

APPENDIX 4 - PAPARAZZI EVIDENCE

Serge Arnal

A selection of Arnal's statements:

'In the distance I could see the car speeding into the tunnel. On reaching the first underpass, I saw it emerging from the other side. As it exited this first underpass, I slowed down as I could no longer see the car and wanted to see if it had changed its route.'

Having passed the crashed Mercedes, 'Once I was out of my car, I did not get too close as I am afraid of blood. I went back towards my car. One of my colleagues, Rat, informed me that it was the Princess's car. *I stayed alongside my car.* I then noticed that my colleagues were taking pictures of the accident.

'In reply to your question, *I got out of the car without my camera.* I got my camera out ten minutes or so after I arrived. I did not go to the spot where the accident had taken place. Firstly, *I remained by my vehicle* and approached the scene afterwards. My colleagues were taking photos. There must have been ten of them or so. I only grabbed my camera roughly when the police arrived and just took some pictures of the car. I do not think I took any pictures of the VIP. I maintain despite everything that *I was not one of the first to take photos.*

'I stand by my initial comments in which I stated that I called the emergency services on my mobile phone immediately after getting out of my car. Whilst I was phoning, some of my colleagues were already at the scene. Romuald came towards me. I do not know if he was coming from the car. In any event, he came up to me and told me that it was the Princess. We fell into each other's arms.'

This, as was stated at the inquest, was a complete pack of lies. Arnal's passenger, Martinez, said that Arnal was driving at 60 to 70mph, so it would have been impossible to lose sight of the Mercedes. Why did he follow the Mercedes from the Ritz if he didn't know Diana was in the car? It was proved that he took the very first photo of the crashed Mercedes as he, Rat and Martinez ran towards the crash site (see photos on the website). The Mercedes was still smoking and nobody else was there. Then he took eight more walking from the back to the front. He changed his story when the photographs were seen and his lies were exposed.

He also said, 'You tell me that I appear to have taken Diana. What I was trying to do was to get an idea of the person or one of the persons inside the car. I did not know who precisely was in the foreground. I was not using the zoom; I must have been fairly close when I took these pictures. In photo 11 you can see another photographer's camera. I can tell it is a Canon and from the appearance of the hands, it could be Benhamou.'

Comment:

'I appear to have taken Diana...get an idea of the person or one of the persons inside the car'. I honestly don't know what to say about that statement. He knew damned well it was Benhamou because he was leaning over him to take pictures of Diana lying in the back and he'd known Benhamou for 12 years.

That was after stating that he only took pictures of the car, not the passengers. He also said that he moved his car to allow the emergency services past and parked in a side street. Even that simple statement was a lie. In fact, for some reason he moved his car twice and at first said that he and Martinez did that together. Then he said that he moved it alone. Then Martinez said that it was he who moved it.

'When I went to move my vehicle for the second time, I think, contrary to what I said, that Mr Martinez was with me.'

Was there damage to the rear light that they didn't want the police to see? This was a hastily conceived cover story because Martinez handed films to Guizard from Angeli agency, who was parked in front of Arnal's car on the slope just outside the tunnel exit. Arnal denied knowing whose car it was, even though Guizard reversed at the Place de la Concorde lights in order to let Arnal in immediately behind the Mercedes. Another of his laughable statements was that he took photos as a witness to an event. Of course, he wouldn't have been interested in selling them, just recording the event.

Arnal also stated that he drove past the wreck, parked, got out and ran or walked out of the tunnel. I believe Arnal did not tell the truth about walking out because many calls were made from inside the tunnel, even inside cars, and nobody else reported a lack of signal.

However, Arnal stated that he tried to call emergency services '112' on his mobile. That call was at 12:23:43, but he dialled '12' instead and got through to directory enquiries.

Arnal testified that he had to shout into the phone, which is not surprising as he rang directory enquiries to report a car crash. If the crash happened at 12:23, he must have been in front of the Mercedes, whereas, if the crash was at 12:22, he must have been right behind. My calculations show that the crash took place at 12:22:21.

I wondered what could have happened to make him dial the wrong number, if it was in fact a wrong number. It is only three digits after all. He told the other photographers that he'd called the emergency services, so it does appear to have been a mistake.

Serge Benhamou

Regarding his return to the rear of the Ritz Hotel, he said, 'Alain Guizard, the editor at Angeli, was already there at the back. He was not a photographer but he was there to give the starting signal to Martinez. He was in his light coloured 205.'

