Have you got that other smaller one?

Perhaps if you could show me on the exhibit, exhibit 4 at this stage?---That has not got the right markings when we were there.

You find it hard to do it on that map, do you?---Yes.

Perhaps you could show me on exhibit RC28?---We drove out in a northerly direction.

Yes, but I am interested to know how far you say the road from Mina to Marcoo - what distance along that road?
---I do not know. I have got no idea. It is not too far, I know that much.

Would half of it have been sealed?---It was sealed all the way to Marcoo.

All the way to Marcoo it was sealed, was it?---The road was sealed all the way to One Tree and all the way to Marcoo.

Are you sure of that, are you?---Yes, positive. The road was burning. We could not travel on it.

Well, you said the road was burning; what did you mean by that? Actually on fire?---Well, there was bitumen smoke. All the mulga trees and salt bush - - -

No, no; just stay with the road. Was the road actually on fire?
---Well, there was no flames and that. It was smoke everywhere, and we had respirators on and goggles, and we did not know where we were going.

But the smoke that you talk about, was that smoke coming from the road?---Yes; and tyres burning; all the vehicles were on fire.

How long after the blast did you move forward to the area of the explosion?---We left Roadside about five minutes after the explosion.

But you would not have had time to get changed in five minutes, would you?---We were out there. We moved to that Mina and to the decontamination centre and we got out there very quickly. The tyres and canvas curtains were burning on the air compressors that were life supporting equipment on the bunkers.

You told us on page 4 of your statement, about five minutes after the blast a scientist came up and said he wanted us to go to the Marcoo Crater?---He told the warrant officer Cliff Stewart, that he wanted to use the army engineers in the forward area.

Well, by the time that conversation had taken place and you had been processed through and given your protective clothing, that would have taken, what, half an hour, would it?---I do not know. I know we had no watches

and that, and we were taken, approximately five minutes after the explosion, we were taken from Roadside; so you can work all that out yourself.

I am suggesting to you that the steps you would have had to take on your own statement would have meant that it must have been a lot longer than five minutes before you came to the crater. Would you not agree with that?
---We left Roadside five minutes after the explosion. We were taken to the decontamination centre, fitted out with protective clothing, and moved into the Marcoo area. I have got no idea of the time and I cannot give you a clue on it.

Then when you came to that area, you say that the scientist who summonsed you in the first place was there. Now, do you recall that scientist's name?---No, not - I know he was a British scientist. That is all I know about him.

He told you, you say, to go into underground bunkers and remove sandbags from the entrances?---Yes.

Were these bunkers large bunkers, or relatively small?---We put all the bunkers in at Marcoo. They looked like big transport containers. I think one lot was 300 feet below the surface at Marcoo.

And were they generally below ground, or were they above ground and below ground?---Some were just slightly above the surface.

You say the bunkers had heavy doors?---Yes.

What were the doors made of?---Steel.

Did they have door jambs around them or how did they - - -?
---I did not look closely at them. They were like a sliding door.

How thick were they?---I have got no idea.

Did you look at these doors at all closely?---Only when we were forcing them apart where they were jammed and they had some locking device fitted on the outside.

You say you had life supporting equipment, or they had life supporting equipment?---Yes. Air compressors mounted on two-wheel trailers.

Were they on the top of the bunkers, were they?---No, no - down below too; down below, protected by sandbags.

Were they operating?---Some of them were blown over on their sides and that. They were all diesel motors, and the diesel motors are still turning over. The tyres and the canvas curtains were all burning.

Some of the doors, you say, were jammed. Were you required to try to open the doors?---Yes. We had like a crowbar, wrecking bars, and things like that.

And did you in fact open some of the doors?---Yes.

And did you go inside of the bunkers?---No, no. As soon as we got those doors clear, the scientists made us go outside into another area.

Did you look inside any of the bunkers?---No.

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If you were opening the doors - - -?---We did not pull them - we just forced them clear, and they were not swung - the door was not swung open, or they did not slide it open or anything.

Were you curious to know what was inside?---I thought they had livestock inside.

Were you curious to know?---Yes.

If you were curious, why did you not look?---Well, there was smoke and dust everywhere, and the temperatures - it was in the summer months; with respirators and goggles - our goggles were fogging, and we did not know where we were.

You then say you were outside one of the bunkers when you heard human screams coming from it?---Yes.

Was that coming from the bunker which you say you were outside? ---The scream came from inside the bunker.

Was that the one that you were just outside?---Yes.

And was it one person you say you heard?---Yes.

And was it over any length of time, or was it just one scream? ---One loud scream. The warrant officer Cliff Stewart was in front of me, and he told his wife before he died that the people should never have been put into the underground bunkers.

You do not think someone might have been playing a practical joke, do you?---No; no way in the world.

And there was just one scream?---Yes.

On one occasion?---Yes.

Did you ever ask any questions about who was screaming, or why? ---Yes. Some of the chaps spoke about it and they thought it was a mad British scientist that set the atomic blast out in the bunker.

Did you ever ask any of your officers about it?---It did not pay to answer questions over there - ask any questions.

Is the answer that you did not ask?---Hey?

You did not ask?---No.

Now, tell me who was the commanding officer?---Captain Lockie, James Lockie.

Was Captain Lockie present when - - -?---No, he went - - -

- - - this scream - - -?---No. He was the officer commanding the 7 Independent Field Squadron, that he went home in June/July 1956 with half of the squadron.

Well, was Major Lockie present when the scream was - - -?
---No officers. The only senior man there was
Warrant Officer Cliff Stewart.

Warrant Officer Cliff Stewart was there, was he?---Yes.

And he heard the scream, did he?---I do not know, but he told
his wife that there was people in. No doubt - I was
right behind him.

Is his wife still alive, do you know?---Yes.

Do you know where she is living?---Yes, Canberra. She has made
statements to the newspapers about the people in the
containers.

Mr James has the statement.

MR JAMES: I have reference to it.

MR McCLELLAN: Perhaps if I can see that.

MR JAMES: There is more to come.

MR McCLELLAN: Mr Toon, I think you have indicated that you
heard only one scream, and you thought it was one
person?---It echoed around the bunker. It could have
been 20 or 30 feet below the surface; I am not too sure.

Are you certain that you heard only one scream from one person?
---It was one loud scream. I would say it was only
one person screaming.

So if Mr Smith said that - if Mr Stewart, I am sorry, said that
there was more than one, you would not agree with him?
---He might have went to some of the other bunkers
himself. I would not know.

But as far as you are concerned, if Mr Stewart had said that
there was more than one person, you would not have
agreed with him?---I would not have disagreed with
Warrant Officer Cliff Stewart because he knew what was
going on in that forward testing area. He was the only
one - the only Australian that knew what was going on.

You then go on to say that you later heard stories about mentally
retarded people were within some of the bunkers. Tell
me this: where did you get those stories from?---I am
not making any statements about mentally retarded people.
The Royal Air Force people in England are stating that
they transported mentally retarded people from England
to Maralinga, and they were put into buildings opposite
the Maralinga Airport Terminal. I am not disagreeing with
them; I did not see them, and I know nothing about them.

All right. You say you were there for some two hours, and then
you left. Is that right?---Yes.

Do you have any idea of the level of radiation you were exposed to on that day?---None whatsoever. My eyes had a glow in them when I came home to Brisbane, though. That is how much radiation I got over there.

You then record how you went through the decontamination carriage, and what was done to you there. On page 6, you tell us about your involvement in driving a tractor from Emu, and tanks from One Tree, and Marcoo, to the railway station at Watson?---I would like to correct you there. I did not drive any tanks whatsoever. I was only involved driving a Land Rover down to the railway to bring the Armoured Corps people back to the Maralinga village.

Well, your statement says that you were involved in driving a tractor from Emu - - -?---Yes, that is correct.

And assisting other army people with tanks from One Tree and Marcoo to the railway station at Watson?---Yes, well, I drove the Land Rover down to the rail siding.

You say that these implements - you say, and I quote you "They were contaminated and I helped load them at Watson railway station." How do you know they were contaminated?---Well, the three British tanks were placed around the Marcoo and One Tree explosion, within 400 yards. We had yards at that time - 200 metres whatever it is. They were just outside the fire-ball area.

Could they have been decontaminated by the time they were taken down to Watson?---Probably they were rubbed over with a bit of diesel; they could even have had a steam cleaner put on them.

I am sorry. Would you in fact have known by the stage they were taken to Watson they were contaminated?---As far as I was concerned I never went anywhere near those tanks.

Did you know in fact whether they were contaminated?---No.

Then you record a medical problem you had, and then on page 7 - I am sorry, at the bottom of page 6 - you say there is another instance you recall:

In April/May 1956 when driving with five others we were going from 43 to Watson delivering mail. We were taking a short-cut through the country and we found under a quandong tree two adults and three Aboriginal children, dead. When we found them

you say

they were all skin and bone and rags.

These people that you found, you say you were taking a short-cut. Were you on a track or were you just - - -?---No. We were just travelling over the Nullabor.

Virgin scrub?---Yes.

And who was with you?---Five other chaps from 7 Independent Field Squadron.

Can you give me their names?---I am not too sure of their names. I know some of them have got common law actions going and I am not going to state their names.

I wonder, if you could tell me the names?---No, I am not stating the names of the people. One of the chaps that was with me committed suicide in Brisbane.

We would very much like to know the names of the people who were with you so we can talk to them?---I am not - they have got common law action going and I am not interfering in their common law action.

The fact that you might tell me their names will not have anything to do with their common law action. We all know who has got common law actions?---They can put up to shut up themselves. I am not their keepers.

MR JAMES: May it please the commission, there may be a way out of this difficulty. Mr Toon might be prepared to write the names in a sealed envelope to be held by the commission, would that be of some assistance?---If the commission will give me the full names of the entire personnel at 43 I will point out the blokes that came with me, plus the other 20-odd chaps that saw those Aboriginal remains the following day.

MR McCLELLAN: Do you say that you can now recall the names of the five people that were with you?---I know the names of some of these people.

Can you recall the names of the five people who were present with you when you found - - -?---I can recall some of the names, but I am not going to give them to the Royal Commission.

You are refusing to give them?---Yes. We are going to the Human Rights Committee of the United Nations. They might do a thing or two about the deceased Aborigines that were found.

You say that you refuse to give those names to the commission? ---I am not giving any names. Those blokes can front up and speak up and shut up and do what they like.

THE PRESIDENT: I do not think you need take it further.

MR McLELLAN: Thank you.

You say then that you went back the next day having notified Captain Lockie?---We reported it to Captain Lockie that night, approximately 9 pm that night, the same night.

Did you go and see Captain Lockie yourself?---We all went together. I am not too sure who informed Captain Lockie of the finding of the Aboriginal remains.

Were you present when the captain was informed?---Well, I would have been close by.

And nothing was done that night?---No.

But you say the captain went back?---He took 20 of us down the following day early in the morning. He told us not to touch a thing, and we built a marker there.

What sort of marker did you build?---We gathered all the rocks around the area and built a bit of a triangle thing.

How large was this?---About 2 foot high, I would say.

And then you left?---We returned to 43, and that afternoon the cabinet minister responsible for Maralinga, Mr Beale, flew into 43 Mile Base airstrip in a RAAF plane. He was taken down to that area.

How do you know how he was taken down there?---Well, as soon as he got there he was put in a Landrover and they went down in that area. That afternoon when I was driving down to Watson's siding, I saw a bulldozer working in that area.

Now, would you be able to show me on the map again whereabouts? ---It was between 43 Mile Base and the railway line. Have you a smaller one - I might be able to - - -

Exhibit RC28 - perhaps you can show me on that. You have not got the rail siding in there?---No. That goes down from Roadside. Between Roadside and the railway line. This might have it better.

No, I am sorry, that goes down to Roadside. Between Roadside and the railway line?---Our solicitor might have a better one. And there is where we used to bypass Maralinga village. We went roughly down there and came out at the railway station on the eastern side of Watson.

The railway station on the eastern side of Watson down here somewhere?---There is a railway station further down.

That is 11 mile camp?---It was not there when I was there in 1952.

That is the edge - you see that line there of the Nullabor Plain? ---Yes.

Now, would you be able to help me: that is Maralinga and Watson? ---I did not go from Maralinga. I went from 43. We did not go anywhere near Maralinga, we were at 43 Mile.

Relative to Watson, can you help me by identifying - - -?---I cannot do it on that. You get me a smaller chart. I think our legal people might have one in the photo album there.

Mr James shows me this plan. Does that help you - Maralinga - - - ?---Forget all about Maralinga. We were 43 miles north

of the railway line there. Maralinga was 25 miles north of the railway line, so it would have been anywhere in this area here.

You see, we would like to try to be as precise - - -?---Well, then maps are no good. Get a few army ones you might do better. The army have got some of those plans of the area.

Do you recall whether or not it was closer to Watson than it would have been to camp 43?---Midway, I would say. Could have been closer to 43. I know it was at least 15 miles because the trees were mostly - the railway chaps had grabbed all the timber from the mulga trees within about 50 miles north of the railway line.

Now, can you relate this incident in time to any of the nuclear explosions?---There was two explosions at Emu. This was April/May 1956. Those people were most likely travelling down to Yallata Mission below the railway lines.

They were the only three officers we had there. There was a flight lieutenant Gordon Steptoe, an air force bloke, and I do not think he was there at that time.

You made a statutory declaration in relation to these events, I think, in 1984; is that right?---Yes. I am not making a big thing over the Aborigines. I could not care less that the Prime Minister of this nation does not give a damn about them. Why should I lose any sleep over it?

You made a statutory declaration in 1984, that is a copy of it there. Would you like to read it?---Yes. I know what is in it.

You state a number of names?---Yes. They are only part. You give me the full list of the thing and I will point out every one of them that were down there, and I am not speaking for them. They can front up themselves if they want to. I got 20 phone calls after I released this statutory declaration to the press, and some of these army chaps rang up and said they should have put the entire group of Aborigines in the area when the bomb was exploded.

Those names - that list of names is not a complete list; is that right?---No, no. I got 80 or 90. I want the entire lot. Senator Georges is hoping to get me the entire lot.

The statement that you made to the commission, is that a complete statement of the matters that you want to bring to the commission's attention?---No. I have got hundreds of them. I have found two dead men on Saturday night at Monte Bello - a naval petty officer hanging out of a naval landing, travelling from Onslow to Monte Bello after two atomic explosions - hanging out of the porthole of one of the vessels - I think it was the HMAS Kangaroo - hanging out of the porthole dead.

Is that the incident that you wrote - - -?---No. That is another one where they dug the army chap out of Monte Bello.

You wrote to the commission about that last week; is that right? ---Yes.

And I take it that letter contains the material which you were not personally involved with?---No.

It is just something that has been reported to you, is it? ---I have got the chap's statement. He is going to - he is thinking about giving evidence. He might give evidence to the United Nations. He might not front the Royal Commission.

You have the gentleman's statement, do you?---Yes.

Do you have it with you?---No, I do not think so. I have his letter but I am not submitting it to the Royal Commission.

You do have a letter from him, do you?---Yes, a signed statement.

Is there any reason why you will not give it to the Royal Commission?---It belongs to the Maralinga and Monte Bello Atomic Ex-Servicemen's Association and the petty officer has stated he is willing to make his own statement to the Royal Commission or the United Nations.

But would that stop you from giving us a copy?---I will check with the chap, and he lives in Victoria. If he is willing to let you have the statement - if he is willing to let you have it - I will give it to you, a copy of it.

Thank you. You wrote to the Prime Minister, Mr Hawke, in April 1983?---Yes.

A copy of that letter I show you; do you recall writing that letter?---Yes.

Now, in that letter, amongst other things, you indicate in this first paragraph - you say:

There is proof of planned radiation poisoning and extermination of an entire nomadic aboriginal tribe

?---Yes.

"In the vicinity of the Maralinga Testing - - -"?---Yes, I stand by that statement too, and a lot of the other chaps with me will stand by it too.

I have to ask you whether or not you have any evidence to support that statement?---I only saw what - what happened when we were there in 1956.

By that do you mean you only have evidence in relation to the incident that we discussed a little while ago?
---I saw other Aborigines there, I am not carrying out a crusade for the Aborigines. They have got all their legal people themselves. They can fight their own case.

But I want to have it quite clear - you say there - - -?---I saw all the other Aborigines in that area, and I am not making any more statements. All my statements on the Aborigines will be put to the Human Rights Committee of the United Nations.

You also wrote to Mr Fraser when he was the Prime Minister?
---Mal-function.

In February 1983, and a copy of that letter is before you as well. Do you recall writing that letter?---Yes.

In that letter, on the second page, you indicate that there is to be a continuation - I will read the words precisely.
You say:

In the meantime our members will continue with the exhumation of the bones of nomadic Aborigines.

Have your members ever exhumed the bones of any nomadic Aborigines?---I am not stating. Our chaps are over in the Kimberleys in Central Australia. I do not answer for any of our people. They can speak and make their own statements.

Mr Toon, you wrote a letter to the Prime Minister in which you claimed that your members will continue with the exhumation of bones of nomadic Aborigines - - -?
---Where they - - -

Could you just tell me do you know whether or not any of your members have ever exhumed any bones?---I think they have.

You think they have?---Yes - near the new railway line to Alice Springs - the fallout area for the two Emu tests.

Do you know the name of your members who may have done that?
---Yes.

Can you tell me the names?---No, I am not giving you any names.

Why is that?---They will make their own statements. I am not speaking for those people.

Have you been in contact with those people recently?---Yes.

Have you asked them to make a statement for the Royal Commission?
---I have gave them a form. If they want to fill the form in and submit a statement, but I think a lot of them are not game to front the Royal Commission because there is a certain group running around, supported by the Australian Democrats, that are stating that they are former Maralinga ex-servicemen, and we have checked these chaps out and they have never ever been in the Australian army.

You also say in that letter to Mr Fraser that other members are carrying out an investigation of liver mitosis in livestock?---Yes, in the Kimberleys.

Now, what stage - - -?---We had an ABC TV team following them around in the Kimberleys.

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E. TOON

Are you prepared to tell me the names of those people?---No. I am not going to disclose any of the names of any members of the Maralinga and Monte Bello Atomic Ex-Servicemen's Association.

You also say in that letter that the association has carried out a survey of the radioactive sludge from the RAAF Amberley Decontamination Centre?---Yes.

Now, can you tell me the results of that survey?---No. No, that is for the people - it is not going to be given, I do not think, to the Royal Commission.

Well, does someone have that survey?---Yes.

Who is it?---Some of our members that are keen fishermen that go out into that area where those drums were dumped into the ocean.

I see. So this is a survey of sludge which was collected in drums and dumped into the ocean, is it?---Yes.

And do you know whereabouts those drums were dumped?---Yes.

Whereabouts?---I am not stating.

You are not prepared to tell me that?---No, no. That information belongs to the Maralinga and Monte Bello Atomic Ex-Servicemen's Association.

What about the members who were involved in the survey; are you prepared to tell me the names of those members?---I am only prepared to give you the name of the bomber pilot.

Could you do that for me?---Yes. I think he was a - he might have went to a Wing Commander, but I do not know if he was a Flight Lieutenant when he did the bomb drop - Ronald Graham, since died from cancer.

He is dead, is he?---Yes.

Can you tell me the name of any living person who might have been involved with the survey?---I am going to give no names out of any living people that are members of our association.

You say that the 44 gallon drums - - -?---We gave 400-odd names to Fraser and Carrick, and they used that information for their own purposes. They sent me a telgram to phone them when the newspapers got on to the HMAS Karangi, and my legal people will submit that telegram that Senator Carrick's department had sent to me.

You also issued a newsletter on behalf of the association in June 1982?---That belongs to the membership of the Maralinga and Monte Bello Association.

That might be so, sir, but you see, there is a copy there of the newsletter which you issued?---Yes, that is to our members. Just because ASIO agents are running around following us and checking on our phone - pity they did not check on a few of the drug addicts and that around the place.

I just wanted to ask you about the statement in this paragraph here in relation to - you referred to the New South Wales government - you see that?---Yes. Well, that was in all the press. They had parts of bodies everywhere and certain bunkers and that out at Maralinga.

That is what I wanted to ask you, sir - - -?---I had nothing to do with it. Some of our chaps had. My brother-in-law that was at Maralinga with me was involved with the health physics people. They brought him over; they gave him 80 per cent of his warrant officer's pay rate of \$350, 28,000 and a captain's job was created for him at Victoria Barracks in Brisbane.

Well, you say there that there were various items from experiments which were used at Maralinga. Do you see that in that paragraph? Apart from newspaper reports, can you tell me from your own knowledge of any such incident occurring?---I did not see them when I was there myself. That information is from our members and that. Everyone knows it was on - just go and see some of the undertakers around the major cities. They were all well paid.

Can you tell me the name of any person who might assist me with any inquiries?---I have names, but I am not giving you any names whatsoever.

You will not give me any names there either?---No, I am not giving you any names of any of our Maralinga/Monte Bello people.

Why is that?---They can front up and speak up and shut up, and do what they like.

Have you encouraged your members to come and talk?---I have encouraged them to come forward to the Royal Commission.

Your Honour, I have put - I think it is now - four documents to the witness which are contained in a bundle, which also includes a letter written to the commission, dated 1 October 1984, and my friends have copies of the documents, and I tender one bundle. They will be RC29.

THE PRESIDENT: Very well.

MR McCLELLAN: Yes, thank you, Mr Toon.

MR JAMES: Mr Toon, you were questioned about claims that the mentally disabled persons had been utilised during a test?---Yes.

Would you have a look, please, at the document I now show you? You yourself, as I understand it, make no claim that mentally disabled people were used in the test based on any personal knowledge of your own?---No.

However, that document, I think, is a clipping from the Melbourne Age referring to a series of articles contained in the London Times and to the information provided to the London Times. Does that article summarize what you had heard about concerning the utilization of mentally disabled persons in the test?---Yes.

Have you any objection to providing that article - that clipping, to the commission?---A copy of it.

Yes, certainly, and might the commission have it, at this stage, for the purposes of copying?---Right.

I would tender that.

MR McCLELLAN: I think we can make arrangements to have it copied.

THE PRESIDENT: Perhaps it could become part of what you have already tendered.

MR McCLELLAN: I think that might be sensible, part of RC29.

MR JAMES: And similarly, the telegram of the witness - perhaps that could be part of the same material.

THE PRESIDENT: Let us have everything. Will that be all?

MR JAMES: No, there are some further - - -

THE PRESIDENT: All right.

MR JAMES: You were, I think, 18 years of age in 1956 when you went to Maralinga?---Yes.

And you were told, in relation to these trucks that you drove - what were you told about the yellow colour trucks?
---That they were involved in the Emu tests and to only drive them for two hours.

What were you told about the red coloured trucks?---They told us the red vehicles were okay.

And it was a red vehicle that you drove for a lengthy period of time?---Yes.

Did you subsequently receive, from some source, information that in fact the orders had been wrong?---Yes, from another army engineer that was at Emu in 1953. I think he is going to give evidence to the Royal Commission - Syd Ruffey.

And did he indicate to you that red was the colour used to signify a hot or contaminated vehicle?---At Maralinga in 1956 for the four atomic tests, yellow was the contaminated colour.

But did Mr Ruffey indicate to you that the red one was hot?
---There was not too many vehicles painted red. Most of them were yellow or the khaki, the army colour.

Now, where and how did you find out in 1970 that if you were under 19, you were not supposed to have an exposure to more than 18.5 rads?---Various chaps did some research on it with the Americans and British, and they found out that the British scale was, anyone under 19 it was 18 minus 5 rads.

And that was in 1970 from various ex-servicemen you found that out?---Yes, some of our chaps went to England and America. They had a scientist in America, and I think a professor in England - a professor of atomic medicine in England.

These various items that were removed from Emu, you have told us that they were dirty and so forth - that the vehicles were dirty. Now, was there ever a point in time at which any of them were decontaminated, even to the extent of washing them?---Not to my knowledge - only the windscreen.

You refer to the recovered equipment as being recycled, including the tinned food. Do you recall if the tinned food was washed or cleaned in any way?---My brother-in-law was in charge of removing that tinned food from Emu, and putting it into the stock of the ration store at 43 Mile Base. He has signed a statutory declaration to be submitted to the Royal Commission.

Right, and do you have that declaration available?---I think we have got one there.

This is in this file?---It should be - wait a minute - - -

Is that J.J. Boughen, retired?---Yes.

A statutory declaration, dated 19 June 1983?---Yes.

And may I tender that to the - - -?---I do not think that is it, that one, is it? No, that is another one he signed.

Would you have a look please at that document? If I might approach, Mr Toon? Firstly, do you see the document that I showed you?---Yes.

Do you have any objection to a copy of that being made available to the commission?---No. Senator Carrick's department wrote to me and told me that they had no record of my army service at Maralinga.

But you have no objection to J.J. Boughen's document of 19 June 1973 being made available?---No. Any statutory declaration which I completed, which should be - - -

This is the statutory declaration?---No, that is not on the tinned food one.

It should be in this file, should it?---It should be there.

Was the food labelled in any way?---Yes, there was labels on it. It was tinned peaches.

Was it contained in tins?---Yes, all tinned stuff.

Was that tin boxed, or those tins boxed or contained in cartons?---I think it was in cardboard cartons, but I am not too sure. The brother-in-law was involved in all that. I did not have much to do with it.

Was any decontamination done of the carboard cartons?---None whatsoever.

Or the crating?---There was no decontamination all the time, from January till September 1956, at Maralinga.

You refer to the recovered equipment as being recycled. Did you see it reused?---Yes. All the Tumbling Tommy sewerage system, part of the kitchen, and the steel hut that they brought down from Emu; they wanted me to live in it. There was a shortage of tentage and they wanted me to sleep in the tin shed but I refused to do it.

THE PRESIDENT: Just before we go any further, there seems to be some discrepancy between these two documents that were produced. The telegram refers to an article in The Australian on Monday, 23 March. This an article in The Age on the 23rd.

MR JAMES: The article in The Australian is coming also; and in fact, perhaps it will save time if that could be photocopied whilst I am proceeding.

MR McCLELLAN: Have you got anything more that I can photocopy?

MR JAMES: I am doing the best I can as I go.

MR McCLELLAN: You do not want the editorial, I take it?

MR JAMES: No.

You referred to proceeding to build and improve the base at 43?---Yes.

Was that done with the recycled material?---The materials were reclaimed from the Emu site.

These vehicles that had a circle with an R on them, that was painted on them, was it?---Yes. The ones we have got the photos of are from the Marcoo and One Tree tests, not from Emu.

In terms of the photos, you are now referring to this material that you had put together from various photographs and items supplied to you?---One of our members of 7 Independent Field Squadron carried a concealable camera at all times at Maralinga.

So this has been provided to you by the membership of the Maralinga and Monte Bello Atomic Ex-servicemen's Association?---Yes. The photos belong to the Maralinga and Monte Bello Atomic Ex-servicemen's Association.

If I might approach you for a moment: looking at the entire document, you have prepared an index setting out the various items shown in the photographs?---Yes.

In addition you have included a small scale sketch map of the area?---Yes.

And thereafter follow the numbered prints of the various photographs?---Yes. There is 500 negatives altogether. The chap would only give me the negatives, but we got 500 negatives.

He would only give you the prints?---He gave me 500 negatives; that is only a sample of the photographs.

And you would be prepared, would you, to have prints from the photographs made available to the commission?---Yes.

And by way of sample, the first is a photograph of an armed vehicle damaged during the One Tree explosions and at Marcoo?---Yes.

And you also refer to a damaged Bedford?---Yes.

We see Centurion tanks and a British army truck used in the tests and later not reclaimed, with a driver without protective clothing?---Yes. The vehicles involved in the Marcoo and the One Tree explosion were put in service with the Australian army. Commonwealth number-plates were fitted onto the vehicles.

Perhaps if I leave you there for a moment; photographs 7 and 8 show some tanks; photographs 6, 7 and 8 I should say show some tanks?---Yes.

Photograph 6, you refer to the tank being marked with a radio active symbol?---Yes. It has also got a marking radioactive on it.

Do we see, when we look at photograph 6, a circle with an R inside and the word radioactive alongside?---Yes.

And a person - there appears to be an occupant of some sort in the tank?---Three people in there; two or three.

We can see one with his head sticking up and no protective clothing?---Yes.

Secondly, photographs 7 and 8, similar tanks?---There was three of them altogether.

Three of those tanks?---Yes.

And 8 shows the damaged tanks being loaded onto a train for return to Puckapunyal?---They came from England, but the tanks were loaded onto the rail at Watson to be railed to Mangalore, the rail-head for Puckapunyal.

Photograph 13 shows two army engineers at Watson railway station?---Yes.

And in the background one can see, between the two houses, a tank?---Yes. The tank broke down and they could not move it and it was left there.

That is between the two houses at Watson?---Two railway houses at Watson.

The rest of the photographs set out basically, do they not, the activities of the members of the 7th Independent Field Squadron?---Yes. They were the vehicles that drove all around the two bomb sites at Emu and returned to Casula in June/July 1956.

And also the water treatment and water tower?---That is the water at 43 Mile Base.

There is also photograph number 23 which shows a man with a bird?---Eagle, yes.

Could you tell us about the man with the bird?---When we were travelling to Emu, the only wildlife we saw in that region was a wallaby and an eagle, and the eagle was dying, and one of our chaps ran down the wallaby and they decided to eat it - make fillets out of it.

Did they eat it?---Yes, and they all came down with a shocking sickness and they had to fly them out to Adelaide.

Before you went in in 1956, whilst you were at Ceduna, did you see dingoes?---Between Panong and Yallata, there was dingo. We stayed there overnight in the desert, and dingoes came in to where we had our base for the night and they appeared lame and a lot of saliva running out of their mouths.

I would seek to tender the photographs together with the index sketch map.

THE PRESIDENT: They can be taken in as exhibit RC29.

MR JAMES: Have you been able to identify one of the persons who went out to take the tank to withstand the blast and thereafter removed it as the now deceased Mr William Jones?---No. That was an Emu one.

An Emu one?---Yes. That is a separate tank altogether. It is a 100 ton Centurion. They could not load it onto the rail.

Had you managed to identify Mr Scott, a federal parliamentarian from South Australia?---Yes.

Who had sought corroboration of the claims by John Phillip Bourke regarding the finding of four, dead Aborigines in a bomb crater after the tests?---Yes.

And that information could be obtained, if necessary, from Mr Scott - subject to his willingness, of course?
---Yes. He is a parliamentarian. I do not know if
- - -

I think he made these claims on 30 April 1984?---Yes. The other chap, I think, is a member, but not the parliamentarian.

Mr Toon, in April 1982, you wrote to the New South Wales Minister for Health, Mr Brereton?---Yes.

In relation to the movement of the cloud towards New South Wales. This was in relation, I think, to - in particular - the radiation readings at Byron Bay?---Yes.

Firstly, which test were you referring to? Was that the One Tree Test on 27 September 1956?---Yes. I think it was the One Tree Test. It - - -

Perhaps if I showed you your letter?---Yes.

That was the One Tree Test, was it?---Yes.

There, in that letter, you refer to information that suggested a secondary cloud had formed?---Yes.

And that that had moved eastwards across the continent, crossing the coastline near - in the vicinity of Coffs Harbour. From what source did that information come? I am not asking for names - - -?---Yes.

But the nature of the source?---Our - the RAAF crew in a tracking aircraft stated that the cloud moved directly from Maralinga to Inverell. When the mushroom cloud got to Inverell, heavy rains set in, and the mushroom cloud was caught up in the flood rains of northern New South Wales and south-east Queensland.

This is the RAAF crew of a tracking aircraft?---Yes.

Would you be prepared to let us know which aircraft?---No.

Are you prepared to let us know their names?---No.

They are members?---Yes.

Might I have that letter back? Perhaps that could be marked and placed with the original portion of Mr Toon's material.

Mr Toon, you made mention of the bore water not having been tested for radiation?---Yes.

How did you know it was not tested for radiation?---They had no testing equipment at 43 Mile Base.

Were you involved with the provision of the water supply or the construction of the water supply facilities?---Yes. I helped construct the water supply equipment.

The souvenirs you mentioned from Emu, what were they?---Spanners, socket sets - there was even a jeep loaded on to one of the vehicles, taken to Casula - a brand new Austin A90 jeep.

And at Casula, the material was washed?---Not to my knowledge - just cleaned of dust and that.

Do you recall the radiation badges that were issued in September 1956?---Yes.

Do you recall what colour the little pieces of film were in that badge?---Pinkie -ish - pink or red.

Pink or reddish film?---Yes.

And did that film change colour at any stage?---Not to my knowledge, but we did not have it on when we went into the contaminated areas. But we had no badges when we went to Emu. We had no radiation badges from January '56 to September 1956.

Now, in September 1956, you acquired the radiation badges?
---Yes.

For how long did you wear each badge?---I have still got mine at home somewhere.

So you were given one badge, and that was it?---Yes.

You have still got yours?---I have still got mine at home.

Do you know if others have still got theirs?---Yes. Some of them would still have theirs.

Was any record kept of the issue of these badges?---Not to my knowledge.

And, indeed, have you since been told or received a letter from the United Kingdom Department of Defence - have you since received a letter from the United Kingdom Department - I think it is the department - - -?
---Defence Ministry, I think it is.

The Defence Ministry - indicating that there is no record of any badges issued to such personnel as yourself during that period?---Yes. They state that there is no record of my ever being at Maralinga.

And, indeed, that that would mean, since you were not issued with a badge, that you could not have been exposed. That is from the Atomic Weapons Research Establishment, dated 9 February 1982, addressed to the Department of Defence

and indicating that fact, that there is no record that you were issued with a badge, proves that you were never exposed. Do you recall that letter?---Yes.

Well, will you have a look at that document?---Yes.

Is that the letter to which you refer?---Yes.

Can you find the badge and bring it in for us?---Well, I have got a lot of stuff at home. I have got a lot of spanners and things like that, and I re-claimed certain tins. I also brought two protective sets of clothing home.

Would you be prepared to let us all have a look at those - just to look?---No, no I am not - not prepared.

Just to have a look, I am talking about; not to hand it over?
---Some of it I would be willing to.

Well, would you bring that in to us?---Yes.

Might that letter also go with the first bundle of documents from this witness?

Mr Toon, you have in front of you a boomerang?---Yes.

Where did that come from?---That came from between Emu and 43 Mile Base. Mulga wood is the only wood from over that area.

How did that come into your possession?---We found it at - in that area.

Well, was there any person around when you found it?---No.

And whereabouts was it lying?---Just on the - in the bush.

And you picked it up?---Yes.

Right. And you want to retain that?---Yes. It is my property.

And you are happy to submit it for identification, should that be necessary?---Yes.

You also have, similarly, in a small plastic bag located to the right of the statements some other objects. What are they?---Stones taken from where the secret trials were conducted at Roadside.

Who took them?---Members of 7 Independent Field Squadron.

Right. And they were supplied to you when?---We collected them ourselves.

Right. Have they been submitted to any form of scientific checking?---Yes, for our association; for our common law cases.

And the association has recourse in relation to them available?
---For our membership with their common law cases.

Right?---And I also had a bag of soil in an army plastic bag, and when I fronted Major General T.J. Daly at Victoria Barracks in Brisbane in 1957 - September 1957 - the bag of soil was seized after I made statements that I heard that the reports of the findings of the deceased Aboriginals at Maralinga had not been properly investigated - - -

Mr Toon - - -?---And I would like to state about that that the bag of soil was seized by Captain Sleighter of the Northern Command Provost Corps. Captain Sleighter died two years later from a shocking cancer.

Mr Toon, you have told us that you have been - you have told us of the incident in which you saw the bodies of the deceased Aboriginal people. For how long have you been concerned about that incident?---Since 1957.

And indeed after you had reported that incident, was there a subsequent event in which you made further complaints about the lack of investigation into those deaths?---Yes.

When was that - - -

THE PRESIDENT: At this stage, we will take a short break.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, Mr James?

MR JAMES: Mr Toon, coming back to this occasion on which you saw the deceased Aboriginal people, I have taken you to a time subsequently when another event had occurred following upon your making complaints about what had transpired, or more correctly, what had not transpired, after you had seen the bodies of these Aboriginal people. Did you make some complaints about the lack of investigation into their deaths? ---Yes, I reported it to Major General T.J. Daly at Victoria barracks, Brisbane.

When was that?---September 1956.

1956, or '57?---'57.

And have you in fact since that day been continuing to make public your views concerning that occasion?---Yes.

When you complained in 1957, what happened to you?---Another Army chap and myself were absent without leave for over 100 days. We were given a court martial. The other chap was sent to his group at Toowoomba, and I was sent to solitary confinement at One Military Corrective Establishment at Holsworthy for 42 days gaol, but the commanding officer of 7th Independent Field Squadron, Major Herbert Mahalm recommended that I only do 21 days.

Was the incident when you were taken to gaol publicised in the press?---When I came out of the court martial I was made to stand at attention for a group of photographers from the Brisbane Telegraph. I lashed out with my Army boot and the military provosts tried to keep me in order, and that afternoon in the Brisbane Telegraph on page 2 a large photograph was submitted with "42 days gaol" on the top of it.

And that is the photograph I hold?---Yes.

Now, there is a Mr Rogers I think is a member of your association?---Yes.

What is his Christian name?---James.

James Rogers. Has he provided you with a photograph of the ground crew at Amberley in 1955?---Yes.

Together with one of the planes involved?---That bomber came out of the workshops, but all those chaps worked on the contaminated bombers.

And do you understand that he is in a position to identify all the people depicted in that photograph as part of the ground crew that worked on the contaminated bombers?---Most of the people.

Would you have a look at the photographs I now show you. More correctly, it is a photocopy of the photograph, is it not?---Yes.

That is the photograph?---Yes.

And you are prepared to make available a copy of that photograph to the commission?---Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: Mr McClellan, that can become a part of the exhibit.

MR JAMES: Mr Toon, have you managed to track down the Canberra bomber that was used, firstly, as an observation plane during the tests at Monte Bello and also later at Christmas Island?---Some of them.

Do you understand that WD954, the Canberra bomber, still resides in the Warbirds Museum at Mildura airport?---Yes.

And that you have managed to track down through obtaining a newspaper clipping?---Yes.

Is the plane apparently in the possession of a Mr Piers Dunn, D-u-n-n, who was a flight engineer with the RAAF for some nine years?---Yes.

When you were provided with showers after having been out to work on the doors at the bunkers, after the explosion on 4 October 1956, what were the showers like - the showers themselves?---Just a dribble of water coming out of the shower rose.

And you have told us in your statement it was a dribble of water, but when I asked you what the showers were like, was it a dribble of water that enabled you to get the soap off?---They gave us like Solvol soap, and it was very difficult to get much lather out of it.

And you refer to your having two showers, and a Geiger counter with no gauge, but a bell?---Yes, an alarm.

Who was operating that?---Canadian army engineers.

Were there a number of them?---Yes, they were a detection group, a radiation detection group from Canada, mostly army engineers.

And you refer to the removal of the gloves, boots, respirators, goggles and overalls?---Yes.

Do you know what happened to that equipment?---No.

Was it placed in any bins or in any particular area?---No, it was just tossed into a corner of the railway carriage.

What did you dress in when you left?---Our working clothes at the far end of the railway carriage.

You have mentioned also that prior to leaving for Casula in November 1956 a blood sample was taken from you? ---Yes.

Firstly, were those blood samples taken from other people as well?---Some of the other members of 7th Independent Field Squadron, but some of the other chaps, a statement that they did not have any samples taken.

From your own knowledge, were there people that you knew blood tested?---Approximately half of the squadron. There was no Australian medical people at Maralinga. All the medical side, the medical doctors and that were all British.

And who was it that took these blood samples from you?---Royal Air Force chaps, British Royal Air Force.

Did you ever hear anything about the results?---None whatsoever.

Of any examination of those blood samples?---None whatsoever, but they used me in 1957 - they gave me massive doses of x-rays in 1957.

When was that?---That was after they put me in solitary confinement.

And what was that for?---No doubt they were carrying out certain medical tests on me that I could not object to. I was kept in underground cells in Victoria barracks at Paddington in New South Wales.

And who was it that did this in 1957?---The Australian Army.

Do you recall the names of the people, or their ranks, or designations?---Mostly generals, and some of them were unknown military officers in civilian dress. At that time there were three bombs waiting to be exploded at Maralinga. That is why they kept me in solitary confinement.

I have nothing further from this witness.

THE PRESIDENT: Mr Eames?

MR EAMES: Mr Toon, at the time you were in that area, did you see any Aboriginals at Maralinga village?
---Only one group that the scientists had in their sheds.

And were they from one of the nearby settlements?---They were probably found out in the forward testing areas.

And were those people subsequently - did you see them taken away from the area?---No.

There were police officers, I think they were called, stationed at Maralinga?---They were Commonwealth police officers and a South Australian policeman was there, too - Peter Logan was his name.

And from time to time did you see Aboriginal people being transported in vehicles by the Commonwealth police officers?---No. I did not see any by Commonwealth policemen.

Well, did you see them in any vehicles - for example by native patrol officers being transported?---No, no, no.

You are saying you saw Aboriginal people being transported by someone in the area?---By the scientific people.

When you say that you saw Aboriginal people in one of the sheds at Maralinga, do you know how many people were there - Aboriginals?---They looked like a family.

And do you know when this was?---Between September and November 1956.

And do you have any idea what they were doing in that shed?
---No. They were probably experimenting with them.

Apart from that occasion, did you see Aboriginal people on any other occasions, either at Maralinga village or elsewhere, near the test sites?---Not at Maralinga village, but I saw a lot of them down near the railway line. The railway line had no fencing on it. There was no fencing anywhere at Maralinga at that time.

Would this be - do you know Wooldea?---Yes.

W-o-o-l-d-e-a?---Yes, we used to come out there.

Was it at approximately Wooldea that you saw people, or was it at Watson?---At Watson, and all along the railway line. We used to take vehicles right down to the Great Australian Bight. We did not do any work on a Sunday and we roamed all over the area.

Did you ever see Aboriginal people in that area north of the railway line?---Yes.

And did they appear to be permanently camped or did they appear to be walking in the bush?---They seemed to be wandering around. They looked very sickly looking. There were no children over about seven or eight years of age.

Yes?---The men were very thin and the females were very fat.

And did they appear to be hunting parties? Did they have spears and so forth?---They seemed to have sticks and that. They seemed to like carrying little bits of tin and things like that.

The incident that you have described in 1956 with the family that you found deceased - - -?---Yes.

Can you recall now how they were clothed?---No. They were only rags. I only saw those Aboriginals for a couple of split seconds, and we backed out from under there.

Well, you may not now be able to recall, but did there appear to be any other implements there - for example spears or shields or - - -?---There was a lot of rubbish there. I think there was a log - a mulga wood log there.

Yes, and the boomerang you have shown us here today - - -?---It did not come from there.

No, I appreciate that, but did you on any other occasions ever see any bark arrangements or spears or any other implements that suggested to you that there may have been Aboriginal people generally in that area?---Yes. Some of our chaps were finding certain things that they were souveniring, that the Aborigines had left there.

Would they be wooden implements of some description?---Mostly mulga wood stuff.

Yes?---They seemed to concentrate on tins and that - peach tins and biscuit tins, and things like that.

Did you ever see tins, empty tins, in the bush on any of these occasions when you were out on a weekend?
---Yes.

So, from time to time you would see some evidence that there had been people, whether Aboriginal or not?---Yes.

Camped in the area?---Yes. They were wandering into Emu and souveniring 44-gallon drums and whatever - draining the petrol out of vehicles.

There was in fact a problem which was known amongst the people serving there, was there not, of pilfering by Aboriginal people?---Yes. They blamed them.

Yes, I appreciate that. But had there been any warnings that you were aware of that had been generally issued about ensuring pilfering was not occurring by Aboriginal people?---None whatsoever.

All right. Yes. I have no further questions.

THE PRESIDENT: Mr McIntyre?

MR MCINTYRE: Mr Toon, you just mentioned some Aboriginals that were in a hut, and I think you said you thought there were some experiments being carried out?---Yes.

Whereabouts was that hut?---That was a building. It was a permanent building at Maralinga village.

Whereabouts in the village was it?---It was on the same side as the power house and the big turbine water treatment area.

Did you ever see any Aboriginal people inside that hut?---I only saw them going in there with the scientists.

When was that?---That was in 1956.

Before round one?---What?

Before One Tree?---Between September and November. That is all I can give you.

And who was with the Aboriginal people?---Scientists.

Do you recall their names?---No.

Did you talk about that sighting with anybody else?---It did not pay to make any statements. Any problems with servicemen at Maralinga, they were hit with tranquilisers and carted off to Adelaide, and no one heard much more about them.