At first, he said the Mercedes sped away from the Ritz. 'Reply to question: I am quite positive, right from the departure from the hotel the driver drove very quickly, he wanted to shake us off straightaway.'

When challenged he replied, 'I must be mistaken in saying that it set off quickly. I was comparing it to the speed of my scooter.'

He then described Henri Paul jumping the lights at the Hotel Crillon, but he said, 'I was very close to the Mercedes at that stage. I jumped the light, like everyone else by the way in order to follow him as he set off again quickly from the light he had just jumped.'

'I do not know if the Mercedes jumped any lights on the Rue de Rivoli, but I am sure it went across a red light at the Place de la Concorde.'

Benhamou also said, 'I did not have time to take a photo at the red light at Concorde. I do not remember if the flash went off.'

He then said that he thought he'd been left behind, so he drove at about 60km/h. There was no traffic and he arrived at the Place de l'Alma and then drove towards the Avenue George V. Then he noticed lots of stationary cars in the Alma Tunnel, did a U-turn, stopped at the tunnel entrance and went in on foot. Unfortunately, witnesses approaching the tunnel from the same direction as the other photographers saw him.

Stevens Report:

Rat's driver, Darmon said that, as he approached the tunnel, 'Right behind me there was a scooter with one person on it and a motorbike. He describes the scooter rider as 1.6m tall, aged about 50, slightly balding in front, wearing Raybans, a beige combat jacket and boat shoes.' That could only have been Serge Benhamou. The Stevens Report, however, says it '*appeared*' to be him. Benhamou was riding a Honda Lead 80 or 90cc scooter. Therefore, if Benhamou was that close to Darmon, it proves that the Mercedes was not doing anything like the speed they claimed.

During the questioning of Brigade Criminelle Lieutenant, Eric Gigou at the inquest, it was pointed out to him that one of Rat's very early photos shows Martinez and Benhamou on the left. It was obvious that there were not lots of people there.

Gigou tried to say that there were people driving in the other direction and maybe Benhamou was talking about those too. Benhamou's statements included:

'I took my shots of the car and the occupants when I was approximately three metres (ten feet) from the scene.'

'I took the front seat passenger whilst members of the public were close to him.'

'I took the rear seat passengers whilst members of the public were attending to them.'

'Then I took some whilst the police and the fire brigade were at the scene and removing Dodi from the car.'

He also said that he took some photos, but felt unwell and called Laslo Veres to take over from him. Laslo Veres arrived; Benhamou saw him from a distance and left without speaking to him. This is also wrong. Witnesses saw him talking to Veres. He later admitted that he did in fact speak to Veres before he left the tunnel for good. In his third statement, he said, 'When he arrived, I told him that I was leaving.'

Benhamou said his phone battery was flat so he called his agent, Dufour, from a kiosk. There was no answer so he went to his office and waited until about 2 or 3am. Michel Dufour arrived and Benhamou told him he had taken some photos and that he wanted to throw them away.

Dufour said that he would take care of them so Benhamou left them in the office. He left at about 4 or 5am to go home, unplugged his phone, but couldn't sleep.

Having developed two of his films, Dufour came to Benhamou's parents' house on the evening of Monday September 1st, but Benhamou didn't look at them because he now knew that the people were dead. He said, 'I do not know if you can see any of the injured in my photos.'

This was a strange statement, in view of the fact that he was caught in the photo above leaning inside the rear of the Mercedes, pointing his camera directly at Diana. Asked why he hadn't come forward earlier, he replied that he wasn't well. Then he spoke to his lawyer who told him to get in touch.

Comment:

'I must be mistaken in saying that it set off quickly. I was comparing it to the speed of my scooter.' This statement does not really require a comment.

Why did he go to Dufour's office and wait if he wanted to throw the photos away? Why didn't he just throw them away?

'Henri Paul jumped the lights and then set off again quickly from the light he had just jumped.' This makes no sense. If Henri Paul jumped the lights, then he didn't stop in order to set off again quickly.

He also said he didn't have time to take a photo at the Concorde red light and didn't remember if the flash went off. If he didn't have time to take any photos, the flash wouldn't have gone off and he wouldn't have needed to remember whether it had or not!

Nobody else said that Henri Paul jumped the lights at the Place de la Concorde. In fact the Mercedes was behind other cars at the Place de la Concorde lights and one witness described him being blocked by another car and having to reverse before he could drive away.

Although he said he felt unwell, Benhamou admitted that he took shots of Dodi being removed from the car.

Romuald Rat

Romuald Rat's statements to French police:

'I only took photos after Dr Mailliez had arrived.' Photos taken as he ran towards the crash site and before Dr Mailliez arrived prove that statement to be untrue.

A press release on September 1st, said that Henri Paul was three times over the limit. Rat said in a statement on September 30th, that he spoke to Henri Paul about cameras outside the Ritz and that Benhamou had said that Henri Paul must have been drinking, as he was really strange. Rat gave two previous interviews in which he didn't mention those comments. (Langevin mentioned the same conversation with Benhamou for the first time in an interview on October 8th, 1997, again after the press release).

Rat said that none of the photographers had vehicles that could keep up with the Mercedes. As you'll see later in the vehicle specifications, that was completely untrue, and while one might not expect Rat to know the specifications themselves, he certainly had enough experience as a paparazzo to be aware of relative vehicle speeds. Rat also stated that he called Odekerken after he lost sight of the Mercedes. However, that call was timed at 12.17, before the Mercedes had even left the Ritz.

Odekerken, at the rear of the Ritz, called Rat and said the car Henri Paul was driving was the much faster Mercedes 600, the same model as the couple had used during the day. That was the basis for Rat's original story of being burnt off at the lights.

In Rat's August 31st statement regarding the drive from Place de la Concorde he said,

‘When the lights changed to green, the Mercedes sped off to the embankment towards the Maison de la Radio. We never caught up with the vehicle, none of us. We were all left stranded because of the speed of the car. We tried to catch up with them. I was among the leading pursuers. In the first tunnel, we did not see them. We decided to carry on to the embankment, slowing down as we went. We were thinking of leaving it there for the evening.

‘When we got to Alma, we heard a hooter. We carried on, and the first thing we saw was the people on the left-hand lane who had got out of their car. Then I saw a mangled car across the road. I did not recognise it straightaway. We slowed down, then we overtook the Mercedes, stopping immediately in front of it. I put all my cases down and ran over to the car. People were looking without doing anything. I recognised Al Fayed, who was lying across the rear seat completely contorted. People were coming up to look, not to help. I thought that they were all dead. I got angry and I got all the people away.

‘I have some idea of first aid and I checked to see if Diana was alive, feeling her pulse. I felt it and she groaned and moved. I spoke to her in English saying, ‘Be cool, doctor will arrive.’ I did not touch her in any other way. I could also see that the bodyguard in the front was also moving, and I also told him to be calm in English. I also wanted to reach the battery but it was impossible, given the state of the engine. I felt that I was alone. I cried out in irritation.

‘I did not take any photos of the injured. That is something I will not do, other than in a conflict. There were then some clashes because people were attacking us, saying we were disgusting. I got angry, saying that they had not lifted a finger until then. I took 20 or 25 photos, which is not remarkable in our line of work.

‘In reply to your question: on entering the tunnel I saw smoke coming from the Mercedes and the rear lights of another vehicle that was moving away, but that is rather vague in my mind. I did not exchange any words with the police officers or with my colleagues. I saw one police officer in uniform trying desperately to push the journalists back, he was alone but I did not have the moral strength to help him and it was not up to me to do it.

‘Moreover, I didn't even think about it for that matter. I cannot think of anything to add at present, other than I did not understand why the Mercedes suddenly drove so quickly since everything had gone so well during the day, and a normal chauffeur knows that that is not the way that you shake someone off. He took too many risks.’

‘We caught up with it when the Mercedes was stationary at a red traffic light at the junction of the Champs-Élysées and the Place de la Concorde. It took off again like a shot when we drew level with it. At that stage, I could not take any photos as I was putting my helmet back on. No photographers took any photos while the Mercedes was in motion. That is something that is not done in France. You tell me that the two witnesses saw the Mercedes having to brake due to a car at the entrance to the underpass at the Alma Bridge and that at that point a motorcycle was right on the limousine's tail.

‘It was not the motorcycle on which I was travelling. I was busy putting my helmet back on though, and there could possibly have been a motorbike in front of ours. I would like to point out that Darmon and I were not the only ones on a motorbike at the lights. Anyway, we were never right on the Mercedes' tail. We even lost sight of it on a bend leading from the Place de la Concorde to the embankment. By the time we were in the tunnel, we had given up following the Mercedes and slowed down.