Were you aware of anybody who was submitted to tranquilisers and taken off?---Yes.

Who was that?---Taffy McTavish, a Welshman.

When you saw these Aborigines taken to the hut, were you by yourself or were you with somebody else?---Other people there.

Would you be able to name the people?---No, I do not name any other people.

Was it during the course of the trials or after trials had finished?---Well, I am not too sure, but they had the secret trials at Roadside.

How many Aborigines were there that you saw?---Just a family.

How many is that - four or five?---I do not know. I did not count them.

How far from that were you standing?---I was in there, within 20 to 30-odd feet of that area.

Have you made this claim to anybody before today - that you saw those Aborigines being taken inside the hut?
---I am not carrying a crusade out for the Aborigines. They have all their own people. I have got 2000-odd members of the Maralinga and Monte Bello Atomic Ex-Servicemens Association to look after, and I am not carrying out any crusade or that for the Aborigines. If the Hawke Government and Fraser and Carrick did not do a thing for them, it is not my job.

You mentioned on several occasions over the years, have you not, these deceased Aborigines that you say you saw under the Quandong trees?---Yes.

Well, have you mentioned to anybody this sighting of yours you say you made of Aborigines- - -?---I saw - - -

Please - that you say you made of aborigines entering a hut at Maralinga village, before today?---Yes.

When was the first time that you made that complaint?---I am not too sure and I - - -

Who was it made to?---Most likely members of our Maralinga and Monte Bello Atomic Ex-Servicemens Association.

Have you told anybody outside the association about - - -?---Most likely I have told - I give the reporters a fair go.

Have you seen that published anywhere in the press?---I do not watch much TV. I only watch Channel 0 and Channel 2.

Has this story about sighting Aboriginals entering a hut at Maralinga village been- - -?---It was a building.

All right, well, has this story about Aboriginals being seen entering a building at Maralinga village been printed in any of the newspapers?---I would not know. I only read the Daily Sun and The Courier-Mail in Brisbane.

How many occasions did you see these Aboriginals entering the hut?---I only saw them once at Maralinga.

Did you see them coming out?---No.

Did you make a report of that sighting to anybody at the camp?---No.

Did you discuss it with anybody else at the camp?---Yes.

Who was that with?---With members of 7th Independent Field Squadron.

Would you care to tell me their names?---No, I am not disclosing any names. They can front up, speak up, and shut up themselves.

This Canberra bomber you mentioned, was that a Royal Air Force aircraft or a Royal Australian Air Force aircraft? ---It was a Royal Australian Air Force - Royal Air Force bomber with an Australian crew.

Were you present when it flew through the cloud?---No. I have got the report from the bomber pilot, Geoffrey Tuck.

Where does he live, do you know?---He is deceased. He died - he contracted cancer 12 months after flying into the mushroom cloud at Emu and died at Laverton at the RAAF base 18 months later.

As far as the Canberra bomber is concerned, is it the case that your knowledge is entirely based upon what other people have told you?---It is a full report from the bomber pilot of that Canberra bomber.

Where is that report now?---It belongs to the Maralinga and Monte Bello Atomic Ex-Servicemen's Association.

Would you be prepared to make that report available to the commission?---The widow of Geoffrey Tuck - Fraser and Carrick denied her all claims of compensation. She was only 25 when her husband died; she had two small children, a girl 5 and a boy 3, and she was denied all compensation. She has taken common law action, and I do not want to interfere with it whatsoever.

I take it you are not prepared to make that report available to the commission?---No, I am going to release that report to certain newspapers.

Would you be prepared to make that report available to the commission?---No.

Mention has been made of the declaration that you signed in relation to the sighting that you say you had of the Aborigines beneath the Quandong trees. Do you recall Mr McClellan showing you that?---Yes.

And there are a number of names listed in that declaration, are there not?---Yes.

Now, are they names of people that were present with you? ---They were members of the 7th Independent Field Squadron and Ground Crew, RAAF, who were at 43 Mile Base in 1956. I have got more names - I have 80 or 90 people. There was a small detachment of naval airmen also there, but I am hoping Senator Georges will get me the full list of names of the entire roll call of 43 Mile Base at that time.

Do you say that the people mentioned in that statutory declaration were present when you went back the next day with Captain Lockey?---Well, there was 20 of them there, and I do not speak for any of them.

There is one name here of Corporal R. Johnston. Was he a chap from the air force?---Yes, well, he has a common law case, and I do not want to make any - he is also our national president of our federation. I am not making any statement on his service.

Was he present with you when you went back to the site?---He was at 43, but he has told me he did not go down to that area.

Did you discuss your sighting of the Aborigines with him? ---Yes.

That is after you got back to camp, was it?---No, I did not - I stayed - I did not speak to him in 1956 about it.

Did you speak about your sighting to anybody in 1956, apart from Captain Lockey?---Yes, yes.

You have mentioned that when you told- - -?---20 of them saw the remains.

You mentioned when you told Captain Lockey about the remains that you say you saw, that there was also present Major McGhee and Lieutenant Sharp?---At 43 - they were the only other two army engineer officers at that base.

Yes, well, were they physically present when you told Captain Lockey about the presence of the remains?---They were in their mess sipping on whisky.

Were they in the same group together?---Well, that is all they did every night, was sip whisky in their tent.

When you told Captain Lockey about the remains, was Major McGhee sitting beside him and was Lieutenant Sharp sitting beside him?---Well, I do not think so. I think that Sharp and McGhee would have known about it. When there was a group of bodies found in that area, Lockey - he was a very timid man and he would have spoken to the Lieutenant Colonel McGhee and the adjutant of 7th Independent Field Squadron.

Was Captain Lockey by himself when you told him, or were there other people there?---There was other people there, but I am not too sure who they are.

Was Major McGhee there?---They were in the mess hall when we were there - the marquee tent it was.

Was Major McGhee close to Captain Lockey when you told Captain Lockey?---Well, I am not too sure where he was.

What about Lieutenant Sharp, was he close to Captain Lockey?
---The three of them were there sipping on their whisky, so- - -

I suggest to you that at no stage did you tell Captain Lockey of any sighting of any Aboriginal remains at all?
---Well, I did not go and get my phone disconnected and clear a flyout to Honolulu for an extended holiday. I had to put up with all these bloody cranks after a flip-wrecked bloody radio announcer made statements on 4BC in Brisbane. I am not carrying out any crusade for the Aborigines. I do not care what they do about them. I am not - if the Prime Minister and his Cabinet could not care a damn about the human life- - -

THE PRESIDENT: We have had you on that Mr. Toon. Will you just answer the questions that are put to you?
---Well, I do not want to answer any more questions on the Aborigines. I do not care a damn about them.

MR McINTYRE: All right, we will pass away from the Aborigines. Tell us about- - -?---The British treated them on the same level as the dingoes; a nuisance level.

If we could now come to your description of the approaching to the Marcoo crater?---Yes, my brother-in-law fell in the crater.

You told us about the scientist who told your group to go through, and you have mentioned the name of the warrant officer?---Cliff Stewart.

What was his job in the squadron?---Well, he was the squadron sergeant major and he was the senior man for the army engineers in that forward testing area.

Did he go with your group forward to this area, near the Marcoo crater?---Yes.

After you went through the - what you describe as a railway carriage- - -?---It was a railway carriage.

After you went through the railway carriage and you got your clothing, how did you travel to the Marcoo site? Did you go in a vehicle?---Yes.

What sort of vehicle was it?---An open 3-ton Commer diesel truck, I think it was. I do not think it was petrol. Most of the vehicles were petrol, but I think that one was a diesel.

And I think you said at one stage that the tyres on the truck were burning?---Not on that vehicle. There were hundreds of vehicles in that area - Jeeps and Bedford trucks and Austin A90 Jeeps and the tyres and the canopies and things like that were burning.

What else did you see apart from those sorts of trucks?---I saw everything what was going on and I am not- - -

What else did you see?---That is all I am stating I saw there.

That was after Marcoo was it?---That was straight after the explosion at Marcoo.

And that was the second of the series at Buffalo?---Yes.

And you say you saw trucks on their sides with tyres burning? ---The things that were on their sides were a two-wheeled air-compressor mounted trailer that were down below the surface for flying air into the underground bunkers.

Did you see anything else with its tyres burning apart from those compressors?---Just vehicles.

What sort of vehicles were they?---Bedfords, Austin A90 Jeeps and British Land Rovers - all brand new.

How far were they from where you were- - -?---Most of them were just outside the fireball area. The fireball area was completely vaporised and some of the tanks were burning.

You saw tanks, too, did you?---Three tanks.

How far were the tanks from you?---I would say 400 yards; they could have been closer.

You say that you went through the railway carriage a very short time after the explosion?---To be fitted out with protective clothing.

What time of day did the explosion occur, do you recall?---It was after lunch.

Would it be about 4.30 in the afternoon?---Well, I know when we went back to Maralinga village, I had some more showers in the billet, and we went and had tea.

Did you see anybody else go through into the area towards Marcoo before you?---Yes, we- - -

What sort of people were they?---We were surprised. After we left Roadside and moved towards Marcoo with protective clothing, there was about 150 high-ranking military officers standing out in the open. Well, they did not go through Roadside, so they must have sat the bomb out in that area.

As you went towards Marcoo Crater itself, did you see anybody else around there?---There was scientists and that running around everywhere in Landrovers and that.

In protective clothing?---Yes.

And how long do you say it was after the explosion that you arrived at the site of the bunker?---I do not know. I know we left five minutes after the explosion to go to Mina.

And you mentioned that the road was burning; where did you see the smoke coming from?---We were running on the road and the bitumen was all burning, and the vehicle had to leave the road and travel through the bush.

Do you say that you were running on burning bitumen?---No, no. The bitumen was burning and melting and we pulled off the road. Cliff Stewart and the driver was in the front and 20 of us were in the back of the 3-ton Commer.

How far from the bunker was this burning bitumen?---There was bunkers scattered all around the vicinity.

You said one was about 300 feet below ground. Do you recall saying that?---Yes. We put it in. They blew a hole in the solid rock and they had to get a bulldozer to keep scooping out all the stone, and it was a long bunker, about 50-odd feet, and it was put down in the ground and the rock was all covered over the containers.

You said one of them was about 300 feet below the ground?
---Yes.

Are you quite sure of that?---Well, I would not argue if you said 200. I do not know. I know it was a fair bloody way down.

Did you dig the hole yourself?---No, the bulldozer - we blew holes in it and the bulldozers scooped it all out.

Are you sure you are not describing the scene of vehicles turned over, which might have been the scene that would have been seen after round one, after One Tree?---No, no.

Quite sure?---I saw some of the equipment, the 25 pounders and that were all blown over and ripped apart at One Tree, but most of the vehicles I saw at Marcoo, they were burning, and we were more concerned with the crater. We had a look into the crater. The solid rock had been turned into fine powder, and one of the bulldozers went in and they decided to leave it in there and they covered it over.

How far was the crater from the bunker that you saw?---Well, all outside the fireball area, I would say 400, 500 metres - yards they had at the time.

And you say you got that close to the crater that short time after the explosion?---We went right up near the crater and my brother-in-law fell in the crater and they had to put a steel wire rope in to him to get him out.

This is immediately after the explosion, is it?---Well, whatever time it was in that after two hours - we spent two hours in that area.

What is your brother-in-law's name?---I am not disclosing it. He is a captain in the army and I am not disclosing his name.

Is he still serving in the army?---Yes. Carrick and Fraser bought him over, like I said.

What rank was he in 1956?---I do not know what rank he was. I know he was a warrant officer later on.

Was he a member of your unit?---Yes, member of 7th Independent Field Squadron.

When you say you heard this scream, how far were you from the bunker?---We were outside the bunker door.

How far were you from the bunker?---We were right up at the bunker door.

How close to you?---The bunker doors were protected with sandbags.

But you had just opened the bunker door, had you not?---No, we did not. We had to remove the sandbags away from that bunker door.

Did you slide the door open a little bit?---Some of them were sliding doors and others seemed to swing out on hinges.

This door that was closest to where the scream came from, did you open that door slightly?---We forced it open.

And how long after you forced it open did you hear the scream? ---Straight - when we forced it open, when we were still there; once we got that doorway clear and open, the scientists made sure we got the hell out of there.

Were you actually working on opening the door?---Yes, with Cliff Stewart and some other chaps.

Were you using a crowbar?---Well, we had - I do not know if they are wrecking bars or what they were.

And was it at the instant that the door was opened that you say you heard the scream?---Well, when we forced it open and we heard the scream coming from inside.

So do you say it was at almost exactly the same time that you opened the door; is that right?---Yes.

Where was the scientist when this happened?---There was no scientist there. They were above the surface and we - once - Stewart moved us straight out when the - - -

How far from you was the scientist when you heard the scream? ---Well, the scientist was - the scientist would have been - our 20-odd blokes were working at different bunkers.

How far from you was the scientist when you heard the scream? ---I have got no idea.

Well, were you surprised to hear the scream?---Yes.

Did you mention it to anybody else?---Yes.

Who did you mention this to?---The other members of 7th Independent Field Squadron.

All of them?---To most of the ones that were out there.

Did you tell Second Lieutenant Sharp?---I do not know. I am not too sure.

Was he out there with you?---No. They made sure no officers went into the contaminated area.

Did you tell Major McGhee?---Major McGhee had - he went away before the explosions in September 1956 and so did Major Lockey.

Was it not the case that Major McGhee stayed through?---Well, I did not see him after we moved from 43 Mile Base to the village.

In any event, when you heard the scream, did you go and tell the scientists that there was somebody down there? ---No. It was not our job to go and tell any scientists. They did not want to know what a group of army engineers were doing.

Is it the case that you felt the scream was somebody calling for help?---I thought it was a British scientist that sat out the explosion.

Did he appear to be calling for help, whoever he was?---All I heard was the horrible scream coming from the bunker.

Did you go and tell the scientists, "Look, there is somebody yelling down there."?---I was behind Cliff Stewart. There was the man in charge of that area and it was not my job to do any bloody thing. We had respirators on and goggles and that and terrific heat; the sweat was running down everywhere in us and we wanted to get the hell out of there.

Did anybody tell the scientist that there was somebody in there screaming?---I do not know. Warrant Officer Cliff Stewart has made certain statements before he died. I do not know what he did. I am not here speaking for him.

Did you see anybody else mention to the scientist that there was somebody in the bunker screaming?---No, no.

Did you tell anybody outside that group, that was outside the bunker, at any stage that there was somebody in the bunker screaming?---No. You could not speak. You had a big respirator on, and glasses and smoke everywhere, and everyone was running around in a mad panic. They did not seem to know what they were doing.

Do you say you saw the scientists go inside the bunker?---Well, I did not. They were the ones that were going in. I did not see them go in. They went down in. All the bunkers were below the surface.

Did you see the scientists go into the bunkers?---They were running around everywhere. I do not care. I do not know what they did.

And do you say you are not aware whether anybody told the scientist that there was somebody down in the bunker screaming?---No. Well, they were in charge of the area. They would have known what was in the bunkers.

What did you do after you left the bunker when the screaming occurred? Did you go straight back to the carriage?
---We kept working on more underground bunkers.

Did you see any more scientists around?---They were running around everywhere.

Who was telling you to work on the bunkers? Who was controlling you?---One of the scientists was telling Warrant Officer Cliff Stewart. He was not telling us. He was telling the warrant officer what to do.

Did you see anybody tell that scientist who was supervising you that there was somebody in the bunker?---Like I said, there was smoke and that everywhere and complete chaos and I do not know what was said or done.

Did you mention the scream of the person in the bunker to the person back in the village later on?---Yes.

Who to?---To our own members of 7th Independent Field Squadron.

Did you mention it to Second Lieutenant Sharp?---No, I do not think so.

Why was that?---Well, he was - he locked himself away in an admin block at Maralinga village and did not want to seem to make contact with anyone else.

Do you say that all the members of 7 Independent Field Squadron, apart from the officers, were aware of what you had heard that day?---You have got to remember that was - - -

Wait until I finish the question; do you say all members of 7 Independent Field Squadron were aware of what you saw that day except for the officers, after you had got back and spoken to them at Maralinga village that night?
---I do not know. They were all getting - Fraser and Carrick has bought them all with 100 per cent disability pensions. They can say what they like. I am not speaking for those people. They can front up themselves.

Do you recall anybody other than Warrant Officer Stewart, who was present when the screaming was heard?---Yes.

Can you give me their names?---We have got their names. Some of them are going to front the Royal Commission in New South Wales.

Are you prepared to give their names to the commission?---I am not giving any names of members of the Maralinga and Monte Bello Atomic Ex-Servicemen's Association.

When you went to Emu, did you have any reason to believe that any of the vehicles or any of the food which you took from there was contaminated?---No.

And your belief that they were contaminated is based upon what somebody has subsequently told you; is that right?---Well, everyone knows now that the place was all contaminated.

You confined your activities I assume to the village area at Emu?---No. They wandered around everywhere in the grounds - the airstrip - the airstrip was out at the clay pan.

Where did you go yourself?---I was reclaiming this tin shed that they - we had some navy chaps with us and they were blaming Lieutenant Sharp for letting them take their jackets off there.

On this trip when you went there, and you removed these items of equipment and the huts and the food, was Second Lieutenant Sharp with you?---Yes.

On how many occasions did you go to Emu?---About five. It could have been more; I am not too sure.

And was there only one occasion when you removed huts and vehicles?---No. There was all - there were thousands of 44 gallon drums full and empty. There were drums of diesel and petrol everywhere.

And did Second Lieutenant Sharp go with you on each occasion?
---No.

Who was in command of the party on the other occasions that you went there?---Various other chaps.

Officers?---No. We only had - like I said, we only had McGhee and Lockett and Sharp, and McGhee was doing all their planning at the 43 Mile Base.

When you went to Emu under the command of Second Lieutenant Sharp did you stay in the area where the huts were at Emu village?---Well, we went around there where the mess and the huts were and all that. We wandered around and had a look at the bulldozers and things like that.

How far did you go from the mess and huts on each occasion that you went to Emu?---I have got no idea of the mileage we covered there. We just roamed all around. We went right over towards the Mabel Creek area and saw where they had the roads blocked, and the airstrip. We drove around everywhere, sightseeing for the - - -

Who was with you when you drove towards Mabel Creek?---Various members of 7 Independent Field Squadron.

But could you give us their names?---No, I would - - -

Who was in command of you and the party when you went to Emu and were driving towards Mabel Creek?---I would not know. I was held there - I was down as a corporal there when I was there. They had me down for a higher duties allowance as a corporal. The position I was doing at Maralinga was a corporal's position.

On each occasion that you went to Emu with the party of people to remove these items, the trip would have been authorised by the officers in command of the unit?---I - I do not know. The chaps were going there souveniring and that all of the time.

On the five occasions that you say you went to Emu, were they authorised trips?---Well, the adjutant and the few other officers knew we were going.

Do you say that Second Lieutenant Sharp knew of every occasion that you went to Emu?---Yes.

Did you tell him where you went when you went to Emu?---No. He did not ask.

The rocks you have mentioned and you have got there, you have said that you took from the area where there were secret trials done at Roadside?---Yes.

When were they taken from the Roadside, do you know?---They were taken from January 1956 to November 1956.

Did you bring them away from the range, or did somebody else bring them away?---I am not stating who brought them away. Members of 7th Independent Field Squadron.

Were they taken from the Roadside control point, or from somewhere else?---Yes. Some of them were taken from the vicinity of the secret trials on the eastern side of the road at roadside.

Yes, thank you, your Honour.

THE PRESIDENT: Anything further, Mr McClellan?

MR McCLELLAN: Mr Toon, you, through your counsel, tendered a letter that you had sent to Mr Brereton. Do you recall that letter?---Yes.

I will just show you a copy of it. You indicate in the letter, in the middle of the letter, where you say:

The association has unofficially observed and monitored the regions and the travel paths of the atomic mushroom clouds from Maralinga and Monte Bello across the continent.

?---Yes.

It goes on:

The monitoring has shown that there is no appreciable decay of the plutonium observed in the heavy, rain washout areas.

Now, does the association have the report that appears to be referred to in that letter?---Yes. Our people have been - they know more about the radiation fall-out than the Commonwealth Department of the AIRAC.

Are you prepared to make that report available to the - - -?
---It belongs to the Maralinga and Monte Bello Atomic Ex-Servicemen's Association, and it will be used for the common law claims against the Commonwealth.

Are you prepared to make it available to the commission?---No.

Would you be prepared to make it available on any special terms, such as that only the commissioners and myself saw it?
---That would be - it would be the decision of an

executive committee meeting of our Maralinga and Monte Bello Atomic Ex-Servicemen's Association.

Could I ask you to put that matter to that committee for decision?
---I might be willing to do it but I do not - - -

Would you be willing to do it, sir?---Not after - not after the criminal deception from Fraser and Carrick when we submitted all our information we had in 1981 and '82. It was used for - by the Attorney General to block claims by our members.

Well, sir, the question I asked you was whether or not you were prepared to ask your association whether or not that report could be made available?---I have the numbers on our association, and I do not think they would.

You do not think they would?---No.

But are you prepared to ask them?---I am prepared to put it to them, but I personally would vote against it myself, and I have the numbers on the association to block it.

Have you ever shown that report to anyone?---Certain - - -

Apart from the association?---That report belongs to the Maralinga and Monte Bello Atomic Ex-Servicemen's Association, and it will only be used for the purposes of common law action against the Commonwealth.

Sir, you - or Mr James made available to me, a newspaper report of Mr Tuck piloting the Canberra jet bomber through the cloud?---Yes.

Do you say that you have a statement from Mr Tuck which would tell us something other than what is contained in this newspaper article?---Yes. I have a three page report on the flight into the mushroom cloud, plus another report of the British bomber that went into the mushroom cloud before the - Geoffrey Tuck's Canberra bomber.

Well, the report of Mr Tuck, do you know who that was a report to?
---Geoffrey Tuck wrote that report for his own purposes, to assist his wife and children.

And the copy that you have, is that the only copy; or are there other copies?---There could be other copies. I am not too sure.

Do you know the address of Mrs Tuck?---Yes.

You do?---She has remarried.

The rocks that you have there, you say they were measured?---They have been checked, not measured.

Who was that done by?---By scientists working with the Maralinga and Monte Bello Atomic Ex-Servicemen's Association.

Are they scientists in Queensland, are they?---They are not in Australia, those scientists.

They are not in Australia?---No.

What, you sent the rocks overseas, did you?---I am not prepared to say where the rocks went to.