‘I did actually follow the Mercedes for a long time. However, I did not recognise this as the Princess's car. I dismounted, abandoning my helmet, camera and lenses on the edge of the pavement by the motorcyclist. I then rushed over towards the vehicle. It was as I was approaching that I saw it was a Mercedes and I said to myself that it could be them. I went over to the right-hand door and looked inside. I thought they were all dead. I cried out shouting at the onlookers who were just standing there.

‘You say that it is surprising for a photographer to abandon the tools of his trade when an incident has just occurred. My first thought was to go and see what was wrong with the people and if I could do anything. It was me who opened the rear right-hand door. I saw Dodi Al Fayed with his ... body on the rear seat, stretched out, facing me, his eyes half open. I

saw a floor mat on top of Princess Diana. I took it off to see if she was alive and placed it over the lower abdomen of Al Fayed ... I took the Princess's pulse and she groaned.

'I did indeed shout out, 'She's alive' at one stage. It is true that I was shouting and that I had slanging match with Martinez. This is because he was telling me to calm down and I felt he was too close to the car. It is true that I shouted at him because he was taking photographs inside the car. It was only after the fireman's intervention that I went and got my camera and took some photos of the scene as a whole, with a wide angle.

'In reply to your question and contrary to what a witness claims, I never said, 'It's your fault' to another photographer. Contrary to what was also said, I did not have an altercation with any police officers. I remember one of them, who was fairly stocky, trying to push people away. He did come over to me and when he pushed me back, I moved away. I do not remember being aggressive towards him.

'I ran towards the car I took two photographs. When the crime squad showed me my photos, I saw there was one which I had taken before opening the door. I do not remember that one, but I think I took that one at the moment when I got the shock. The policeman arrived and pushed us back. I do not remember whether I had an argument with him.'

Question: 'According to certain witnesses, you are said to have had an altercation with other photographers to stop them taking photos?'

Answer: 'It is true that I had an exchange with Martinez but it was not really an argument. It was tension which was coming from everywhere, including the police.'

Question: 'Mrs L'Hostis ... recognised you as being one of the most vicious photographers, having become irritated at a policeman, saying 'Let me do my job'.'

Answer: 'I exchanged some words with a policeman, I do not deny it. As for being vicious, I was above all tense as one may be when one has just seen three dead bodies in a car. It was the first time I had seen any dead bodies.'

Question: 'Mr Pennequin ... recognised you as having been present, crouched near the right rear door of the car, near the princess without seeing what you were doing exactly, you had a camera in your hand but were not taking photographs?'

Answer: 'When I was crouched down it was to take the Princess's pulse but I do not remember if I had my camera or not at that moment.'

Pennequin arrived at roughly the same time as Dr Mailliez; minutes after Rat said he took Diana's pulse.

Questions to Inspector Carpenter from Mr De La Mare, representing the Ritz at the inquest:

Q. 'What all of this would suggest, I would put to you, Inspector Carpenter, I think you will agree, is that there is a very strong likelihood that Mr Rat was very close to the Mercedes at the time of the crash?'

A. 'Yes.'

Q. 'And these inconsistencies and these lies that he has told have not actually been followed up by the French investigation.'

Christian Martinez

In his first statement, Martinez said that he tried to call the emergency services. In his second statement on September 1st, he said that he had, in fact, left his phone in his car and had not tried to call. He said he saw the Mercedes at the Crillon lights in Place de la Concorde and around it were Guizard in his light Peugeot 205, Odekerken in his 4x4, Benhamou on his scooter and Chassery in his black 205. Benhamou said that he only caught the Mercedes at the next set of lights.

Martinez took around 86 photos and yet the French police gave only 30 to Operation Paget. It is known not least from the evidence of fellow paparazzo, Pierre Suu, that Martinez gave one of his films to Guizard in the tunnel. The French police took two films, plus another with 14 exposures. Guizard reluctantly gave the police a few negatives, but there were clearly many more.

‘When I arrived at the traffic lights, I said to Alain Guizard, who was in front of me, to let me past and I then ended up directly behind the Mercedes. When I had got behind it, after a few seconds the Mercedes pulled away.’

In the Alma Tunnel: ‘We went past the car very quickly at *90 or 100 kilometres per hour*. We stopped roughly 20 metres from the car. I got out of the car, with my camera, I believe. We made our way to the scene and it was at that stage that I remember Rat being present. I remember him, possibly not at that very moment, but immediately afterwards being shocked at what was happening and running in all directions.