Thank you, Mr Toon.

MR JAMES: With the leave of the commission, I wish to ask one question about one matter only.

THE PRESIDENT: Very well, go ahead.

MR JAMES: Mr Toon, you have referred to the livestock of which you had been put in charge in September 1956?---Yes.

And being returned from the test site at One Tree the day after the test?---Yes.

You have referred to that livestock being shot in November 1956? ---Yes.

What happened to the beasts after they were shot?---I do not know. We had to shoot them, and they were left at the village. Most likely, they were buried in unlisted burial sites, where they were putting the Aboriginal remains they were finding on the range. I also know the site of one unlisted burial site near 43 that is - that has not been listed, which I might be willing to put before the Royal Commission later on.

That would be of assistance?---Yes.

I have nothing further.

THE PRESIDENT: You are excused?---Thank you.

THE WITNESS WITHDREW

MR McCLELLAN: I am reminded by the secretary that I have apparently not tendered Mr Toon's statement. I wish to do that. It could be marked with exhibit RC30.

THE PRESIDENT: I thought you were going to put all the documents with exhibit RC29. That is Mr Toon's statement.

MR McCLELLAN: I suppose that is appropriate. We can leave that as part of exhibit 29. I call Mr John Coolahan.

JOHN NOEL COOLAHAN, sworn:

MR McCLELLAN: Your full name is John Noel Coolahan. Is that correct?---That is correct.

And your address is care of Sun Court Motel, Bulcock Street, Caloundra?---Correct.

And you have provided a statement, through your solicitor, to the commission.

I tender that, your Honour; it can be marked RC30.

Do you have a copy of the statement?---Yes, I have.

I wonder perhaps would you get it out for me, thank you. You indicated in your statement that you were a wireless operator in 1953 on a DC3 aircraft based at Richmond. Can you tell me this; is the DC3 otherwise known by the name Dakota?---Yes, that is correct.

You say, from your log book, you can tell that you left Richmond in September 1953 and flew to Woomera. I think your log book is there with you?---That is correct.

You indicate there who the crew were and say before you went to Woomera you were told you were going to participate in the nuclear trials and you were told you would be testing for airborne radioactivity before and after the explosion?---Really, for mainly, ground activity from a low level.

I think the DC3 is contrasted with the Lincoln, a plane which was appropriate for low-level flying?---Yes.

Just tell me this, what was it like flying at low levels over central Australia?---Extremely rough because of the thermal sort of conditions.

Could you hold a constant height?---Sorry?

Could you hold a constant height?---Give or take 20 feet I suppose.

Give or take 20 feet?---Yes, we would vary between 500 and say 250 feet.

Do experienced flyers experience air sickness in turbulence of that sort?---Some air crew do. None of our crew did. The scientist we had on board was sick for, I suppose, three-quarters of every trip.

Three-quarters of every trip?---Yes. One thing, we admired him, inasmuch if you concentrated for anything like eight to 10 hours a day - they would be sick and back to work. In fact, we used to tease them.

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You used to tease them?---Yes.

So each DC3 had a four-man crew, and after arriving at Woomera you did a lot of local flying until the first test, which you believe was on 16 October. The local flying, did it have a purpose?---Mainly to get ourselves au fait with the countryside or topographical features.

Were you flying particular routes or in particular areas?
---No, not particularly. We went up to Emu field and flew around there for a while to get ourselves au fait again with that area. Flying before and after each blast that was a pre-set sort of pattern.

This flying before the blast, was it a low level or was it at high altitude?---Oh, it would have been anything from 500 to 1000 feet, I suppose.

That is low level, I assume?---Yes.

Were you asked to look for anything on the ground during the course of this time?---Not to my knowledge.

Were you ever asked to look for Aboriginals?---No.

Would you have known if you had been asked?---We would have expected to see something because having spent a long time flying in the centre we would have seen them, but they were not specifically even mentioned.

The wireless operator in a DC3, whereabouts did you sit?
---You would sit about 8 feet behind the second pilot on the right-hand side.

Do you have a window?---Not in that particular craft.

Can you see out from that position at all?---No. I had a habit over the years of standing up between the two pilots or in the astrodome which is the navigational dome in the top of the aircraft. I was interested in the countryside.

When you stand between the two pilots could you see the ground?
---Yes. Quite often we would take part with the second pilot and the captain and do some flying ourselves.

And if the plane was bumping around in turbulence at 500 feet, were you still able to stand between the two pilots?
---Oh, you got used to it.

You did not hit your head on anything?---No.

The log book, you say, shows that on 26 October you flew approximately 40 hours?---Approximately, yes.

Did you, between the 16th and 26th, did you do any flying according to your log book?---Could I produce the log book to you and you could read it for yourself?

It might be easier for you to read than me. I will come and look at it with you?---We departed Richmond on 24 September and arrived at Woomera on the same day, on the 24th. On the 26th it would have been about 65 hours of flying.

About 65 hours of flying from - - -?---When we arrived at Woomera.

That is the 26th of - - -?---The 26th we arrived at Woomera.

26 September you arrived at Woomera?---Yes.

And then you mark there total. Is that right?---Yes. The first test and then the second test.

And you were there present at Woomera - - -?---At Woomera.

Until what date?---I departed Woomera, that would have been on 27th or 28th for Richmond.

28 October?---Yes.

Now, during that time you did, you say, how many hours flying? ---Approximately 60.

And do you have the dates of those flights?---Yes.

Do you have any flying, yes, I think you do - you flew on 8 October?---Yes.

In '53, is that right?---That is right. That was only an air test.

An air test?---We did not fly again until the 15th.

You flew again on 15 October?---Right.

You have marked that as X200?---Yes.

And you flew for 2 hours 35 minutes?---Right. To get to X200.

This was in the DC3?---Yes.

The number of your aircraft, do you have that?---It was A65 109, that particular - - -

109 right?---Yes.

And then you flew the same aircraft on the 16th?---Yes.

For only 20 minutes. Is that right?---Yes.

Why was it for only 20 minutes?---If I recollect, it was about half an hour or 45 minutes after the blast which we witnessed. We became airborne and flew over the actual site and we landed again and took off to do our survey.

Well, according to your record I have here the blast occurred on 15 October?---Yes.

That 20-minute flight on the 16th?---My dates would have been out by a day.

Why out by a day?---I may have mis-read the log book.

Then help me - we will go back again to the 15th. We have X200 there, two hours and 35 minutes?---Yes.

Could that flight have occurred on the same day as the X200 20-minute flight?---No.

Definitely different days are they?---Definitely different. We arrived the night beforehand and stayed overnight and then we were given permission or asked if we would like to see the second blast off which was the date of the 15th.

You recall that 20-minutes flight as being very shortly after the blast?---Yes.

And then you flew on the same day according to the book for three hours and 30 minutes?---Yes.

To Oodnadatta?---Yes.

Did you land at Oodnatta?---Yes, we landed there, and we must have refuelled there in that case.

And then you flew from Oodnadatta back to X200?---Yes.

Five hours and 45 minutes?---Yes, right.

But you did not do that until the following day?---No. We stayed overnight at Oodnadatta.

And you did some more flying. You have got X200 WRA. What is WRA?---To Woomera.

To Woomera, and you were back there on the 17th?---Yes, the 17th.

And that appears to have been the flying that you did associated with that explosion?---That is correct.

Is that right?---Yes.

Now, tell me, sir, when you were doing this flying after the test, was it all done at low level?---Yes.

And were you flying to a specific pattern?---Being a wireless operator, I would not have known except I knew that we were doing patterns, but what the areas - the navigator would have known himself.

The 20-minute flight has me intrigued. Why did you understand you just went up for 20 minutes?---We went across to have a look at the crater.

Just to have a look at the crater?---Well, this is what I understood. Whether we were told to, I cannot recollect.

THE PRESIDENT: From where?---From the airfield at Emu Field.

MR McCLELLAN: And do you recall seeing the crater yourself?
---Oh yes, yes. I stood between the two pilots and watched it as we flew around it.

Do you recall seeing any atomic cloud on that occasion?---Oh, the cloud I had seen in the tests itself, previous to becoming airborne.

And how long after the bomb went off did you do this flight?
---It would be about 30 minutes to 45 minutes.

30 to 45 minutes after?---Yes.

And was there any scientist on board your aircraft when you did that flight?---I cannot recollect whether he was or not. I would say possibly he was because he stayed with us all the time.

Do you know if he might have been taking photographs of the site?---He could have been because he was way down the back of the aircraft, and the door would have been closed most likely anyway, and we would not have seen what he was doing anyway unless we went down there.

Tell me, was the DC3 a breezy aircraft inside or not?---No, not particularly.

It was not?---Not unless the side windows were open.

Could you open the side windows?---Oh yes - the pilot's windows.

Was it the usual practice to open the side windows?---At that height, yes, because it is so warm.

It was not a pressurized aircraft, I assume?---No, we never had any pressurized aircraft.

You never had a pressurized aircraft?---No.

You record in paragraph 7 of your statement that your aircraft had a British scientist on board, sat down in the back, you do not know exactly what gear he had, apart from some type of geiger counter?---Which he had told us.

He told you he had a geiger counter?---Yes.

Do you recall seeing that implement?---I would have seen it but I cannot remember.

You could not describe it to me now?---No.

Do you know whether it extended out beyond the skin of the aircraft in any way at all?---I think it did, on the starboard side.

On the starboard side? Do you know what extended out?---I do not know.

As radio operator, were you ever required to relay back to any base location information which the scientist was obtaining whilst he was in the air?---No - only our positions relative to a bearing distance to a particular point.

You did keep in touch relaying back to - - -?---Oh, we had to, yes.

You indicate you were not given protective gear?---No.

Or warnings?---I would have worn a flying suit or just the normal shorts and long socks.

You had in-flight rations and I assume during the 11½ hours - - -? ---In fact, those rations stayed on board the planes, mainly from the time we left Richmond, and remained

on the planes until we got back to Richmond. The food we did not eat just went back to Richmond.

But the cupboard was never bare on board?---No. We had a few tea chests of tinned food and we would have possibly been given bread and fresh rations each day.

You were not warned about not eating anything in flight?---No.

You were not given any breathing gear? By that you mean oxygen facilities?---The only oxygen facilities would have been on the aircraft which was only a tube anyway, without a mask.

Was that ever used, to your recollection? I take it that would only have been necessary if you were up above 10,000 feet or the like?---For a long period, yes. At times we had both aircraft - there were only two really - and we did fly in formation at times along routes.

I was going to ask you, how many DC3s were there stationed at Emu at that stage?---There were only two.

Two?---Yes.

And did both those aircraft take off after the explosion and perform similar grid-type functions?---Yes, but the second aircraft, that crew were not there to witness the explosion, which we did.

They came in after the explosion?---They would have flown another pattern from Woomera that particular day.

From Woomera?---That particular day, because we would have heard one another on the air.

Did you hear one another on the air?---Continually, yes.

Do you know whether that aircraft was flying close to you or was it flying some distance away from you?---At times we flew in a pattern of about 200 or 300 yards apart.

Was that a constant thing?---No.

Or did it only occur sometimes?---It was only on certain occasions.

Now, you record observing the cloud. In paragraph 12 of your statement, you say:

After approximately three or four minutes the clouds separated, the head adopted an angle shape, and the stem broke away. I recall there was a clear gap between the top of the stem and the bottom of the cloud was fairly clearly defined. This happened so soon after the blast that I recall the cloud head was still billowing upwards. It seemed to me both parts of the cloud then started to drift towards us.

When you say they started to drift towards you, where were you standing relative to the position of the cloud?
---I cannot say the exact distance. They spoke of 12 miles.

Yes?---It may have been closer because if I can recollect we could see the tower from where we were.

Right?---As the cloud went up, it suddenly sort of changed direction. Whether the wind had changed or the wind sheered at that time - - -

Were you standing at the airfield, were you?---Yes.

And the cloud started to come back towards the airfield?---Yes.

Do you know whether in fact it went over the airfield or had you left by then?---We were not standing in the airfield. I would say the airfield is probably a mile or two from the actual quarters, and that is where we stood.

So you were standing near Emu Village?---Yes. It would have been - - -

Not near the airfield?---No.

And the cloud, you say, rose up from the explosion and then moved back towards where you were standing at the village?
---Right.

And I ask you again, did you stay there until the cloud had gone, or did you fly out before the cloud had disappeared?
---I would say it was approximately about halfway towards us when we moved out to the airfield.

And was it still coming towards you at that stage?---I cannot remember. Of course, it was pretty high by then and the lower cloud had sort of dissipated a lot.

Well, was there any sense of urgency displayed to you, about the movement of the cloud, by anyone?---Not that I recollect, no.

You do not recall it as being an unusual - - -?---I think I heard a few gasps.

A few gasps - from whom?---From the people around us - the service people.

What caused those gasps?---Possibly looking at the cloud changing direction.

Did any officer or person in command express any concern?---Not terribly.

Now, you record the fact that the Canberra flew through the cloud. Did you observe that happening?---Yes.

From the ground or from your aircraft?---From the ground.

And then you record the flight that you were involved with and the records of your log, and then in paragraph 21 you say, to your knowledge, the aircraft which you flew in Totem was never checked for radiation?---Not to my knowledge.

Could it have been checked without you knowing, do you think?

---It could have been. I did not see any decontamination areas, or which would have looked like a decontamination area where we had our aircraft.

Were you ever issued with a film badge or - have you seen a film badge?---If you could show me one - - -

Yes, sure. That is a type of film badge. Have you ever - - -?
---No.

Never given one of those?---I think we had a badge which gave us authority to go outside of the enclosures, that is all.

What about a thing like this called a dosimeter? Were you ever given one of those? You answer, no?---No. I have never even seen one before.

Never seen one?---Not to my knowledge.

You refer to the British scientist; you say he had no protective gear on?---No.

And then you record some personal medical details; is that correct?---Correct, yes.

That is all the questions I have, sir. It might be an appropriate time.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, all right.

MR McCLELLAN: Perhaps the clock gives us five minutes, maybe, so we could use those - - -

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR JAMES: Mr Coolahan, the DC3 was the Dakota aircraft known as the Workhorse, I think?---Correct.

And they were used widely all over the world during the second world war and subsequent. Indeed, I think they have even been used up until recently in places like Papua/New Guinea. You are nodding. We cannot get the nods down?---Sorry.

Could I get you to give an answer? They have oil plugs in the wings, do they not, round black plugs?---No, not that I know of.

The aircraft, does it tend to leak as it flies?---Yes, it had a lot of oil leaks. You could see it streaming over the wings.

You could see it streaming over the wings as the plane flies?
---Yes.

And after any particular flight, the plane is coated in a film of oil, is it not?---Yes.

Was anything done after these flights you made, and particularly, the flight over the crater in relation to the sticky film of oil over the plane?---Not to my knowledge.

At any stage did you see persons with geiger counters check out that plane?---No.

You were asked - - -

THE PRESIDENT: We did not get the answer then?---No.

MR JAMES: I am sorry.

You were asked about it being a greasy aircraft. You mentioned the windows open. Even when the windows were shut, did the airstream outside enter the aircraft?---Yes. It could come up through the floorboards of the passengers cabin.

And it tended to rattle a bit, did it not, some floor movement of the structure?---Yes.

And indeed, in places, you could actually see out to the outside area?---It has a lot of vibration, of course.

Now, you mentioned in relation to the cloud changing direction, something called wind sheer. What is wind sheer?
---Well, it would be a sudden change of wind where, I would say, it could be more thermal than anything, and the thermal part could have been from the explosion itself.

So that you can get an effect, for instance, of wind at one height blowing in one direction and another height a different direction?---Yes, right.

And that can be complicated by the thermal effect of the explosion itself - - -?---Which probably caused it, anyway.

You were ordered to get airborne as soon as possible after the explosion. When did you receive those orders in relation to the explosion - before or after?---I cannot recall.

Right, OK.

THE PRESIDENT: Perhaps that is a good time. We will adjourn until 2 o'clock.

LUNCHEON ADJOURNMENT

MR McCLELLAN: Mr Coolahan, I think, was in the box, your Honour.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, Mr James?

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MR JAMES: Mr Coolahan, one matter: you appeared to have some difficulty hearing in answering. Do you have some hearing defect?---Yes, I am on a 30 per cent repat pension for sinusitis and hearing, mainly from New Guinea during the war, decible noise, and flying without oxygen for long periods at 18,000 feet.

If you have any difficulty, please ask for the question to be repeated?---Thank you.

I want to take you back to the night before the Totem test. Do you recall what you were doing that night?---Yes. We arrived late afternoon - - -

THE PRESIDENT: Which one: the first one - - -?---The second one.

MR JAMES: Totem 2. Right, do you recall what you were doing that evening?---I was not commissioned then. I was in the sergeants mess, and we had a few drinks and quite a number of army NCOs were there which far outweighed outselves, of course.

Did you have a distinguished visitor in the sergeants mess?
---Sir William Penney came in.

Did he appear to be fairly happy?---Yes, he was.

And, in fact, did he indicate to you, that is to you personally, a degree of satisfaction with Totem 1?---Yes, he was. He saw the group that went around and later on he said, "They have doubled my salary".

Did he say why?---For his accomplishment in Totem 1, or whatever previous tests there was.

Did he shout a few drinks as a result of it?---In fact, he donated a case of whisky to the sergeants mess.

Did you see him at any stage following that?---It could have been next morning, witnessing the blast, but there were so many people around I did not take much notice.

Your log book, and I think you still have your log book with you - - -?---Yes.

Do I understand the log books - that is a personal log book kept by you?---Which is left back at base.

There are also aircraft log books kept for the aircraft, were there not?---Right.

And there were various movement orders and so forth in relation to aircraft that changed base?---Yes. It was an operations order.

In relation to the personal log books, were they filled out on the day on which the various events that were recorded took place?---No. The log book stayed back, as your own property back in the squadron, and at the end of each month you had to fill in the dates, aircraft number, who your captain was, and who you flew from A to B and the times, night or day, and that would be filled out at the end of the month - sometimes rather hurriedly because the squadron commander - you had to sort of front with your log book every month and he would check it across, across the squadron log book.

Rosters?---The flight authorizations book, and then he signed it as being correct, and sometimes it could be up to two months before you filled it out because you might be away flying again somewhere else detached, so dates could be misconstrued or written down wrongly, possibly in a hurry to get it done.

Going particularly to the date on which my learned friend questioned you as to the date of the explosions: you recall there was some difficulty with your log book?---That is right, between the 15th and 16th.

Could you turn up that page for us? You will have to keep your voice up?---The first Totem is there.

You see, we have the 15th, 109, Flight Officer Jennings, and then the 16th, 109, Flight Officer Jennings, and Totem, and then on the 17th we have 71 Flight Officer Jennings A tests. Those words in the column, "Duty - Totem A tests," are they meant to correspond with the references to the 16th and 17th?---Yes, particularly in that column was the duty, what you were doing, the test, navigational exercise, or as it says, Totem there.

And when one goes to the second page - that is the right-hand page - I see that we have X200 and that page is slightly out of sequence, but it appears to coincide with 16th 109 Totem?---Right.

And that is the 20 minute flight that my friend referred you to?---Which was after the - - -

Immediately after the explosion?---The blast.

Above that there appears to be on the 15th the words WRA? ---Wocmera, yes.

X200, and there had previously been an X200 back on the 4th? ---We have flown up there as a familiarization of the area.

So that the reference on the 15th to plane number 109 Woomera X200 at 235, would that have been a flight that you undertook on the 15th?---It would have been on the 14th, the night before the explosion, what you call travel. All we did was travel up there.

So you have made mention there of 2 hours 35 minutes but we do not know what time of day that was? ---Normally the hours should be put down there; the previous log book would probably show that, but it was not important, what time we took off.

What are the figures appearing in the right-hand column? That is to say, at the top right-hand under the heading "Time carried forward?" Are they progressive flying hour figures?---Yes. That is the total hours flying by day and that is the total hours flown by night in red.

Now would that mean that since there is nothing filled in - - -?---There was no night flying in that particular period.

There was no night flying during that period?---No.

Coming back again to these figures of the 16th, 16th and 17th, where we have got what appears to be a ditto mark and then "A tests", what is the "OD X200 545"? ---From Oodnadatta up to Emu Field next day, and on that day we would do a survey.

Now these books - you mentioned they had to be submitted and signed for as authenticated - - -

THE PRESIDENT: Mr Toon, would you mind being silent while this witness gives his evidence. We all have to hear it as well as yours.

MR JAMES: You mentioned that book being signed and authenticated. Do you see any checking or authenticating of this signature that covers this period?---No. What actually happens, which I have not brought with me, is a monthly and yearly certificate which gives you the proficiency or non-proficiency, signed by the then CO of the squadron.

And you received that certificate in relation to this period? ---I would have them all at home, except I took everything out of this log book and the other book so that nothing scrt of fell out, but it can be produced, yes.

Subsequently did you serve with the Air Force as an operations officer?---Yes, for 15 years.

At the conclusion of that duty did you receive some commendation for your retentive memory?---Yes. From a member of personnel, Air Vice-Marshal Henneck, who was the member for personnel at that stage.

Your log books shows you that you flew 11½ hours on survey on, I think, the day of the explosion; is that so?---That would be correct, I would say.

That is Totem 2. What day is that shown as?---Well, it would have been the 16th - I am sorry, the 15th.

It was in fact the 15th, but it is shown in your book as the 16th; that is Totem 1, is it not?---Yes. No, that would have been Totem 2, of course. I am sorry, yes.

Totem 1?---Totem 2 was on the 26th, was it not?

Then you landed at Emu, refuelled there and flew another 2½ hours back to Woomera?---Yes, 2 hours 10.

Your log book shows that you further flew on 5½ hours to Richmond?---That is right. That would have been on the 28th really. It was returning to base.

In paragraph 17 of your statement you say, "This cannot be right and I recollect that we overnighted in Woomera and left for Richmond the next afternoon."? ---Which would be about 4 o'clock in the afternoon.

Is that after the events of the 15th or after the events of the 26th?---After the events of the 26th because we were there all the time.

So when you are referring in paragraph 17 to the flight of 11½ hours on survey that day - if you could have a look at your statement; the reference is in paragraph 17?---We departed after the blast from Emu Field.

What day is that that you are referring to now?---That would be the same day as the second blast.

So it is Totem 2 we are talking about?---Right.

In relation to paragraph 17?---And we landed back at Emu Field and refuelled and went back to Woomera; so the total flying hours in that period would have been close to 14 hours really, by the time we got back to Woomera.

And it is Totem 2 in which you flew across the - - -?---The site, yes.

The site at approximately 500 feet?---Thereabouts, yes.

And stood between the pilots and you recall the blackened hole at ground zero?---A quite huge crater, yes.

You saw bits of equipment?---You could see an odd tank.

Your log book also shows that you flew both - two different aeroplanes; that is, 109 and 171?---109 and 71, yes.

Were they both flown at Woomera and over the test site? You have referred to them as being flown in December 1953?---We only left with two aircraft. The other aircraft, as far as I know, did not go over the test site. They may have, because they did not stay there previous overnight or witness the second explosion.

Just to see if I can get it clear, the two aircraft - we are told some four Dakotas were employed from number 38 squadron, that being A65 71, A65 109, A65 112 and A65 118?---That is a possibility, the other crew. The aircraft may have been changed because of inspections and flown back to Richmond and a ferry crew would have taken them out to the other crew.

I think we are told that there were three crews for the four aircraft, plus some reserves. This is from the document, I should indicate, that has been produced by the Commonwealth and not yet tendered because we are still waiting for the report - - -

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR JAMES: Giving details of RAAF participation in the tests dated 24 September 1981.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR JAMES: Would that indicate to you, the references to three crews, two of them with two different aircraft and a whole of reserves, that there would have been some changeover in aircraft so that at least two aircraft were on the site?---The two aircraft were a part of the base, and it is a possibility that the other crews aircraft had been changed over. We did have aircraft staging through with VIPs on board in that period from Darwin going south, who stayed overnight at Woomera; which could have been 121, or one of the others.

And your commander on the aircraft was flight - - -?---Flying Officer Jennings.

Flying Officer Jennings. A crew of four - - -?---True.

- - - in each aircraft, and there were always - or there was always, at some stage, an officer in command, was there not?---Yes. It was a Flight Lieutenant Norris in charge of the other aircraft, and Flying Officer Jennings in charge of our aircraft.

Right. And Flight Sergeant Bellamy, who was a pilot?---Right - a second pilot.

A second pilot, and Sergeant Drew: do you recall a Sergeant Drew? ---I remember a Sergeant Drew.

Was he ever a pilot in the aircraft - in an aircraft in which you flew, while you were there?---No. He is possibly the second pilot of Flight Lieutenant Norris' aircraft.

There is also Sergeant Hector Neal McDonald?---Yes. Later on he was killed flying in the para field, three or four years later, in a Bristol Freighter.

Did you see the aircraft washed at any stage, at any place?---No. Normally we would leave the aircraft and go back to our quarters for de-briefing, and whatever the ground staff did, of course, I would not know.

Have you any knowledge of any practice of washing down the DC3s?---I have never noticed it.

THE PRESIDENT: Is this the position, that you just do not know whether it was washed down, or not, or do you say that it was not washed down?---To my knowledge, we would have experienced some of them washing down
- - -

And you would notice the difference too, would you not, if it had just been washed down. Would it not look different?---Well, it would, yes, yes.

So you do not believe it was washed down?---I do not believe it was washed down, no. I have never seen any area over there where the aircraft had been washed.

MR JAMES: In addition to that, if it were washed, the only location which you could surmised it would have been washed was in Richmond, New South Wales?---Yes. But I have never seen any area which was put aside; where later on in Darwin, there were areas on the air field at a later time put aside.

Did you at any stage, near any of the air fields, see set aside a group of aeroplanes in an off limits or restricted area?---No, but having flown in Lincolns beforehand, crews had told me that when they got back or arrived back from Woomera, that their aircraft were washed down; and that there were quite high readings.

This was what you had heard from Lincoln crews?---Yes, friends, yes.

And they were Lincoln crews based where?---At Amberley.

I have nothing further from this witness.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, Mr Eames.

MR EAMES: Mr Coolahan, can I firstly yet again check with you about some of the hours that you logged. You said that between 26 September - well, yes, you may be able to say this without my needing to come over. But you arrived at Woomera on 26 September?---Yes. That is right. It would have been late afternoon.

Is it possible from your log book to tell us how many hours you flew between 26 September and 15 October 1953?---Yes. It would have been - September 15 - and the 15th? right?

Yes?---So I will take it to 8 October before we flew again on the 15th. It would be about eight hours. The reason we were given was because of adverse winds and weather. This is why we were. - - -

So, prior to the tests, prior to Totem 1, you only notched up eight hours of flying?---Right.

Were there any other DC3s based at Woomera at that time; that is, prior to 15 October?---Not to my knowledge. There was only two aircraft left from the squadron.

Yes. Well, where was the second one?---With us.

I am sorry?---We both left Richmond on the same day for Woomera.

Well, between 26 September and 15 October, were both planes flying at about the same number of hours each?---I would say so, yes, because we would share flying hours.

Yes. And so do we take that that there would have been approximately 16 hours of flying done over that period?---I would assume so, yes.

And do you know whether or not the other plane was doing similar exercises to your own, prior to 15 October; in other words, low level surveys?---Yes, because we would have half-hourly schedule reports, and sometimes 15 minutes.

Yes?---Either it would be say 10 or 40, or 15 or 45; so the other aircraft would be calling up within 5 minutes either side of my scheduled report.

Yes. You have told us that I think it was for Totem 2 your plane was actually at the air field at Emu. Was it at the air field for Totem 1 at Emu?---No. We have been up there, but we had not stayed overnight.

Right. If I can just concentrate for the moment on this period prior to 15 October, with respect to your own plane and the second DC3 that you were involved with, do I understand your evidence to be that you received no instructions that these survey flights were to look for aboriginal people or anyone else on the ground?---No.

And that, of course, would be something that you would remember if you had been specifically instructed to do that, would you not?---Because otherwise, we would probably have removed the back door of the plane, and stand down at the back of the plane.

Quite. If you are to do a ground survey, that is, looking for people, it is not something that can be done without some planning; and indeed, without some training, is it?---To aircrew, you would not need any training because we would do - quite often - air sea rescue services over water or land.

Right. Perhaps I can put that better: even aircrew, would want to know specifically what it was they were looking for; whether they were in fact looking for people, or looking for geographic points, or whatever it may be. It makes

a difference, would it not, on the flight that you were flying as to what you were looking for?---True. As I said, if you were specifically asked to look for something on the ground, then we would - one of us would remove the parachute door, and one would stand down the back, sort of strapped in to look out.

So you would find - you would make a point of having all four crewmen in positions that would give them the maximum range of visibility?---Yes - or otherwise, we would carry observers to assist us doing that.

Yes. Well, that would, of course, be the other thing: given the nature of the Dakota, if one were to fly a survey, looking for people on the ground, there would be nothing to stop you putting any number of other people, would there to - - -?---That is right, if we were asked to do that, yes.

Can I just check, how many windows were there on the DC3?---The navigator would have one on the port side - - -

Yes?---And the two pilots, of course, on either side.

Yes?---And the wireless operator did not have a window.

And apart from opening the door, would there be any other points where people could stand and look outside?
---Oh, quite often on search and rescue, you would have people on the passenger side looking out through the windows there.

Yes, quite. And, certainly, you have got no recollection of any such exercise - - -?---No.

- - - on these flights prior to 15 October. And when you were in fact doing the flights prior to 15 October, did you in fact ever notice anyone on the ground?
---Oh, throughout that period - and I have got to be honest - there is a feeling in the back of my memory we did see a number of animals, like camels and that sort of thing - - -

Yes?---But I think it is a possibility, we did see a number of Aborigines in sort of humpies, running around waving.

Yes?---But I cannot swear to that.

And I know it is 30 years ago, but do you have any recollection as to whether those observations were made before the tests or after either or both of these tests?---This would be possibly on the trip to Alice Springs, when we stayed overnight, which would be round about 24 October.

24 October, so in the gap between the two Totems?---Yes.

And I suppose unless you had been asked specifically to look out for people on the ground it would not necessarily follow that you would make a report of such an observation?---No, it would be just a matter of interest of probably waving or something like that. We would not even log it.

I suppose as far as the crew were concerned they knew very little in any event about what radiation dangers there were or otherwise in the area?---No, whether we did not know whatever readings the scientists took - we would send coded messages back, but they were mainly on-position reports. It was mainly in plain language by varying distances on a certain grid.

Given that most of your flying was done in grid patterns either over the test sites themselves, or the range area, or alternatively following cloud from a bomb blast, are you able to say whether it is more probable than not that sightings of Aboriginals would have had to be either in the test site area or alternatively somewhere near where you were tracking the fall-out?---I would say, quite a distance away.

That is fairly relative. Can you assist us at all?---Well, as I said I cannot definitely say I did see them, but at the back of my mind it is that I did see them, possibly between Oodnadatta and Alice Springs which is quite a distance away, possibly 3 to 400 miles.

Between Oodnadatta and Alice Springs?---Yes, that was the particular survey, or maybe north of Oodnadatta.

If one wanted to look for Aboriginal people on the ground in the test site area would you have known what to look for unless someone told you?---Usually what I have seen before, Aborigines, but as I said we were not asked to look for them.

And are you familiar with what is called a Wilshire, a bow-shaped wind-break that Aboriginal people would have used?---Yes, having spent three postings in the territory I would have seen them.

Would you agree that even from 500 feet, such a wind-break would be extremely difficult to spot unless you were specifically looking for those sorts of things?---No, but your eyes are roving all the time, and anything out of the ordinary would catch your eye.

Yes. But it would certainly help though in terms of noting that fact if you were specifically on a flight to look for those sort of things?---True.

Now, but between the 15th and the conclusion of your period there, that was 28 October, we have got eight hours that you flew prior to the 15th, and I think you said altogether you flew for about 65 hours. Is that right?---Yes, give or take a few minutes.

Does that mean there was about 57 hours between those periods after the 15th and your departure on 28 October?
---It was taken after the first explosion - we went back to Woomera, then on the 24th would have flown 11, 13 - about 25 hours all told in survey.

This is before your departure on 28 October?---From Woomera, yes.

Now, again can I ask you with respect to the other Dakota, are you aware of whether it was flying about the same number of hours as your own plane during that period?
---Yes.

So again effectively we can double the number of hours that would have been flown?---True.

Do you know if they were also flying survey, low-level surveys?
---Yes, we lived in the same quarters.

During that period is the situation again the same: you were never asked to make a survey with respect to Aboriginal people or any other people on the ground?
---Not to my knowledge, unless the captain. We were at the same briefing.

That is right. It would have been quite stupid if he was told and he did not tell you, would it not?---Yes.

And certainly you were very close generally?---We would have been briefed together.

Yes. Can I take you then to Totem 1 on 15 October. You have told us that on 16 October you did a 20 minute flight and that was a flight from Woomera. Is that right?
---No, from Emu Field.

From Emu Field?---After the explosion.

On the 16th?---And we were terribly interested in having a look at the crater itself.

Can I just check that we are talking about the same dates: when you say the 16th, are you talking about the day the bomb went off, or the day following?---The day the bomb went off, about 45 minutes after.

Right, and you had seen the bomb go off as you described to us, you saw the shape of the bomb, then you got in

your plane and did a 20 minute flight to have a look at the site of the bomb blast, is that right?---Yes, it was something you would not forget because feeling the heat and the blast and the light it would stay in your memory.

Right. When you followed the blast for Totem 1, did you observe where the cloud was going?---We did not see the first.

Sorry?---Totem 2.

Sorry about this, I may be at cross-purposes: on the flight of 16 October you just flew over to have a look at the site.

THE PRESIDENT: Which is really the 15th.

MR EAMES: Yes, really the 15th. You just flew over to have a look where the bomb went off?---I would not say we flew over to have a look where the bomb went off. I would say we were told. Otherwise we would not have done it. A flight has got to be authorized, and it has to be authorized by the officer-in-charge of that particular area.

Well, just so my slow brain can get it right this time - - -?
---So you just do not take off to have a look.

On that day you did not see the blast itself or any of the wind drift or any of the cloud?---Of Totem 1, we did not.

Of Totem 1 you did not?---But of Totem 2 we did.

Now, on Totem 1, did any plane that you were aware of go up after Totem 1 to follow the cloud?---Oh it would have been the Lincolns because they were flying continuously, doing much more hours than we were doing.

So the DC3s were not being used for that exercise, certainly not for Totem 1?---Oh yes, our object was to record radio-activity above ground, and not radio-activity in the air so much.

On the day, and I think it was the same day you made the three hours thirty minutes flight to Oodnadatta, that was again the day of Totem 1, was it?---Yes.

Now, what were your instructions on that day? What was that flight meant to be doing?---The navigator would be given a particular flight plan. I am sorry he is not here because otherwise he would have more information than I would have. He would be given a certain area to survey.

Yes?---And that would be tied up with the explosion anyway, otherwise we would not have been there.

Yes. Now, you told us that you spent a fair bit of time standing between the pilot and co-pilot looking out, that was your practice?---I have always done that.

And because you had been flying a lot of low level flying had you got used to the location of the surrounding cattle stations that adjoined the range on that series of maps. The navigator would have been, of course, because he would have been pin-pointing our position all the time.

Yes. But I take it then that you would not know on this day that you were flying for three hours 30 minutes to Oodnadatta and back again, whether you were flying over any particular cattle stations at that time?
---I would say you would probably see the odd property, but you would not recognize it. The navigator would know.

All right. Can you recall on that flight in any event observing any people on the ground?---Which day was that?

Sorry. This is the 16th you said which is in fact the 15th?
---Oh. Honestly I cannot say, but at the back of my mind I still think we saw a number of Aborigines on the ground waving from their humpies.

Yes?---Waving, on their humpies.

But you do not know when it was?---But I would not say which day, but it was during that period, towards Alice Springs.

Yes. On the day of Totem 1, are you able to tell us anything about wind direction on that day?---No. Normally the wireless operator, you would be at the briefing, but it would not affect you. You are mainly interested in radio frequencies.

You would not pay particular attention to that sort of thing?
---Not particularly.

All right?---Except I believe they were waiting for the winds to blow across to the north-east.

Yes?---And that is why the second test was delayed.

Yes. Can I take you now to Totem 2? On the day of Totem 2, and this may be where my confusion comes from, you did see Totem 2 explode; is that right?---Yes.

And on that day were you also based, or was your plane on the airstrip at Emu?---Yes, yes.

And on that day did you fly on any official duty to follow the course of the cloud at all?---It was not part of our operations order. Our order was to record radioactivity.

Right?---Above ground level.

But what you noticed, as you have described to us, with the wind or - or the cloud appeared to break into two parts, did it?---Yes.

Was one apparently going north-east?---I would say more like north-west.

North-west?---Yes. I am only guessing, but I would have to reorientate myself standing there, and it seemed to come towards us.

But certainly the second part appeared to be heading south?
---I could not say that. No, I would say it was actually coming towards us - the whole two clouds. The lower one was dissipating.

Yes?---And it was very reddish.

Now, can I just read something to you and, if you cannot comment on it, please say so, Mr Coolahan, with respect to Totem 2. Speaking here of the cloud:

By contrast close in fallout from Totem 2 was subjected to considerable wind shear so that the first part of the close in fallout plume extended south south-west from ground zero for some two kilometres, then broadened and veered to the south-east.

Now, from your observations, are you in a position to make a comment?---I could have been disorientated as regards where I was standing - where north-east and south-west was.

Is that possible, the description I just gave then?---It is possible, yes.

Both explosions - that is Totem 1 and Totem 2 - the main cloud of radioactivity proceeded directly to the north-east, crossing the coast of northern Queensland? Would you say, from your observations, that the main cloud appeared to proceed north-east, or would you say you cannot comment?---I said that before, I think - about five minutes ago.

Yes, all right. Yes, I have no further questions.

THE PRESIDENT: Mr McIntyre?

MR MCINTYRE: Was the predetermined grid pattern in Totem 1 and Totem 2 generally to the north-east of Emu Field? ---I would say most of the flying we did was more to the south and south-west.

Is it the case that it was the Lincolns that did the cloud sample and tracked the cloud?---Right.

And the function of the Dakotas was, at a lower altitude, to measure the levels of radioactivity which had been deposited on the ground by the fallout?---Correct, yes.

And, in reference to the instrument that the scientist had in the aircraft, which you seem to recall might have had a probe outside the aircraft, does the description either of an ionization chamber ring a bell with you? Do you recall what the scientist had was in fact an ionization chamber?---He sat on the starboard side and he had a sort of a box about this big, I suppose.

Yes?---On the seat behind him.

Yes?---And, as I said beforehand, I think something did protrude through the perspex.

But you understood the function of that machine was to record, at the low height you were flying, the radioactivity

which was coming from the ground?---Right. We did not question him because - we attempted to, and he was reluctant to advise us of anything of what he was up to, except what he told us.

Is it the case that, as far as you recall, you did not actually fly through the cloud itself?---No.

That was done by the Lincolns?---Right.

Now, you made reference in your statement to an RAAF Canberra. Might it have been the case that the Canberra that flew through the cloud only flew through the cloud after Totem 1 and not Totem 2?---I would have not seen it.

Did you see the Canberra go through the cloud?---Yes, as far as I can recollect, but I would not know if it was an RAF one or an RAAF one.

We will come to the question of which nation owned the aircraft in a minute. Might it be the case that the Canberra flew through the Totem 1 cloud and that there was no Canberra flying through the Totem 2 cloud?---Totem 2, as far as I knew, because otherwise we would not have seen it - Totem 1.

Do you in fact know whether it was an RAAF Canberra or whether it was an RAF Canberra?---Recollecting back, and news that filtered back to Australia, it was an RAF Canberra with two wing commander doctors on board, and either a wing commander or a group captain as the pilot.

It is your recollection it was an Australian crew in the aircraft?---RAF.

RAF crew?---Yes.

Inside an RAF aircraft?---Yes.

Yes, thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, Mr McClellan?

MR McCLELLAN: Do you know or recall whether any DC3 aircraft ever were forced to land during the time you were there?---No.

You have no recollection of any being forced to land?---No.

You indicate there were 2 DC3s, so far as you recall. Were there only ever 2 DC3s during Totem 1 and Totem 2 while you were there?---Both crews departed on the same day from Richmond which was in September.

Both crews went back. We went back the first day and they departed the next day. It is a possibility Flight Lieutenant Norris' aircraft had been changed over without my knowledge.

What do you mean "changed over"?---Well, it could have been - that aircraft could have been taken back to Richmond and the ferry crew brought another aircraft over.

Yes?---After an inspection done on it which would have been required to have been done at Richmond.

Could it be possible that, although you were there for the whole time, in fact there might have been four DC3s located during Totem 1 and Totem 2?---Both crews, we stayed in quarters, which were actually married quarters, together, and we would have noticed another crew there. We had to have transient crews going through.

Transient DC3 crews?---Yes. One was a VIP aircraft.

During Totem 1 and Totem 2, there might have been other DC3s coming in for a period of time?---Into Woomera, yes.

Into Woomera?---But only overnight.

Only overnight?---Yes.

Are you sure there were no other DC3s involved in the sort of survey work?---No, because I would have heard them over the radio.

Yes, thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: You may stand down now, thanks, Mr Coolahan.

THE WITNESS WITHDREW

MR McCLELLAN: I call Mr Edwards.

MR McINTYRE: Your Honour, I could indicate, before the next witness is called, I saw this morning a number of very thick Australian Air Force Reports which I believe cover in some detail the flight operations from Emu and from Woomera during Totem, and they are being copied now. They are classified. These may in fact provide a much more readable, factual basis for all those flights than we can get through these witnesses. I should have that some time this afternoon.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

LANCELOT EDWARDS, sworn:

THE PRESIDENT: Sit down, Mr Edwards.

MR McCLELLAN: Your full name is Lancelot Edwards?---That is correct.

You live at 48 Dalton Avenue, Mermaid Beach, Queensland?---That is correct.

I think you provided a statement to your solicitor; is that correct?---Yes, I have.

I tender that statement, your Honour. It will be RC31.

I think that you were with the RAAF from 1944 until 1975, and at the time you were retired you were a squadron leader?---That is correct.

You indicated in your statement of 27 September 1953, you flew from Amberley to Woomera in a Lincoln to take part in what turned out to be atomic cloud monitoring duties. Did you know at the time you were going that that is what you would be doing?---Not at the time before we departed, no.

After arrival you said there was some local familiarization flying exercises carried out. What sort of altitude were they carried out at?---They were not carried out under the direction of the scientists, but purely our own local familiarization flights, to become familiar with the area, type of thing, so they would have varied from low level or medium heights, to 12 to 15 thousand feet.

And on 15 October, you were a wireless operator on board a Lincoln aircraft which took off from Woomera at 12.20 hours for atomic cloud testing duties, code named Totem 1. You indicate the other members of the crew, and I think we heard from Mr Turner yesterday. Is that correct?---Those names I have there are the only ones I can recall. There were other members, but I cannot recall their names.

The Mr Turner referred to there is the Mr Turner that gave evidence yesterday, I think?---I believe so.

You were required to:

Locate the cloud generated by an explosion triggered at Emu a special instrument was fitted internally to monitor radiation levels

?---That is correct.

Do you recall that instrument?---I cannot physically describe it, but other than the fact it was a rectangular shape, a black box. The measurements are probably around about 18 inches by 6 to 9 inches, type of thing.

Who operated it, do you remember, sir?---No, I do not. I cannot recall.

Was there a scientist on board your aircraft?---No, not to my knowledge that I can recall.

You say a dosimeter was issued to each member. When you refer to a dosimeter, are you referring to a device like this pen thing that I have here?---Yes, similar to that, but I think from memory it was black, I think from memory.

Would you need to look at this a little more closely to assist your memory? I was going to ask you if you knew how it worked?---That is very similar. I could not swear that that was the - - -

Was this issued to you on the first flight, the first time you flew into the cloud?---Yes, it was issued, each of the crew members had it issued to them.

Who issued it to you?---I cannot recall.

Were you given any instructions in relation to its use?---We were advised not to proceed further after it reached a certain reading on the scale, but the level, I cannot recall what it was, but - - -

Do you recall ever reaching that level on the scale?---The only reason it went over the upper limits of the scale - it went beyond the limit that we were advised not to proceed any further after.

You recall your instrument going beyond its level?---Yes, and we checked with the other crew members, or the pilot of the aircraft checked with the other crew members to see if theirs had reacted the same as his and we all had a similar problem. They all went over the required level.