‘Arnal and I went to the car because I think it was me that wanted to move it. There were no other parked cars. I think the cars that had arrived later parked in front of the Mercedes. We therefore moved the Fiat Uno to a small road by the tunnel exit. As I returned, I saw Guizard at the [entrance] to the tunnel.’

This is all untrue. He had already given film to Guizard and Arnal stated that he alone moved his Fiat.

‘Then I did a series of photos of a body which was being removed from the car by the emergency services. I later found out it was the body of Al Fayed.’

‘Reply to question: I remember seeing two police officers in uniform arriving at the scene. This is because I had time to get out by the Mercedes, to get back into *my* car, park it and return to the Mercedes.

‘It is blatantly obvious that I was trying to photograph Diana in these pictures. I think I zoomed in to get them or the person in white moved slightly to the left. These photos of Diana go from [page 84 to 90]. They were taken in rapid succession when the angle was opened up. I was possibly 1.5 metres to two metres away...’

The Coroner pointed out to the jury that photographer, Martinez, said, ‘Henri Paul was going much too fast... maybe swerved to avoid a vehicle that was travelling very slowly in front of him. Then he lost control of the car.’ The Coroner told the jury, ‘If you think that is what happened, you may like to ask how Martinez could have known that.’

Alain Guizard

Guizard was agent for Christian Martinez at Angeli Agency.

‘I would like to mention one important point concerning the driver of the Mercedes. While I was at the back of the Ritz with Langevin, Serge Benhamou pointed out to us the man who had come out via the rear 10 or 15 minutes before the departure. He told us about the sign that the man had made to him, crossing his lips with his fingers as if to say ‘I haven’t said anything to you.’ He had known him for 25 years, but that for all those years, the man had never so much as spoken a word to him.

‘So as far as Serge Benhamou was concerned, this man (who I did not know) had been drinking. We did not dwell too much on this. There was no reason to do so at that stage. It was only later that I found out that this man was the driver of the Mercedes and that according to the media, he had alcohol in his blood.’

Reply to question: ‘On the journey between the Ritz and the Place de la Concorde, the Mercedes can only have been travelling at 60 km/h (37mph). Its speed did not really appear excessive to me.’

Comment: So much for the speeding statements.

‘The flashes that I saw at this point were in the direction of the Mercedes.’

Comment: Presumably, from paparazzi who didn’t take any photos and Benhamou, who couldn’t remember if his flash went off or not. Witnesses described many flashes and Rees-Jones turning around angrily.

‘When the Mercedes pulled away that quickly from Concorde towards the Right Bank, I decided to return home.’

Comment: Yet another one who had waited all day and then decided to go home. I will cover the acceleration in Section 3, The Speeding Driver.

‘Two motorcycles thus chased after the Mercedes. Behind them were Martinez and Arnal and some other photographers' cars but I could not say how many. I remember seeing Benhamou on a scooter at the Place de la Concorde, he must have followed the convoy.’

‘The Mercedes overtook me, Serge Benhamou was right behind it.’

Comment: So Benhamou didn't seem to have any trouble keeping up. Guizard seems to intimate that he didn't follow the convoy by saying that Benhamou must have.

‘On that part of the journey, I must have been travelling at roughly 60 to 80km/h (37 to 49mph). I was driving in the left-hand lane and I remember it being very free of traffic. I do not remember if I overtook any cars.’

Comment: Two witnesses described two cars overtaking them and the Mercedes. One was a light coloured Peugeot 205.

‘I think that once I got to the embankment I drove in the left-hand lane at around 70 kilometres per hour. The road was clear, I think I overtook one or two cars which were driving very carefully.’

Regarding his presence in the tunnel, he said, ‘I went by at walking pace without stopping and without leaving my vehicle. I remember driving over some debris. I re-emerged and parked on the exit ramp. I ran into Martinez and Arnal there, they had parked their car properly at the exit to the tunnel, without impeding the traffic. I told them to inform the police. They both answered that it had been done and continued on their way, running towards the accident. They had their cameras in their hands.’

He said ‘without impeding the traffic’ as if there was some. He ran into Arnal and Martinez as they were running towards the accident. That means he must have arrived at the same time as them. He also said they had parked their car at the tunnel exit, whereas Martinez said they met him after the Fiat had been moved to a side street.

‘So, it was by chance and without meaning to do so that I followed the route of the Mercedes.’

Comment: This statement is untrue. He overtook a witness on the Riverside Highway.

‘I cannot remember now who the people were around the car. As far as I was concerned, I parked at the top of the exit ramp to the tunnel by a small restaurant. I think it was a Chinese restaurant.’