What did you do when that happened?---They did not advise on how to put a Lincoln in reverse and back-pedal out of area and get away from it because it was a fairly sudden surge. It was not a matter of a sudden reading and then gradually increase. From memory, it was reading normal and then it just jumped to the highest reading, and so the pilot indicated, well, we are in here now, we may as well do what we are supposed to be doing, because we are already beyond the scale that we were supposed to be.

THE PRESIDENT: But how often were you putting the dosimeter to your eye and taking a reading?---Well, it was spasmodic. We virtually could see the cloud visually before we reached it - any reported incident indicated in the vicinity, so we started looking to dosimeter towards the - in the vicinity of the cloud.

Can you tell me - you were operating the radio. Did you have occasion to report back to your base that your dosimeters had gone over the top?---No, we did not record that information. Our job was to record

the position of the cloud when we found it and various other pieces of information which were coded and then sent back to a specially set up recording section back at Woomera.

Did anyone think of reporting back that your dosimeters were over the top?---I do not believe it was discussed at any stage.

You indicate:

No special clothing was provided
. no further use.

Were you given at all on this flight, or flights associated with Totem 1 a film badge?---Not on Totem 1.

You know what a film badge is?---Yes.

And you were not given one for Totem 1?---No.

You say:

Special instruments on board indicated levels of radiation by an operator at regular intervals.

Did you see that activity occurring?---Well, it is in close proximity to where I was situated. I could not physically read the readings that he was recording, but he was sitting virtually next door to me, but facing backwards aft the aircraft.

You say the instrument continued to register high levels of radiation even when visibly clear of the cloud?---That was the operators comment. He was saying, well, I cannot tell when we are out of the cloud because it continues to read, and I assume that it continued to read the residual contamination of the aircraft.

How did you know you were out of the cloud?---Because you could physically see you were in or out of the cloud; it was clearly visible.

What colour was it?---It took the form of the red surrounding dust of the country around that area. It was brownish - redish colour. It looked not unlike a normal cloud in the late afternoon with the setting sun. You may have seen it in civilian aircraft - quite a brownish-reddish.

Then you went back to Woomera:

The aircraft was serviced as if we had returned from a normal flying exercise.

What did you mean by that, what would have been done to it?---When we arrived back from an exercise, we are met on the ground by various maintenance personnel who do various checks and they chock the aircraft, and put static lines over the peterheads and do various things around the aircraft as a normal job exercise.

Did you see that happen with the aircraft on that occasion?---Well, they were there doing - I did not physically see them doing the job because we were, at that stage, still inside the aircraft, but they were busily engaged on doing their normal maintenance requirements.

And they had no special clothing and you say no special precautions were carried out?---No, they were dressed without even shirts, just in their shorts, and some people had hats on. It was just a normal operation.

Now you say the canister was removed from the pod and aircraft by a ground staff person and placed on a trolley previously positioned under the aircraft. Did you see this operation occurring yourself?---I did not actually see the trolley going in underneath there, but it was there - when we came out of the rear door the trolley was in position underneath, I think, between number 2 engine and the fuselage, directly underneath the pod in which it was being carried, and one of our airmen was in the process of lowering it down from the main plane onto trolley itself.

And you saw the pod coming off and being lowered onto the trolley, did you?---I saw the latter stages of it, just about being rested onto the trolley itself. I did not see the actual uncoupling of it.

Who carried out the operation?---One of our maintenance personnel.

Ground staff?---Ground staff, yes.

And how was he dressed?---I cannot remember whether he had his shirt on, but they certainly did not have any special clothing on; none of the ground staff had any special clothing.

No protective clothing on his face or the like?---No.

Tell me this, had the pod been checked for radiation to your knowledge before it was unhitched or uncoupled?---Not to my knowledge.

Was there anyone around with a geiger counter or similar instrument to measure radiation when you got out of the aircraft?---There were other boffins, as we called them, the scientists dressed in white protective overalls carrying instruments of some nature, but standing well back from the aircraft towards the shelter of the overhang from the hangar which we pulled up in.

Were there any boffins in having a look at the gentleman who was taking the pod off the aircraft?---No. No scientist to my knowledge was anywhere near the aircraft when this activity was taking place.

Did that surprise you?---Well, at the time it did not because we were not overly concerned about the effects of radiation, and it was not until afterwards that we started talking amongst ourselves and say, hey, what are we doing here with these scientists being - obviously safeguarding their own interests and here we are not being protected.

You say the scientists had protective clothing. What did they have on?---They appeared to be white cloth, calico or linen, type overalls to cover their normal wearing attire.

Did they have anything on their faces?---I cannot recall having any masks on, no, but they may have done. I cannot recall that.

Did they have gloves on?---I think they had gloves, yes, and I think helmets, like cloth helmets.

Cloth helmets?---Cloth helmets.

What, hoods?---Hoods - just a cover.

After the container had been taken off, the canister had been taken off the wing and put on to a trolley you say?
---That is right.

Who wheeled the trolley away?---The boffins pulled on a long rope attached to one end of it, towards them, and that was the - well, they just disappeared after that. I do not know what happened.

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How long was this rope?---Perhaps from here to the doorway away, something like that.

So we can imagine, can we, someone standing near the door, taking the canister off and putting it on to a trolley which was then pulled on a rope?---That is correct, yes, by the scientists.

Did you wonder why that was happening?---As I say, at the time it passed through our minds that something was amiss in that we had been subjected to the very conditions that they are now getting samples of, and dressed in protective clothing, but I do not know whether that was directly at that time or whether it was - became apparent afterwards, some time afterwards.

You say you were checked with Geiger counters, showered and allowed to leave with instructions to wash your flying suits as soon as possible?---That is correct.

Did you just carry your flying suits away under your arms, did you?---That is right. We just took our flying suits off and used our daily normal wearing uniform.

Were your flying suits checked for radiation?---I cannot recall whether they were checked on that occasion or whether it was after the second check, after Totem 2, because at some stage all of our clothing was confiscated and piled in a heap in a special area set aside in the hanger and it was to be destroyed. I cannot recall whether that happened at the end of the first test or at the end - it certainly happened after one of the tests and I feel that it happened after the second one.

Tell me this - I have not asked anyone else this, but I assume after you had had this shower, you had to dry yourself? ---That is correct.

Were you given a towel to do that with?---Yes. One of the silly parts of it was the fact we used several showers using the same towel which could possibly recontaminate ourselves at the same time.

Well, let me just ask you what did happen. You came in, stripped off, and you went to a shower?---That is correct.

Were you given a towel before you went to the shower or after you came out?---I do not know. There just happened to be a towel there. I would not know.

And then you dried yourself with the towel?---Right.

And then you were checked for radiation, were you?---That is correct.

What happened to that towel while you were being checked for radiation?---Probably placed on the nearest thing close by; I do not know. I cannot recall.

And if you were still hot, you went back and had another shower?
---That is correct.

Did you get a different towel?---No, used the same towel.

And that continued on?---Right.

Now what happened to that towel after you - - -?---I do not know.

It was put into a bin or taken from you?---I cannot recall anything happening. I know the towel was very wet after about the six or seven showers; it became wetter and wetter and was of very little use.

Were you ever given another towel during that washing operation?
---Not to my knowledge; I cannot recall.

Now what about that flying suit that you say you were asked to wash as soon as possible, did you personally wash that or did you take it somewhere?---It was normal practice to wash our flying clothing as frequently as we thought fit.

Yourselves?---Yes.

And out there, whereabouts did you wash your flying suits?
---We were temporarily based in what turned out to be married quarters at Woomera and they had their own washing facilities at each house.

So you washed them through a machine?---I thought they were hand washed. I do not believe there was - I think there was a copper involved in the place but no washing machine.

And what about the rest of your flying gear, your helmet and your boots and so on, were they cleaned or washed?
---They were not cleaned. As I say, I cannot recall whether they were confiscated after the first test or after the second test, but we certainly used them between the two. We flew in between Totem 1 and Totem 2, and to my knowledge we used the same equipment.

You flew again on 26 October - - -

THE PRESIDENT: Just before you go on, you say that after the first test and you had your cold showers, you were allowed to leave with instructions to wash your flying suits as soon as possible?---Right.

Does that not indicate that they were not confiscated on that occasion and it must have been after the second test?
---Yes, it does, but on reflecting back, there is some doubt as to whether the rest of my flying clothing was confiscated then or whether it waited until the end of the second test.

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But why would you be told to wash it if it was going to be confiscated?---Well, I think they believed that certain items of clothing was washable and that it could be decontaminated, whereas other items such as your oxygen mask and parachute, parachute harness and other items, were not washable. They could not clean them under those circumstances.

MR McCLELLAN: You say you flew again on 26 October and then on the 27th at 1525 hours you took off from Woomera in the same aircraft for Totem 2 and returned three and a half hours later; similar tests were carried out but on this occasion you say you were issued with white cotton-type protective overalls?---That is correct, yes.

Well, is that a set of overalls that go over your normal flying suit?---Yes.

And were they buttoned at the arms, the wrists and the ankles, do you recall?---I cannot recall that at all; fairly loose and sloppy type of thing, so they were large enough to go over your normal flying suit as well.

What were they made of?---I believe cotton or calico.

You say you were given bootees?---Right.

What were they?---They were cloth bootees to pull over our normal flying boots.

And you wore those on that flight, did you?---Yes.

And hoods?---They went over our flying helmets, yes.

They went over your helmets?---Yes.

What, were they attached to your flying suit?---I think they were just loose from memory. I cannot recall. I do not believe they were attached to anything. They could have been. No, I cannot recall.

Did they cover your face?---No.

Was anything issued to you for your mouth?---Not from memory; we had our normal oxygen masks which would have covered most of our face.

You did not fly the Lincoln normally with oxygen, did you?---From 10,000 feet onwards it was normal custom to use oxygen during daylight hours and to use oxygen from ground level at night time, night flying exercises.

These trips that you carried out for Totem 1 and Totem 2, were you flying above 10,000 feet?---I cannot recall the height we were at. It could have been - I believe - I think they were between 10 and 20,000, but I am only guessing there.

Do you recall whether or not you used oxygen during them?---One of our briefs on the second test, we were to use oxygen from ground level.

So on the second test you were actually told to use oxygen from the start, were you?---Yes.

Do you know why you were told to do that?---Well, because of the added precautions, of the danger of radioactive contamination.

Were you told that at the time?---Well, we were - it was implied that that was the reason and the reasons we were given the extra protective clothing.

On this occasion you say you were also given a dosimeter; I assume therefore - I should have asked you this - the dosimeter you were issued with for Totem 1 was taken off you, was it?---Yes.

What happened to it?---Handed to the people recording the radioactivity, using the Geiger counters, when we went back; somebody took all our dosimeters back.

Did anyone comment to you that the meter had gone off the top? ---No, not to my recollection.

Was that a matter of discussion at the time?---I think we may have referred to it afterwards, but we were under fairly strict security aspects, in that we were not supposed to discuss any section of the flight amongst other members who were there, other than our own people who flew in the aircraft, ourselves. I do not specifically recall any comments at that time.

Well, for Totem 2, you say again the dosimeter went off the scale when entering the cloud?---That is right.

That is this pen-like thing?---That is right.

And on that occasion you were also given a film badge?---That is right.

Like the one I showed you before?---That is right.

With the film badge, were you given any instructions as to how it functioned?---No. We were just told to carry it on our - in the vicinity of our waist, or pin it to our uniform, or something of that nature. I cannot recall anything else that was said about it.

When you went back to Woomera, was the dosimeter handed in again?---Yes, and the film badge.

And the whole badge was handed in?---Yes.

Were you ever told anything about the colour of the film badge?
---No.

You do not recall any discussion about the effect of colour?
---No.

You say, on return, all your flying clothing and equipment were then found to be contaminated. Was this by measurement with a Geiger counter?---I assume it was by Geiger counter, yes.

Do you recall when it was that it was found that the equipment and gear was contaminated? I mean by that, were you wearing it when that was found to be the case, or was it after you had taken it off?---I think it was as we walked into the hanger, especially just outside our own area within the hanger, they ran a Geiger counter over us as we were dressed; as we came off the aircraft, and as we peeled off, they still continued to run tests on us.

Yes. And on this occasion, did you see the canisters being taken off the aircraft: this is Totem 2?---Not on the second one.

You did not?---No.

Why did you not see them on that occasion?---I did not specifically look for it. I could have seen it, but it did not register at this stage, no.

You say that, to your knowledge, no decontamination procedures were carried out on the aircraft until after returning to Amberley. Now, to go from the end to the beginning, did you see the aircraft being decontaminated at Amberley?---No.

You did not?---No.

I take it, therefore, you did not see anything being done to it at Woomera in the way of decontamination? ---Nothing at all, but this is - - -

Could that have occurred without you knowing?---Sure. Yes, it could have been done.

You say that in late 1953, all crew members were required to attend the medical section of Amberley for blood testing. Were you ever told why?---I do not know that we were specifically told, but we guessed that it was because of our exposure to radiation. But I cannot be sure.

Were you ever given the results of that blood test?---No.

And you tell us then of some details of your medical history since that time, and how is your health today? ---Well, I believe it is still in check. There has been no major outbreak again of the condition.

Yes. Thank you sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Mr James?

MR McINTYRE: Before my friend starts, I have now received copies of documents I mentioned before. It is regrettable that I did not have these this morning when the commission started. It might save some time. But I can make them available to the court now. It might be of some assistance to my friend. Perhaps I can read what documents they are. The first document is entitled The Royal Air Force, 15 December 1953, report on operation Totem. I have had a quick glance. It is a very comprehensive review of the whole operation.

The second document is dated 5 March 1954, and is simply entitled Operation Totem Consolidated Report, although it is a less detailed report than the first one. Thirdly, it is a report on which the date is obscured by the copier, and I will try to have that rectified. But it is dated 1953, and entitled Report of RAAF Richmond participation in operation Totem. There is a fourth document dated 11 March 1954, being a summary of flying hours - - -

MR EAMES: I am sorry, could you just take it a bit slower.

MR McINTYRE: It is dated 11 March 1954. It is the summary of flying hours for (82) of B Wing, operation Totem. Finally, there is a document entitled Report of Visit to examine radioactive contamination of RAAF Lincoln aircraft at Amberley. The date is not very clear from the document. I will have a check made to see if that can be more precisely identified.

THE PRESIDENT: They have all been declassified?

MR McINTYRE: They have all been declassified. I am arranging to have one copy for each member of the commission and one copy for each of my friends. But at the moment, all I have is this. I am not inviting my friends to read this before this witness completes. It is a matter for them as to what they want to do. But it seems to be a pretty comprehensive document, your Honour, and it covers all the detail that this witness has been referring to.

MR EAMES: You talk, and I will read.

MR JAMES: I think, your Honour, at this stage we may have moved into a time sharing situation.

Mr Edwards, did any of the Lincolns develop throttle booster problems as far as you are aware?---I would not know. I cannot recall any.

Certainly not the aircraft in which you flew, which was 52?
---What, during the trials or the tests?

During the trials, yes?---I do not believe we were unserviceable at any stage.

I cannot hear you?---I do not believe we became unserviceable at any stage.

Now, the crew of your aircraft was Flight Lieutenant Onions?
---That is right.

Flight Sergeant Green?---I do not believe I recollect Green being a member.

Right. Sergeant Krix?---Correct, yes. It is not - it is C-r-i-x, I think it is, not - - -

Krix, K-r-i-x?---No, - yes, K-r-i-x, not as it is - - -

Right. And Krix was the navigator?---I believe so.

And Edward Ray Chesney?---Yes, Ted Chesney.

Navigator?---Right.

And yourself, signals?---Right.

And Mr Turner?---Right.

Signals?---Right.

Can you recall who was the second pilot?---I think his name was Murray Richardson, but I do not remember any Green on board.

All right. Was there any interchange of crew members after the Lincolns arrived at Woomera?---Oh, it often happens. You rarely fly with the same person on more than one occasion, unless it is like an exercise as we did when we went away together as a complete crew, and overseas postings, or anything like that.

On Totem 2 - I am sorry, when you went in on Totem 1, did you have the same crew as you had flown from Amberley to Woomera with?---I cannot recall that, but the majority of the crew members would have been the same. But whether they were all the same, I could not recall.

With Totem 2, did you have the same crew as you had on Totem 1?
---The same crew. Probably there were observers that came up with us. I would not have known their names, and they could have changed, possibly.

So there could have been one or two members different?
---Yes.

Now, the advice not to proceed further after a limit was reached, who gave you that advice?---That was given at the briefing. I cannot recall who gave the briefing at all - whether it was Mr Penney himself or somebody associated with the - - -

So it was the scientiest?---Yes.

Rather than a RAAF personnel?---Yes, I believe so.

Can you recall how many crews were at the briefing? Was it a large general briefing?---Yes, I believe it was. I cannot recall the number of crews. I think up to about six aircraft were physically based at Woomera, so I assume that five or six full crews would have been there for the briefing.

Do you recall where it took place, the briefing?---Yes, the camp site at Woomera.

Do you recall that all the crews, and in fact all the personnel that in fact flew with you attended the briefing?
---Yes, it would have been compulsory.

I appreciate it was compulsory for them to do it, but does that mean in fact they always did it?---Well, I do not know of any instances which they would not have done it.

Right. Now, you have referred to dosimeters being issued to every member of your crew. Whereabouts were they issued?---I cannot exactly recall.

Would it be the fact that you now recall your having one of these black devices?---It was not black, I mean it was not black - - -

One of those devices?---Yes.

Do you in fact recall the other crew members having them?---Yes.

Was there any comparison; I mean, you and Mr Turner were both signallers?---Right.

Were you located in the aircraft somewhere near to each other?
---I cannot recall now. I was physically doing the operating, on the wireless operating. I do not know what Turner was doing.

In fact, do you now recall seeing Turner at all in the aircraft while it was in the air?---Not necessarily.

During the flights in Totem 1 or Totem 2?---No, but I cannot recall seeing any of the otherseither. It was fairly isolated.

Do you recall hearing discussions from the pilot - what was that, over some sort of radio?---Intercom.

In relation to the dosimeter readings?---Right.

But you do not recall seeing the others monitoring their dosimeter readings?---No, but I heard the response when the captain said, "Will you check your dosimeter because mine has gone off the top", and we all looked at ours and agreed with him. I could not say whether the whole seven or eight members did exactly the same, but the bulk of the people over the intercom said, "Yes, mine has gone off too", from the front end of the aircraft down to the back.

There was no dissent by anybody from anywhere in the aircraft to the proposition that those dosimeters had gone off the top?---No.

THE PRESIDENT: When that information was obtained, did the pilot immediately alter course to get out of the cloud?---I do not believe so, I would not really know. I think we were already in it. We were travelling at a rate of knots, about 180 to 190 knots, and by the time the responses come in, if we just penetrated the cloud, by the time this information came out we would have been halfway in. He made a comment and said, "Well, we are in here now, we might as well do what we are supposed to be doing. We are already subject to radiation."

MR JAMES: Assuming the cloud was circular, the fastest way out once you were in would be to keep going, would it not?---Either that or up or down, you could climb or descend. It probably would have been less depth.

Do you recall any assurance given by the scientific director at Emu Field that there would be no problem for the aircraft which might in any way require decontamination of crews or isolation of the aircraft?
---I cannot remember specifically.

Now, when you got back to the ground after Totem 1 and you were met, were you met by somebody with a Geiger counter before the arrival of the boffins in the white suits?---I believe, well we refer to anybody that was there as boffins whether they were in fact scientists or what, they were just boffins as far as we were concerned.

But did you see any aircraft when you landed?---No. We just simply got out. We were channelled to a door in the hanger complex where the Geiger counter - I think we went past the person holding the Geiger counter and he just ran it up and down our bodies just to register and it was pushed to one side and then further tests were carried out.

Was this all before you saw the men in the white suits arrive to remove the pods?---No. This would have happened - they would have arrived to collect the pods before this was happening.

Would they have arrived at the time you were in the aircraft still?
---Well, they probably would have arrived and been waiting there while we were still taxi-ing in. I did not see them physically arriving. They were there when we arrived.

How many showers did you have after Totem 1?---Well, more than four, and I cannot recall whether it was the first, second or third - but up to 13 showers I had. That was cold showers.

After Totem 2, 13 or so showers?---Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: What, one straight after the other? You would have one, dry yourself, and then have another?---Sorry?

You would have a shower, dry yourself, then be re-tested with a geiger counter, and go back and have another shower - thirteen times?---Right. The folly of using the same towel in each case-and it was concentrated, most of the concentration was on the back of the neck and it was assumed at that time that the use of Californian Poppy, the old favourite hair cream, was the concentrating factor, the grease was concentrating.

MR EAMES: You used Californian Poppy?---Yes.

In those days, how short or long would your hair come at the back of your neck?---Well, a little bit shorter than it is at the moment. Normally we were fairly close cropped.

THE PRESIDENT: It was an era of short back and sides.

MR EAMES: Indeed, you had sufficient experience in hair-cutting to cut the hair of Sir William Penney at one time?
---Yes.

MRS FITCH: What kind of soap did you use?---In the showers?

In the showers?---We did not have any soap in the decontamination process, just cold water, no soap provided that I can recall.

MR EAMES: That is for the first?---For either.

Instructions to wash your flying-suits as soon as possible, what were you supposed to wash them in?---Well, we were not given any special instructions, just to wash them, to try and clear what contamination was on them.

Were there washing facilities provided at Woomera, and water?
---Especially for washing clothing?

Yes. As in terms of laundry tubs or 44-gallon drums?---Each of our married quarters - three or four of us shared a married quarter, they had normal wash tubs and a copper, no washing machines.

That entailed boiling the flying suits in a copper, draining the water from the copper, and then rinsing them?---I do not believe we ever used the copper. I think we rinsed them in the available water that was there. Flying-suits have a flashpoint component. They are not supposed to be heavily washed because you wash out that flashpoint material that is incorporated in them. We would not have boiled them on any occasion to my knowledge.

And did you understand that the contamination levels of A73-52 as at November 1953 was highly contaminated?---Well, we were only assuming that because of the amount of radioactivity we had been subjected to.

So you were able to gauge the amount of radioactivity that you had been subjected to by the fact that you were accepted in 1959, were you not, you were diagnosed as suffering from carcinoma of the thyroid gland?
---That is correct.

Your thyroid was removed and deep ray treatment was carried out?---That is correct.

It was accepted that that condition, that carcinoma, was caused by radiation exposure in the course of your duties?
---That is correct.

That was determined by the compensation application you made?
---Right.

Was there any point during your duties at which you were exposed to radiation as far as you know, other than at Totem 1 and Totem 2?---Other than normal X-rays there would not have been any occasion to be contaminated.

Or to put it another way, your exposure was all in A7352?---Right.

Now, the date you refer to of Totem 2, is that a date that you got from your - that is 27 October 1953 at page 2 - is that a date that you got from your flying log?---That is correct.

Is that your flying log there with you?---It is.

You flew on both 26 October '53 and 27 October '53?---Yes, the 26th was a local navigation exercise in that same aircraft, and then Totem 2 was on 27 October.

You make mention in December 1953 that all crew members were required to attend the medical section at Amberley for blood tests. Was that simply the taking of a quantity of blood?---I think, from memory, it was just - I cannot recall whether it was from the prick on the end of a finger or whether it was a sample taken from the arm.

But, in any event, you were not told, one month after November 1953, that you had been flying in a highly contaminated aircraft?---No.

The device on the aircraft - you had some device on the aircraft to monitor the cloud, its radioactivity?---Internally.

Yes?---Yes.

And that had a dial or a gauge on it?---it did, yes.

What happened to the readings of that dial or gauge whilst you were in the cloud?---The operator of that instrument had a number of forms, a proforma, that he recorded the actual readings of the - I cannot recall now the actual intervals they had to be read, but I think it was in the vicinity of 10, 15 or 20 seconds, and the closer we got to the cloud, the more frequently the readings were obtained, and they were recorded on these forms.

Do you recall if that device went off its reading level?---No, I do not. I cannot say that happened at all.

You were not the operator in relation to that?---No, no.

Now, was a Mr Budd Puxty involved with your crew?---No.

I think the Lincoln, No 52, after Totem 2, was eventually flown back, but you were not part of the crew?---Not - I do not believe I flew in that into Amberley. No, I believe I flew back to Amberley in a 47.

When you got back to Amberley, did you ever see again Lincoln 52? ---No. I have been through my log book. I have spent, only 12 months after that, at Amberley. The only aircraft I did not fly in again was the A73-52. All the other aircraft that were over there, I had flown in subsequently.

Did you become aware of an area set as off-limits or restricted in which there were a group of aircraft parked?---Well, there were some aircraft at Amberley, specially set aside, yes.

Did you visit that area and those aircraft at any stage?---No. We were probably driven past on several occasions, but they would have been roped-off, and you could see them from a matter of 50 or 100 yards type of thing.

Any warning signs or painting on these aircraft?---I think the normal black type of cross thing was painted on.

What is that normal type of cross for?---Radiation. I think in the earlier days - I think initially - - -

I am sorry?---I think earlier on that particular sign was not in force at that stage. I think that only came into vogue later on.

That is the present radiation?---Yes.

Did you see any sign on the fence, any warning or sign or indication?---I cannot recall it specifically. No doubt there was some there. It was roped-off and we were not allowed into the area. There was a warning in, I think, red, but whether - I cannot honestly recall.

Now, Mr Edwards, you have told us about in September 1953 flying out. You were not given any instruction or any warning as to radiation hazards before you took part in this operation?---No, not before the briefing before Totem 1.

You were not told you had been exposed to radiation, other than by inference, in terms of the showering and so forth and the Geiger counters - is that right - that is during the operation?---No, we were not specifically told. I believe we knew we had been. I do not think anybody - - -

Indeed, you were not told that you were exposed to radiation until your thyroid cancer was diagnosed in 1959?---I do not believe that that was associated at that time. I think it was some years later I started thinking back on it - this could have been the cause of the problem - but it certainly was not considered at that time.

So your thyroid cancer was diagnosed in 1959?---Right.

But you were not told directly?---No.

That you had been exposed to radiation then?---No.

When was it that you were first told directly that you had been exposed to radiation?---I do not believe I had ever been told I had been exposed to radiation - in as many words.

Right; but, nonetheless, in 1981 your condition is accepted as being caused by radiation exposure?---Right.

So, prior to 1981, were you given any advice by way of medical treatment you could undertake or anything of that order? ---Not to my knowledge. I cannot really recall when I first started putting 2 and 2 together, that this could be associated. I think by perhaps reading one or two newspaper articles or magazine articles about the bombing of Hiroshima. Things started to fall into line in regard

to the time between exposure and the time the problem develops, and in the case of thyroid problems, it tended to peak between 6 and 7 years after the exposure, and this happened in my case.

I think you remained in the air force until you retired in August 1975 as a squadron leader?---That is correct.

THE PRESIDENT: Just a couple of questions, Mr Edwards. Is there anything in your records which would disclose the time between the detonation and the entry of your aircraft into the cloud - first of all in Totem 1? ---No, but I believe that the explosion took place in the vicinity of 7 am.

Yes?---And we took off at 12.20, and we remained airborne for some 8 and three quarter hours. So I am only guessing now, but we would have taken 2 or 3 hours to locate the cloud. So that would have put us at around 3 o'clock in the afternoon, but that is a rough guess.

Would there be anything in your records which would indicate the distance from Emu at which you entered the cloud - first of all in Totem 1?---The only records that would have been available would have been the altitude and longitude position which we transmitted back to the reporting point.

Are you able to give any estimate of that?---No, I am not.

You are not?---No. It has been suggested we were in the vicinity of Oodnadatta, but whether that was so, I cannot - I did not visibly see any predominant land marks that would have indicated where we were in fact.

How far is Oodnadatta from Emu?---I do not know off-hand.

That is all I want to ask.

MR EAMES: With respect to Totem 1, Mr Edwards, were there any B29 crews, that you were aware, flying as part of the operation surrounding Totem 1?---B29s?

Yes?---I think there was one on the ground but whether it was associated with the tests or not, I would not know.

What about Lincolns from RAAF, Richmond?---We had no association with them either, no. They were separate to our detachment at Woomera.

Was there any suggestion to you or members of the crew that you were with, or in your presence, that there had been a dispute between reports of cloud given by planes based at Woomera and B29 crews as to what the details of the cloud were?---Sorry, I did not even realise there had been a conflict or that the B29s were involved.

Yes, could I read this to you?

I am reading, your Honour, from one of these documents which was just made available, addressed to Headquarters, Home Command, RAAF, Penrith, Report on RAAF, Richmond, Participation Operation Totem By Operation Commander, RAAF, Richmond, under a heading Totem One Lincoln Aircraft, and skipping the first paragraph, going to the second.

Could you just listen to this passage:

Details of the cloud as given by Woomera and B29 crews could not be reconciled in which the B29 contact was moving.

Are you familiar with any elements of disagreement that that paragraph could be referring to?---I have not the faintest; it is the first I have heard of it. The aircraft - - -

You are not allowed to - - -?---The aircraft that has been mentioned that took off from Richmond, was the one that Mr Puxty was associated with, and he is here this afternoon, so I guess he may know more about that aspect of that than I would.

Did you make any personal observation of the cloud yourself, the Totem One?---Only from what I could see outside the little window that we have alongside of our position, and it appeared to be, as I said earlier, a reddish-brownish colour - like a normal cloud but tinged with what assumed to be the dust from the - - -

What approximate height was the top?---I cannot recall. I do not know.

Can you recall what height you were flying at when you observed it?---No, I cannot, that is what I say. I assume between ten and twenty thousand feet.

Can you recall whether there was a stem to it or whether it appeared to be a cloud which had broken away from the ground?---No, I think it certainly had broken away from the ground. There was nothing underneath it that I could recall.

Can you recall at all what the lowest height your plane would have got to on that day?---No.

And your navigator, I think, on that flight was Mr Chesney. I may have missed it before but is he still alive, do you know?---I do not know. I have not seen or heard of him for many years.

And I take it that your situation would be that so far as knowing precisely what group patterns you were flying or precisely where you were, etcetera, that would be up to the navigator and pilot, would it?---That is correct.

Navigator and captain?---The navigator and the pilot - captain, yes.

And presumably, that is the same for Totem 2 as for Totem 1, is it?---That is correct, yes.

You Honour, I do not wish to question this witness any further, but I would ask to reserve my right, without inconveniencing the witness to do so, on a very brief glance at these documents - brief indeed - there does appear to me to be a number of things which certainly my learned friend Mr James would have been interested in and certainly I am interested in, and I would ask to reserve the right if need be to cross-examine at a later time.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you are asking for Mr Edwards to come back tomorrow?

MR EAMES: Perhaps I can arrange it through my learned friend.

MR McCLELLAN: I have not spoken to Mr Edwards about that, but perhaps if my friend could leave it on this basis, that if there is a matter that arises, he might discuss it with me and I will see what can be done.

THE PRESIDENT: We will have to alert Mr Edwards. How are you placed tomorrow, Mr Edwards?---I can make myself available whenever necessary.

All right. Do you mind staying until the end of the proceedings today, and that counsel assisting will advise you whether you are required or not. Will that be enough - - -

MR McCLELLAN: Yes.

MR EAMES: Thank you, your Honour.

MR McINTYRE: I have no questions, your Honour.

MRS FITCH: Mr Edwards, in response to a question earlier, you said something about normal X-rays - having had normal X-rays. Could you tell me what those X-rays were? ---Well, I think we had - any aircrew, we had an annual medical examination, and I think that included a chest X-ray, and the normal TB X-rays that used to be common in those days. I think that is once a year, but nowadays they have cut them out.

Did you have any other X-rays?---From time to time I have, yes.

Did you have any dental X-rays?---Prior to that - I cannot recall.

Thank you.

MR McCLELLAN: You may be interested to know, notwithstanding what you have accounted to us, you are not included in the United Kingdom, Ministry of Defence Summary of Radiation Exposures for Service Personnel Involved in the Nuclear Tests. I tell you that because it means either that the British apparently do not have a record of you or that your exposure was thought by them to be below the level which warranted recording. Can I also tell you, sir,- I cannot show it to you at this stage - but I have before me a document which apparently I cannot tell you the name of, but which for Australian purposes has been declassified, but it is a British document which to this point in time the British have not allowed the Australian Government - that, in fact, includes myself - to refer you to or disclose to you. However, it does contain a record of what happened to your aircraft both at Totem One and Totem Two, and can I assure you, sir, that everything you said is confirmed by the information in that document. I have no further questions, your Honour?---Did you infer that everything I said was - - -

Everything you have said is confirmed by that document, but I cannot at this point in time show it to you. I have no further questions.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, Mr Edwards, would you stand down, but would you mind waiting until the end of proceedings here today because we may want you back tomorrow.

THE WITNESS WITHDREW

MR McINTYRE: I think if my friend, Mr McClellan, when he gets a chance to read those documents I tabled this afternoon, will see that there is a lot of information in the Australian documents as well, but there will be copies of them tomorrow.

THE PRESIDENT: I am grateful for that. I must say, Mr McIntyre, that what has cropped up today does underline the importance of the commission being supplied with the documents which it seeks as early as possible because the situation could arise that in the light of what emerges in the documents we may have to recall many witnesses.

MR McINTYRE: Yes. I do not know whether these documents might not already be with the commission. That is the problem I have had. I have just asked the officer from the

department to provide these things for me as in the case of the documents that I provided yesterday, the crew lists for each of the aircraft, and in fact that is with the commission and has been for about ten or twelve days now. These other documents might already be with the commission. I have not myself seen what has been produced to them.

MR McCLELLAN: That document, I think, was given to us last Friday, but in any event there is a more important question underlined, which is the one I advert to in relation to the gentleman who has just sat down, and that is that there are a number of documents which we have - which the Australian Government has taken steps to declassify, but because of an agreement between the Australian and British government, the commission is not in a position to disclose them to anyone, and that is a more severe problem - one which we have raised with the British authorities in Australia, but at this point in time we have no answer as to what is intended by the British to be done in relation to it.

The difficulty, of course, is therefore that irrespective of the attitude of the Australian Government, there is nothing the commission can do to disclose that document to any of the parties.

THE PRESIDENT: You say that the documents produced by the Australian authorities, which have been declassified by them, there is still a veto on any public reference to such documents if their original source is the British Government and they have not been declassified by the British Government?

MR McCLELLAN: That is so, your Honour.

MR McINTYRE: That is not quite the case, if I could correct that? The British Government, I understand, has in fact declassified the documents that my learned friend has. They have been declassified by the British, but they are still subject to an undertaking which was entered into between the two governments when they were first provided to the Australian Government by the British; that is, that they not be released to persons other than those who might use them in the official course of their duties.

THE PRESIDENT: Why is that? As long as they fit within the exception to the production of documents by the British Government, which was established at the outset - that is, because it has a reference to certain triggering mechanisms - is that the basis on which this document is still under the British veto?

MR McINTYRE: No. It is simply on the basis there has been and still is an agreement between the governments relating to the confidentiality of the document in terms of not being shown to other people. It is not based upon any classification of the documents and any service context of being confidential, secret or top secret. It is simply based upon an agreement between governments to protect confidentiality.

MR McCLELLAN: With respect, your Honour, it would seem to me that that agreement needs examination with the greatest deal of haste.

THE PRESIDENT: I have reached the same conclusion. It is a rather unsatisfactory state of affairs.

MR McINTYRE: It certainly is.

THE PRESIDENT: That there is ultimately a right of British veto.

MR McINTYRE: Yes, your Honour, and at the moment I am instructed that there are at a high level negotiations taking place with the appropriate British authorities in an attempt to get these things released for the commission.

THE PRESIDENT: I hope they are resolved before the commission has finished its inquiry.

MR McINTYRE: So do I, your Honour.

MR McCLELLAN: Can I make the point that I would like to be in a position, when documents arise which fall into this category and which are relevant to particular witnesses evidence, to be able to deal with that evidence through the documents, and that makes it even more urgent that the commission have the capacity to do that at the earliest possible opportunity.

MR McINTYRE: I will again contact those instructing me tonight to see what progress has been made over the last two days.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, is this the situation, that if a document is in existence to the knowledge of the Commonwealth Government but for which the privilege is claimed to which you have just referred, you are told of the existence of the documents?

MR McCLELLAN: I have been provided with copies of such documents and at the same time I have been told of the existence of the privilege problem.

THE PRESIDENT: The documents are produced to you though?

MR McCLELLAN: I have the documents.

THE PRESIDENT: But subject to that proviso?

MR McCLELLAN: That is right. Mr Eames says I think I have. I have been so assured.

THE PRESIDENT: There are a few things to clear up.

MR JAMES: Might I indicate to your Honour before your Honour leaves this topic, that Mr McIntyre has indicated that there seems to be ground for belief that the privileged document will contain some of the material that is referred to in the documents he has just produced to the commission. If that is so, the importance of that material is so well illustrated by the summary on top, that the planes when they eventually were to be decontaminated, the water was to be sealed in drums and taken and dumped at sea, and that is all I have got so far, but it is obvious that the material is quite dramatic.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, no blame attaches to you, Mr McIntyre, but it is most desirable that we should not conduct this commission with our hands tied behind our backs.

MR McINTYRE: Mine are being tied front and back at the moment.
I will make my best endeavours to get these agreements

- - -

THE PRESIDENT: I am not passing any reflection on you. Who is
the next witness?

MR McCLELLAN: Mr Stein.

BRUCE DUDLEY STEIN, sworn:

MR McCLELLAN: Is your full name Bruce Dudley Stein?---That
is right.

I think you live at 1189 Wynnum Road, Murarrie, Queensland?
---Murarrie.

And I think that you have provided to your solicitor a statement;
is that correct?---Correct.

Your Honour, I tender that statement. It can be marked exhibit RC32.

Do you have a copy there?---Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: I notice in all of these statements, one element
that seems to be consistently missing is a statement
of the age of the person giving the statement. I
have been finding myself using my primitive arithmetic
to deduce from the figures available the approximate
age of the witness. It is relevant in most instances.
I wonder if we could have that in future?

MR McCLELLAN: Yes, certainly, your Honour.

Perhaps your age?---Fifty-six.

You were at Amberley in October 1953 and took part in tracking
Totem 1. You flew in Lincoln aircraft A73-25?---That
is correct.

From Amberley to Richmond; is that right?---That is right.

And I assume therefor you were stationed at Richmond - do I
assume that you carried out your cloud tracking duties
from Richmond?---From Richmond, yes.

You indicate when the bomb was detonated, 7 o'clock, and you
took off at 0405; is that correct?---0405 the following
day.

On the 16th?---Yes.

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B.D. STEIN

And that was in relation to Totem 1?---Yes.

And you were told to fly generally north-westerly towards the area of Charleville in South Queensland. You proceeded to do that. You had a Warrant Officer Francis and yourself, who were responsible for reading the monitoring devices in the rear of the aircraft, and you began to get readings on the device. Tell me this: was there any scientist on board your aircraft?---No.

And had you two gentlemen received any training in how to work this monitoring device?---Yes. We had received some training at Richmond. We were shown the machine hooked up to its supply, to a supply, and shown how to operate the controls and told what we could possibly expect to see in the reading dial.

You indicate that you made two passes through an area with the device swinging from nil to a very high reading on the scale. Now on each pass it went up and dropped back to nil. Now do you know what that reading was from memory?---No. We just read a scale.

Did the machine ever go off the scale, off the top?---Yes.

Was it a machine that you could adjust so that it would read at higher levels?---Yes.

Did it have three settings?---That I cannot remember; we had a multiplier knob.

Did you ever get the multiplier knob to the maximum multiplication?---Yes.

And did the machine go off the scale when it was at the maximum?---It went to full value on the maximum multiplication.

You indicate that someone recorded that they could see a brown haze in the air?---Yes.

At the same altitude as you were flying, and on entering the brown haze we received the same type of readings we had got on the passes previously?---Correct.

They were passed to Flying Officer Huxley to encode and send them back to headquarters?---That is right.

How when you were taking these readings, were you recording them on any paper or book?---Yes.

What book were you recording them on?---From memory, they were a foolscap page that had been done probably on a Gestetner with a column or heading for the aircraft number and date, a column for time and a column for readings.

Were you issued with any personal radiation measuring devices?---None whatsoever.

Are you familiar with a dosimeter of that metal type?

---No.

Have you seen one of those before?---No.

What about a film badge? Do you know what a film badge is?

---I know what a film badge is from watching movies.

Were you ever issued with one of those?---No.

Now, you indicate that you made a number of passes through the cloud. You received a message from base asking if the officer was encoding the readings correctly?---Well, that was passed down from wireless operator. It filtered through the intercom that this had been received, and we did - Ron Francis and I did not have a great deal to do with that. That was mainly Bud Puxty.

And there was some question about whether the machine was reading correctly?---That came back to Ron and I, and we had to check the machine to the best of our ability.

And then you refer, on page 2, to the activity that you carried out, continuing to pass through the cloud, and then you went back to Richmond. But you ended up at Williamtown?---Yes.

And you parked at Williamtown, and asked what to do. You were told to remain in the aircraft, and not to get out of it; and you would be advised as soon as possible?---Correct.

Tell me this: was that the usual sort of order you would get on return to an airfield?---No.

Did you ever have any other occasion when you were told not to get out of your aircraft?---Not that I can recall.

Tell me this: did this aircraft of yours have collection pods on its wings?---Yes.

Where were they removed?---At Richmond.

At Richmond. And the aircraft stayed on the ground at Williamtown, and you say some vehicles came up and pulled up 100 yards away from you. You were allowed out of the aircraft, but you had to stay around the aircraft vicinity, and carried out a conversation with those people, who more or less intimated that they would not come any closer because they did not know that they were concerned - that your aircraft may be radioactive?---Yes.

And you were told to stay, and that there would be a Dakota coming from Richmond to pick you up and take you back?---Yes.

Tell me this: During this flight, did you have occasion to eat rations?---Yes. We were supplied with in-flight rations.

And did you eat them?---Yes.

You say you were parked on the tarmac for over two hours, remaining in the vicinity of the aircraft and eventually moved from there to the Dakota which had arrived from Richmond to fly you back to base; you arrived at Richmond and to the best of your knowledge you were not debriefed. You were allowed to leave the aircraft, go to the flight hut, and go back to your quarters. You say you had no decontamination procedures carried out? ---None.

Did anyone check you at all for radiation?---No.

You had a few beers, and then went to bed?---I had the normal shower, and a few beers, and went to bed.

The next morning, you say you went back to Williamtown by Dakota. You had a sergeant of the US Air Force on-board who had some monitoring equipment with him?---That is right.

Do you know how he came to end up on-board?---No. He was put on the Dakota with us. We were told he was coming up to check our aircraft.

You were taken back out to the aircraft and a sergeant went, first of all, around the aircraft from the fuselage - outside the fuselage, outside the fuselage wheels where he could point his monitoring device. He asked could he go through the aircraft, and Stapleton requested you to go with him?---That is right.

And you went into the rear door, and monitored persons from the rear turret, right through the aircraft, right up into the nose, and you came down through the front ladder. When you came down to the ground after monitoring the aircraft, Stapleton turned to the sergeant and said to him, you say, "How would you like to fly back to Richmond in a good aircraft?" You record his reply as being, "Christ, no. That bloody machine is hot. I am not going anywhere near it." Now, you heard that conversation, did you?---I was standing alongside - - -

Did it cause you - yes, did it cause you concern?---At that time, I do not think it really did. I think we more or less treated it as a joke. We thought he might have been joking.

Well, did that gentleman come back with you on the aircraft?
---No, he did not.

And did you ever come to believe at that time that what he had said was not a joke?---Not at that time, no.

Did he pass any comment to you as you were going through the aircraft about the level of radiation - - -?
---None whatsoever.

That you were - none whatsoever?---No.

And you indicate the nature of the equipment that you were given when you flew the cloud, and the fact that you had no devices. You ate in the normal way. You then record that later on in Malaya you were required to undergo a radiation test at Changi hospital. How do you know it was a radiation test?
---We were - it was approximately March 1954, from memory. We were - well, I was bundled into a vehicle and taken across the town, which was the RAAF hospital, and eventually got into a room where a medical orderly came in and took blood from my finger; sat for about a quarter of an hour, and was told to go back to Changi. It was not until - I beg your pardon, no - while at - while at Changi, I met Flight Sergeant McEwen who gave evidence yesterday, who was also there for the same thing. We conversed ourselves, and worked out it was possibly to do with the Totem. We were not told that it was a radiation test, to my knowledge.

Right. And then you record in your statement some personal details, including the details of your children. Now, was that the only time that you were involved in flying in relation to atomic tests?---The only time.

You, sir, might also be interested to know that your name does not appear in the British records at all. Yes, thank you.

MR JAMES: I think the aircraft in which you flew was A73-25?
---That is correct.