Comment: This is an attempt to distance himself from the crash scene, whereas he drove past the Mercedes and, as he said earlier, parked *on the exit ramp*.

Reply to question: ‘When I met M Martinez, M Arnal was with him. He was returning from moving M Arnal's car and it was at that point that I mentioned the emergency services, to which Arnal replied that they had already been informed.’

Comment: One or the other or both of them moved Arnal's car after they had taken photos of the Mercedes. This was when Martinez handed over his films to Guizard while Arnal moved his car. It was a little late to ask about emergency services.

Reply to question: ‘I did not receive any film from anyone who took pictures in the tunnel. The only film Martinez gave me is the completed one from the Ritz Hotel. He gave it to me at about 22.30 hours when I brought him something to eat.’

Comment: Pierre Suu testified that Martinez did give Guizard films. He also said that Guizard threw them in the river, which was unlikely, as he wouldn't have known what was on them – unless he was there when Martinez took them.

Reply to question: ‘It is true that in addition to the fact that I was working that evening, I was a partial witness to events and should have got in touch with you sooner, but I was distraught and did not know what to do.’

Comment: I'll let the reader decide about that one.

‘As far as the vehicle I was using is concerned, it is being repaired because my silencer came off.’

Comment: Did the police ask him why his silencer came off? If they did, it was not mentioned again. Incidentally, David Odekerken and Darmon both described Guizard's Peugeot 205 as ‘white’.

Reply to question: ‘If I called Daniel Angeli several times, it is because he is my boss, my friend and my confidant. I was single at the time and it was in him that I felt the need to confide, as I

was in a state of turmoil by what had just happened. The fact that I did not specifically mention these calls to him previously was an omission on my part, but not with the intention of concealing anything important.'

Comment: Poor chap! The truth is that he failed to mention all the calls he made to his boss, not because he was in a state of turmoil, but because they proved that he arrived at the crash site much earlier than he stated. It is also possible that he was waiting in the tunnel *before* the Mercedes arrived.

Nikola Arsov

Nikola Arsov was riding a white BMW R100 GS. Its top speed was 112mph (181km/h) and its acceleration 0-100km/h (62mph) was 4.8 seconds. He was wearing a distinctive yellow coat and carrying a large black camera bag.

According to the interpretation of the Ritz rear exit CCTV images, at 12:17:52, the lights on Arsov's BMW came on and he moved off a few seconds later. The Mercedes pulled away at 12:17:28. However, according to Inspector Paul Carpenter, Arsov and Rat's bikes left the front of the Ritz together. Carpenter then said that Arsov later drives the wrong way up Rue Cambon (rear exit of the Ritz) and followed the decoy cars. I studied the CCTV footage several times and, although I saw a motorbike there, I couldn't see who was driving.

Carpenter said that he always had doubts himself about Arsov as he didn't have time to get to the tunnel and back to the hotel in that time. I don't quite understand the logic of that comment because, if he drove the wrong way, he couldn't have followed the decoy cars. It is known that Arsov left the rear of the Ritz about 30 seconds after the Mercedes.

His statement read, 'Around midnight I saw two cars leaving the Ritz, the Range Rover and the Mercedes. From where I was standing, I could not see which car the couple were in. I decided to follow the Range Rover. The route it took was as follows: Place Vendome, Rue Castiglione, Rue de Rivoli, Place de la Concorde, Champs-Élysées, Avenue Winston Churchill, Cours la Reine and then Avenue Marceau. The tunnel was already closed off and the police were stopping anyone going through. I stopped following and started going back to the agency. I was by the tunnel exit when I saw the Gamma agency's motorbike and the motorcyclist (Darmon). I stopped by it and I saw lots of flashing lights in the tunnel about 40 metres from the exit.

'The Gamma motorcyclist told me that the victim of the accident was Princess Diana. I parked my motorbike to the right of the tunnel exit and went towards the scene of the accident. Several policemen were there. There was quite a panic. I saw several photographers at work around the car. I was able to approach the car and I saw there was a man in the driver's seat and the Princess was at the back with her head and shoulders leaning sideways.

'People were around seeing to the victims. I think they were firemen. I think I took four or five photos of the scene. I have a feeling the flash did not work. If by any chance the photos do come out, they will only be general views of the accident. When I took the photos, I was only five or six metres from the car.

'I only stayed close to the crashed car for five minutes. In answer to your question, I did actually follow a convoy consisting of a Mercedes with a Range Rover behind but I am sure this convoy was just a 'front', intended to lead us the wrong way.'