And had you heard that A73-25 was one of the three aircraft, along with A73-47 and A73-52, classified as highly contaminated in November 1953? --No.

Now, you flew in A73-25 again - - -?---Yes.

- - - following these occasions with the cloud tracking. What was it that you did during those three occasions?
---On the 20th - I am sorry, well yes - on the 20th,

we flew 25 back to Amberley; just a normal travel flight. That was 20 October. And on 24 November, flew 25 again on a cross-country navigational exercise - Amberley-Williamstown-Amberley; and on 26 November, 25 gain, air to ground gunnery, Stradbroke Island, and bombing at Evans Head.

Bombing at Evans Head; a practice bombing range.

Did you see A73-25 after that bombing run, after Evans Head?---No, I never saw that aircraft again. I went back to Malaya, and I never went back to Amberley.

Where did you land from that bombing run?---Back at Amberley.

How long did you remain at Amberley after that?---I served at Amberley November, December, January, and returned to Malaya in February.

So there two months, two clear months, after November 1953?
---Yes.

And in that time, you did not fly 25?---No. I never flew 25 after the November.

Did you see 25 anywhere that you can recall?---No.

Did you see an off-limits park or a restricted park at Amberley containing aircraft?---Not to my memory.

You have been told that 25 had been put through decontamination procedures?---I had not been told that, no.

You were told that at a much later date, I think?---Oh, in general talk amongst air crew that had been in Totem when we were together, years after, yes.

And when you say, "years after", was this in discussions of Totem?---Well, you tend to talk about things that you have done together, when you get back in our messes and - - -

How were you able to link 25 up with what was the gossip years later?---Well, mainly from the fact that they were talking about aircraft that had received radiation, and the memory came back then of the high readings we had got in our own aircraft.

Right?---So, you automatically put two and two together and say, right, she must be one of them.

Did the gossip, this gossip years later, was it two years later, ten years later, twenty years?---No, I think mainly it was amongst people who were in Malaya, following the test, when they were relatively fresh in our minds.

That is two or three years afterwards?---No, that was 1954.

So within twelve months?---Yes, roughly twelve months.

When you were given your general briefing to fly in the general north westerly direction towards Charleville, were you given a briefing to fly in this direction or to make contact with the cloud and follow it?---To the best of my memory, and I would have been in the general briefing, whereas the pilot and navigator would have had additional briefing, and possibly the radio op, but the general briefing indicated that we were to fly on that heading that the navigator was given which was generally north westerly, and to endeavour to pick up the cloud. In other words, to see if we could start getting readings, which we did.

What were you to do once you picked up the cloud?---To stay with it.

Were you to change heading?---No, well, we were to stay with the head cloud, so in other words if we could determine the size of the cloud, readings, in other words, if you went into - take my sheet of paper as a cloud, you went in on that heading, and you started to get a reading there, and you dropped it there, and you would continue on and turn back and try to come back, the navigator would try to come back over the same spot again and see if the same thing was happening.

Was anything said to you about a simple rule that the aircraft must avoid flying through the cloud?---No.

Who gave you the briefing?---It was a normal detachment briefing, as far as I remember.

No scientist or boffin involved?---I think there may have been scientists there that gave us something on the boxes again, and on the dust collectors.

How to work the dust collectors?---Yes, and the boxes. We did not work the dust collectors. They were there.

Anything said about hazes?---From memory, it was intimated that we probably would not get into a high radiation area, or high radiation readings.

And you were issued with no special clothing or precautions?
---None whatsoever.

And that similarly you followed, firstly, you detected the cloud?---Yes.

There was a checking and re-checking and checking again of the codings and readings?---Yes.

And you believe that there was a possibility - sorry, you were advised that there was a possibility that your machine was incorrect?---I recollect that came over the intercom.

Were you ever told that the machine had, in fact, been incorrect?---No.

Now, the path that your aeroplane flew, could you indicate it to us from the map?---Well, remember, I was not the navigator and I was in a position where I could not see outside, but roughly from the Totem area and we ended up somewhere along this ridge.

Right. So you were flying in a roughly north westerly direction?
---Slightly west of north.

And the cloud was proceeding in a roughly north easterly direction?---We were flying with the readings, so as far as we knew we were flying with the cloud.

So you picked up the cloud at Charleville?---Round that area.

And up to Longreach/Winton?---The only true indication you could get of that would be the navigator's logs.

That is and indeed, that is a bit of a problem from your case, is it not, because the navigator inadvertently lost contact with his plot?---True.

And what consequence did that have?---Well, we had to try and re-establish where we were in relation to Richmond.

When you were able to re-establish where you were, was that by some landmark?---I think from memory again we had made a bit of a faux pas in that we did identify ourselves as being around Charleville when we were actually around Longreach.

Right. So you were certainly in the area, a very large area of Longreach to Charleville?---Yes, that is right.

But you cannot tell us exactly whereabouts, and the navigator may or may not be of assistance to us?---Well, we were sending back position reports through our wireless operator.

Were those position reports ever queried?---Not to my knowledge.

What was queried in effect were the radiation readings, not the position reports?---That is right.

You got the recall signal about 2 o'clock?---Yes, I have that in my deposition, but I remember - well, I did not remember, but I worked out afterwards that figure should have been somewhere round about midday, I would say.

12 o'clock?---Yes, because if we got from Longreach to Williamtown in 2 hours we would have been flying a jet, not a Lincoln.

Indeed, it was about 3 o'clock you got the bearing on Newcastle radio. Until that point of time you had simply been trying to work out general landmarks, is that right?---That is right.

Now, was there any other radio traffic which you overheard from other planes in the air?---No, none whatsoever, not with other aircraft.

Is that unusual?---Not unusual, not for an air force operation.

And you have described a rather dramatic landing at Williamtown? ---Yes, we were on limit of endurance.

And you simply sat in the plane and during the time that you were sitting in the plane were you eating or drinking? ---Not that I can recall. I think we had finished our rations.

And, I think, you were there for - also, how long were you at the aircraft?---I would say roughly an hour and a half to two hours.

You sat in the aircraft for a considerable time?---Yes.

And you eventually got out?---We were allowed out.

There were people who pulled up and looked at you?---Well, the whole point of this, we were trying to establish whether we could get refuelled and get the aircraft back to base, which was our prime concern, and we were being stymied.

I appreciate that, but you were told, or more or less intimated you said, they would not come any closer because they did not know, they were concerned that the aircraft might be radioactive?---Well, that is what we - - -

What sort of people were these?---Mainly at that stage ground staff who I think were sent out with the possibility that they may refuel us, but they were stopped.

Was there somebody stopping them, somebody in command?
---Well, as far as I know, yes.

But nobody you identified?---No, no, all this was done through the control tower, by wireless.

Now, the Dakota that came from Richmond to pick you up: was there anything unusual about your transport? About the way in which you were treated on that aircraft?---No, no, we just sat in the normal passenger cabin.

And off you went and everything thereafter was situation normal?---Yes.

You were flown back to Williamtown by Dakota?---Yes.

You could see no reason for this journey backwards and forwards with the crew separate from the aircraft?
---Except that they would not let our aircraft be refuelled while we were there and therefore we could not bring it back. They wanted us back in Richmond.

Was the aircraft at all different when you saw it next day?
---No.

And this top sergeant - what is a top sergeant?---Well the American air force has quite a different set-up of ranks from what we do in the non-coms, and they have bars across the top of their chevrons, the more bars the higher rank of sergeant and the general classification for the highest group sergeant is top sergeant.

Right: Now this particular top sergeant, you never found out his name, or unit or what-have-you?---Never saw him again. Well, we took it that he came from the B29 detachment at Richmond.

Did you identify him as American because of his uniform?
---Yes, American uniform, American voice.

It could not have been a Canadian?---Not with those stripes and bars on, no.

What eventually happened to the outer flying suit?---I wore it until I got out of the air force.

And then handed it in?---Yes.

I have nothing further.

THE PRESIDENT: Mr Eames?

MR EAMES: Mr Stein, were you aware of any dispute between B29 pilots and Lincoln pilots about the nature of the cloud in Totem 1?---None whatsoever.

Were you in any event aware yourself of what the nature of the cloud had been, apart from a description of it as being a brown haze? Did you actually see it at all?
---Yes, I did. When - if I can digress for a moment?

Yes?---Ron Francis and I were sitting in the bowels of the aircraft and we could not see out at that time, and we heard the crew up under the glasshouse talking about it, and each of us went into the mid-upper turret to have a look, and we saw it that way.

You have stated in your statement the cloud was then about the same height that you were flying at?---From memory, yes.

Do you know what heights you were flying at, approximately?
---5000 to 7000 feet, from memory.

Could you see whether the cloud still had a stem on it?---No. It was just like a brownish layer in the air.

Yes?---Which you could not see all the time. It showed up better when the aircraft and the cloud and sun were in various relationships.

Yes. Are you able to say what approximate dimensions the cloud was?---From memory, no, but I think it was around about 200 feet thick, but length and breadth, no.

But, again, as you said, people who would have made the most precise observations, not only of the cloud but also as to where you were during all of this, would have been either the captain of the plane or the navigator?
--True, yes.

I have no further questions.

MR McINTYRE: No questions.

MR McCLELLAN: I have no re-examination.

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B.D. STEIN

MRS FITCH: Mr Stein, can you describe the radiation monitor that was inside the plane from which you took the readings?---Yes. It was a black square - a black rectangular box about so wide, roughly about so deep; so high and about so deep. I cannot remember all the controls on the box. The ones that we were most concerned with naturally was the on and off switch, the dial which was, say, about that long by so high which had a needle that swept across it and, from memory, to the right of that the multiplier switch.

Was there anything attached to the box or was the box just a single unit?---As far as I can recall, a single unit. I do believe we had a probe from the box through the aircraft to atmosphere.

Can you describe the probe?---No, I cannot, I am sorry.

Thank you.

MR MCINTYRE: There was one matter, your Honour, which I wanted to ask but which I omitted to ask, if I could.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR MCINTYRE: You mentioned a scientist who you think may have said something to you about that radiation monitoring instrumentation at Amberley?---No, at Richmond.

I am sorry, at Richmond?---Yes.

That was something which he said to you, or to your aircrew, when you arrived there, was it?---No, it was at our general briefing before takeoff.

Was he an English scientist; do you recall? Do you have any recollection of the nationality?---No, I cannot, I am sorry.

Do you recall who it was who installed the radiation monitoring equipment inside the aircraft?---No. We never saw who did it.

It just suddenly appeared there?---It was in the aircraft when we were - - -

Yes. Did anybody in particular demonstrate to the person on your aircraft how to use it?---I think, from memory, our sigs leader or sig leader of the detachment, plus one of these outside boxes.

What was your task on the flight, again?---I read the instrument in conjunction with Ron Francis.

Yes, thank you.

MR McCLELLAN: Might Mr Stein be excused, your Honour?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. You are excused from further attendance, thank you, Mr Stein?---Thank you.

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B.D. STEIN

THE WITNESS WITHDREW

MR McCLELLAN: I call Mr Puxty.

IVAN WALTER HERBERT PUXTY, sworn:

THE PRESIDENT: Sit down, Mr Puxty.

MR McCLELLAN: Your full name is Ivan Walter Herbert, known as Bud - - -?---That is right.

Puxty?---Yes.

You live at 1 York Street, East Ipswich?---1A.

1A, is it, York Street?---Yes.

And you made a statement, through your solicitors I think it is, to the commission; is that correct?---That is correct.

I tender that and it can be marked RC33.

Now, Mr Puxty, you, I think, were the signal leader or signal officer?---Right.

In the same aircraft, A73-25, on which Mr Stein was the operator of the radiation monitoring device?---That is right.

Is that correct?---I was the squadron signals leader.

Yes?---And I was the lead signaller in that squadron, in that aircraft.

Right. As a consequence, I will not take you over some of the details Mr Stein gave us of the flight. Was that your only involvement with radiation monitoring?---That is correct.

You indicate in paragraph 8 you were not given a warning and you were not told about not eating any flight rations. You record the fact that there was a Geiger counter at the rear of the aircraft. You say in paragraph 10:

After taking off we set out on our designated course and after several hours flying the skipper was told by one of the officers that the Geiger counter had gone unserviceable because it had gone completely off the scale. You were not instructed to report this to base at the time and the skipper told the operator to try and correct the fault. After a few minutes he reported

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it was operating again because the needle had swung back to neutral position.

?---Yes, that is correct.

I take it you could hear this over the intercom?---That is right, yes.

You continued on your course for a few more minutes and suddenly it went off the scale again. It was again reported unserviceable to the captain and it was only at that point that some member of the crew said, "You have flown into a brown haze", that you realised you located the cloud and the machine was in fact not unserviceable but had simply gone off the dial, and you were flying fairly low, you believe under 10,000 feet?---That is correct.

Under 10,000 feet; is that right?---Yes.

It was at that point in time you were asked to report the matter to base; is that right?---Yes.

And there was an exchange of signals and you were asked to have the coding of your information sent. Now, I take it when you reported back to base, you did so by some sort of code?---That is right. The whole operation was supposed to be kept secret and any information we sent back from the aircraft was to be in code, such as if we made contact with the cloud, to get the recording reading and code that, together with the position of the aircraft, and send that back to base.

Were you told why you were asked to check your coding?---No, not really. I presumed I thought I may have misread my codes.

Yes?---It often happens with signallers.

Was it common practice for you to be required to check your code? ---That is right.

It was?---Yes.

The fact that you were asked to check was not anything out of the ordinary for you?---Not really.

But you verified that you were right?---That is right.

Did you?---Yes.

Would you be asked to check your coding on many occasions when, in fact, you were right?---It did not happen to me very often at all, as a matter of fact. I was fairly accurate with my coding. It was only on this occasion they asked me to check the coding because I do not think they believed the reading I sent back.

You sent back a level of reading, did you?---Yes.

Do you recall what that was?---Well, I gave maximum deflection on the indicator.

You said maximum deflection?---Whatever reading they gave me, say, 0 to 10, whatever it was. I gave them maximum reading.

And you do not think they believed you at the other end?---That is right.

Did they ever radio back to you saying they did not believe you? ---Not in actual sense.

Is that what you understood you were being told though?---When a series of signals come back to that effect, to check the coding and then afterwards to check the meter itself, in which case - at which time, the captain asked me to go back and have a look at the machine myself which I did to make sure the thing was reading 100%, and sent the information accordingly.

When you say it was reading 100%, do you recall whether the dial had a line at the end of it beyond which the needles could not go, or whether there was a line and the needle could go beyond that line?---From what I recall of the incident myself, it was one of those instruments when switched off was on the maximum like an ohm meter. When switched on it came back to zero and then any readings from thereon would take it up the scale. In this case it was right across.

Jammed right across?---Yes, as though it were switched off.

Did you check and make sure it was switched on?---Yes, I did.

You then proceeded to fly in the pattern which you told us about. You speak of the in-flight rations, and the fact that you had this incident when you ended up at Williamtown, went back to Richmond, and you confirm that your recollection is that no decontamination was done on you?---No decontamination whatsoever.

No Geiger counters put on you?---No.

No showers?---Only the normal showers.

The next day you went back to Williamtown and picked up the aircraft, and then you record a conversation that you had with Mr Stein when he indicated to you what the American was saying?---That is right, yes.

Repetitively?---Yes.

And forcefully. You then speak of the fact that you returned to Richmond, the aircraft taxied, and there were ground crew but none were wearing protective clothing?---No protective clothing.

And do you not recall radiation checks being carried out at Richmond?---No, not in my sight, anyway.

You say that you saw protective gear being worn by boffins at Richmond. Was that at the time that you brought the aeroplane back to Richmond?---No, over a couple of days before there had been a couple of boffins around dressed in the white overalls and so on.

What about when you brought the plane back; were there any boffins around then?---I do not recall, I do not recall seeing - - -

What about after that? Did you see any boffins?---No, I did not - - -

You refer to the fact that they were wearing a face mask?---As I recall, they had a hat or helmet effect with just a screen that come down over the front and on that occasion it was rolled up.

They were there before you did this mission?---Yes.

Did you see the pods - canisters, or whatever you call them - under the wings being taken off the aircraft?---No, I did not.

Do you know where they were taken off?---No, I do not.

And you do not know what happened to them?---No, I do not.

Was this the only flight that you were involved in in relation to tracking nuclear clouds?---Yes, it is.

What happened to your flying gear? Did you keep it thereafter? ---I had it for several years after that. I think eventually it wore out and I changed it for something new. As a matter of fact, I have a photo of it taken in Singapore, some time in 1954 still wearing the same flying suit.

Are you conscious of whether or not you have ever had any tests for radiation, perhaps when you were in Singapore? ---I think I recall a test being done at Singapore, yes.

What sort of test?---Just blood test, but that is the only thing.

And in October 1981, you were operated on for cancer of the bowel?---That is right.

And how has your health been since?---Quite good.

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I.W.H. PUXTY

And you say you do not know what became of the aircraft?---No, I do not, although I flew in it quite a few times after that up until February of 1954.

Do you know whether the aircraft was ever washed down or - - - ?---Not to my knowledge. After we finished our flight, we just departed it and left it in the hands of the ground crew.

Were you ever worried that it might have been contaminated? ---There was no worry associated with it then. We were not warned of any dangers.

What about the fact that Mr Stein had told you of the American and his comment on the aircraft?---Well, radioactivity is a thing that you read about and did not understand. It was not impressed upon us, and it was just one of those things. You could see it - could not feel it.

Yes, thank you, Mr Puxty.

MR JAMES: Mr Puxty, when you were - I notice you are from Queensland?---Not originally.

Were you originally from New South Wales?---I was born in Windsor, New South Wales.

Well, you would be familiar with the delights of the New South Wales rail system back in the 1950s?---Actually I had not lived there for very long, although Richmond air base was only about a mile away from where I was born.

Was the fact that the American serviceman after his - that you were told of his readings through Bruce Stein, that the fact that he refused to return in the plane to Richmond and caught a New South Wales train in the 1950s any indication to you that he was worried?---We did not look at it that way.

It was just some sort of aberrant behaviour on his part?---We always knew Americans to be a little peculiar.

A little eccentric. You continued to fly in that plane until February 1954?---Yes, I did.

Are you able to tell us how many hours altogether?---Yes, I can. On 17 October 1953, I flew 15 minutes from Williamstown to Richmond; on 20 October - - -

Perhaps without listing them, can you give us a general estimate? ---Somewhere around 60 hours.

That is 60 flight hours?---Another 13 trips I did in it.

You said you did not know what happened to it. Did you become aware of any aircraft at Amberley maintained in some sort of special off-limits restricted park?---No, I do not recall them. I did hear tell of vehicles being

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parked there, but in March 1954 I went to Singapore. I came back at the end of the year and went to Townsville, and Amberley was a little bit out of my area.

But 25 was not one in that park until March at least?---Well, not until after February anyway.

When you were transmitting, whilst you were, in effect, in the cloud, did anybody ever tell you to get out of the cloud?---No.

And had you had any instructions at any stage that if you contacted the cloud to stay out of it?---No, no instructions at all.

Indeed, were not the briefing instructions that if you contacted the cloud to do what you could to work out its size, height and so forth?---That is right, yes.

Which involved sectioning through the cloud?---Yes - work out size, shape, and all dimensions, and the direction of travel.

When you left the cloud, do you recall in what direction it was going? You have said drifting towards the coast in the vicinity of Townsville?---Well, we were not exactly sure of our position when we left the cloud.

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I.W.H. PUXTY

The navigator had lost his - - -?---The navigator was never lost. He was only temporarily uncertain of his position. On this occasion, we took headings for base and after a while we got various pinpoints on the ground and worked out a rough position, and on working back we got a good idea of where we had left it and what direction we had drifted in.

Were you aware that the aircraft was classified in November 1953 as highly contaminated, and again in March 1954 as contaminated, still contaminated?---No, I had not.

I have nothing further.

THE PRESIDENT: Mr Eames?

MR EAMES: Just on the cloud, when you left it - it was not clear from your statement - did you actually see it or were you concluding what it looked like from what the other people said?---No, I saw it.

And you described it as the shape of an elliptical doughnut with a non-radioactive centre. You have given us the dimensions of 30 nautical miles by 50 nautical miles in size. What height was it?---I could not recall the height.

And did there appear to be any cloud drifting along connected with it lower to the ground?---No.

THE PRESIDENT: What is the difference between a nautical mile and a mile on the ground?

MR EAMES: One is a lot wetter, your Honour. I am not sure apart from that.

THE WITNESS: A nautical mile is longer than a statute mile.

MR McCLELLAN : Mr McIntyre might be able to tell us.

THE WITNESS: A fairly accurate description is 66 nautical miles equals 76 statute miles.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, of course, that will have disappeared from the language.

THE WITNESS: No. They are still working nautical miles in air travel.

MR EAMES: But just to get a clearer idea, are you saying that - those are very large dimensions of the cloud, are they not?---Yes.

Are you saying that there appeared to be a very large part in the centre of this cloud in which there was no cloud? ---That is right, yes.

And what colour was it?---A light brownish haze.

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We may have been at cross purposes before. I asked you about height. I was actually asking you about the height of the cloud?---Above sea level?

No, the height of the cloud itself?---The density of the cloud?

Yes, the density of the cloud?---I could not say how deep it was.

And nor can you say how high from ground level it was?---No. It would be under 10,000 feet.

And can you say at what speed it appeared to be moving towards Townsville?---No, I could not say. No, it would be hard to work that out at the moment.

Can you say over what distance you had tracked it during that flight?---Well, we stayed with it for about, somewhere between three and four hours in and out of the cloud, and in that time I would say we must have drifted at least 60 or 70 miles or maybe more, because working back on our track, had we been the same distance where we picked the cloud up, we would have been able to reach Richmond. As it was, we were running out of fuel and just could not make it.

Were you able to work out when approximately it would have reached Townsville?---No, we did not do that.

Thank you.

MR MCINTYRE: What was the duration of your time inside the cloud?---Between three and four hours.

Yes, thank you.

MR MCCLELLAN: You also do not exist in the British records?---Yes. I have no further questions.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that is all for today, is it?

MR MCCLELLAN: That is all for today, your Honour.

THE PRESIDENT: You will notify the earlier witness whether you require him?

MR MCCLELLAN: Yes, I shall.

THE WITNESS WITHDREW

THE PRESIDENT: We will adjourn until 10.00 am tomorrow.

AT 4.39 PM THE MATTER WAS ADJOURNED
UNTIL WEDNESDAY, 10 OCTOBER 1984

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I.W.H. PUXTY