On October 24th, 1997, he said, 'A few minutes later the Mercedes and the Range Rover left, this time going to the rear of the hotel. We followed, there was Suu, me and Cardinale. At no time did I follow the Mercedes which subsequently crashed. I never saw this car except at the scene of the accident. You tell me that according to some witnesses, motorcyclists were seen close to the Mercedes at different times either before or immediately after the accident. It could not in any case be my motorbike, on which I was alone. I did not at all follow the route indicated as being that of the Mercedes and at no time did I find myself near the Mercedes.'

He then said that he followed the decoy cars with Cardinale and Pierre Suu. Inspector Carpenter's review of the CCTV footage shows that Arsov did not follow the route he stated. He did not follow the decoy vehicles as he'd already left before them. Benhamou stated that he was overtaken at some point by a white trial bike that he identified as Arsov's. Witnesses saw a white bike following the Mercedes, and being flashed and overtaken by it. Arsov's bike was also seen in the Alma Tunnel by Bonin.

Arsov said that he arrived at the tunnel when several police officers and firemen were there. He noticed Darmon's bike, parked at the Chinese restaurant and walked into the tunnel. He took some general view photos, but his flash didn't work. 'My photos did not come out because I had not plugged in my flash.'

Rat in his evidence said, 'Arnal was with me. We stayed where we were, both of us I think in shock. Others continued taking photographs. I think it was at that moment that Arsov arrived. One or two other photographers came back...'

He didn't follow the decoy cars and he wasn't seen at Dodi's apartment. He owned a very fast 1000cc bike and could easily have caught up to the Mercedes and the other chasers. I will prove in The Speeding Driver chapter that Henri Paul was not speeding and Arsov could easily have been immediately behind Diana's Mercedes with the rest of the pack.

There are several other inconsistencies in his statements. Perhaps the most significant is his assertion that he parked near a Chinese restaurant and walked into the tunnel. In Darmon's evidence at the inquest, he stated that Arsov parked his motorbike next to his in the tunnel.

Fabrice Chassery & David Odekerken

Fabrice Chassery and David Odekerken were both with Laurent Sola's agency LSD (Laurent Sola Diffusion). Darryn Lyons was their British agent.

Earlier in the evening, Chassery was 'on stakeout' at the Ritz rear exit and told Odekerken that they were leaving. He said, 'We drove towards the Champs-Élysées at normal speed. All the professionals whom I have already mentioned were there, plus the fans who were behaving like madmen. He recounted the Rat and bodyguard argument and said he then went to get the photos they'd taken so far processed in the Champs-Élysées. Meanwhile Diana and Dodi left with the paparazzi convoy, so he returned to the Ritz.

At around 12.05, Henri Paul came out to say the couple were leaving in 10 minutes. Chassery drove to the rear and parked. He called Odekerken to say they were leaving from the rear, then a Mercedes arrived in a hurry, Diana and Dodi got in and the car sped off. He hadn't noticed the substitute driver. He returned to his car, Odekerken arrived beside him and they agreed to end the evening. He neglects to mention that he took some photos through the Mercedes side window. There are photographs of him taking those shots.

Having left to go and eat, he went up the Champs-Élysées, while Odekerken followed the Mercedes. There is, however, serious doubt as to how far along the Champs-Élysées he got before Odekerken phoned him. It is known that Chassery was at the traffic lights in Place de la Concorde at the same time as the Mercedes. It is possibly the case that his Peugeot 205 was the car seen holding up the Mercedes and then he turned right into the Champs-Élysées.

Odekerken stated, 'The convoy shot off along Rue Cambon. We were both late. I re-joined him at the corner of Rue Cambon and Rue de Rivoli. Through the windscreen I asked him what he had got. He told me he had covered the exit and taken some photographs. At that point, I asked him what we should do, we had lost the convoy. By common agreement, we decided to call it a day.' Chassery told a different story about when they decided to stop.

He also said that, while he was at the previous set of traffic lights, he saw camera flashes further on at the Champs-Élysées lights, but he told Darryn Lyons that he 'banged off a couple of shots' at the previous lights. Also, Lopes Borges gave evidence that Odekerken's Pajero almost hit him as he tried to cut in front of the Mercedes when the Champs-Élysées lights turned to green. Odekerken received nine phone calls from Rat during the journey, three of which were at 19, 20 and 21 minutes past midnight.

He was on the phone to Rat at the Concorde lights. Rat said, 'I can see you, I can see you. It was at that point while I was phoning that Martinez went by and seeing that I was on the phone told me not to tip off the others. I do not think he wanted too many people behind.' Arnal and Martinez followed the Mercedes. They were behind the Mercedes at the lights. A scooter had stopped at the lights as well. Earlier, I mentioned a white 205 in Rue Cambon which was Guizard's. There was a *white 205* at the lights near the Mercedes too.'

Odekerken said in answer to a question, 'I went into the first tunnel. The car had driven off very quickly and I did not know which way it had gone. I was not bothered about it anymore. There

were cars in the first tunnel and I think the Mercedes must have overtaken them and got in front of them. At least, that is what I thought afterwards.'

This appears to say that there were paparazzi cars in front of the Mercedes in the Alexandre III Tunnel. He assumed afterwards that the Mercedes must have overtaken them, but he obviously didn't know for sure.

'The reason I did not ring the emergency services was that after talking to the Gamma motorcyclist (Darmon) I heard people running the other way to say that the emergency services had been called.'

If true, this must have been very soon after the crash and minutes before the fire brigade arrived. Yet he stated, 'As I said, the fire brigade were already there when I got there.'

This is yet another lie among many. Witnesses near the Entry Slip Road had blocked the road long before the firemen arrived, so he wouldn't have been able to get into the tunnel. Even Chassery stated that the fire brigade were not there when he arrived, but two police officers had blocked off the entrance with their car.

Chassery said that he parked in Cours Albert 1er 10 minutes after Odekerken's phone call and went down to the tunnel. People, including three youngsters who were screaming at the photographers, calling them vultures, surrounded the Mercedes. Of course, he didn't see any of his colleagues taking pictures. This 'aroused him from his torpor' and he took about 12 shots, 'wide views'.

However, Chassery took the close-up of Diana in the Mercedes with Dr Mailliez and his oxygen bag. This was anything but a wide view! He also took a shot of the fire brigade freeing Dodi. He said that this upset him and he decided to leave. The fact is that Laurent Sola had already called him and told him and Odekerken to leave because the police would be arriving soon.

This is how Odekerken described his arrival at the tunnel, 'I therefore took this route without knowing I was taking the same route as the procession. I must have been a few minutes behind them. There is a first tunnel just after Place de la Concorde. On leaving this first tunnel, I was travelling normally and did not notice anything unusual. The traffic was moving.

'On arriving in sight of the second tunnel - the one that goes down under the Alma Bridge, I began to take the downward slope which corresponds to the entrance of the tunnel, when suddenly I saw the crashed Mercedes. It was parallel to the right-hand wall and had turned round with its front facing me. At the same time, I saw photographers on foot who were taking photographs. The crackle of the flashes stood out clearly. I had my eyes trained on this Mercedes. I immediately realised that it was Diana's car.

'I was in the left-hand lane. I think that a light green coloured car was stopped between the Mercedes and myself in the right-hand lane. I did not brake sharply but I slowed down without stopping. So I therefore passed level with the car and I noticed the chauffeur, who was slumped in the front. The flashes continued to crackle and there must have been four or five photographers at work.

'Vehicles as well as motorcycles - I thought I even saw a scooter - were stopped after the Mercedes in the direction of the traffic flow. As far as I can remember, there must have been two or three cars and two or three motorcycles. The only vehicle that I can more or less remember, without being certain, was a dark coloured Uno or Typo type Fiat with its hazard warning lights on. After having passed the Mercedes, I looked in my rear view mirror not wanting to believe what I had seen. It was a shock.

'On coming back out of this tunnel, I heard a screech of tyres and the sound of sudden braking. I did not see where this screeching came from. I decided to leave the tunnel and I parked at the top on a pavement on the right-hand side. So I got out without my equipment. The motorcyclist from Gamma was there, the one who was driving Rat. I asked him what had happened.'

Odekerken also stated that he told Darmon he was shocked and had refused to take any photographs. However, when Sola handed over his cut negatives to the police, they began at number 5. Photographers usually take one or two blank exposures to make sure the film is loaded properly, but not normally four. It is, however, possible that, in this situation, he might have started shooting immediately, so there would have been up to four previous pictures that were not given to the French police, or were destroyed.

Chassery called Sola and said they had photos and Sola told them to go to his office. This conflicts with Sola's evidence that they met somewhere near the tunnel. After 45 minutes, they went to the Angeli agency to have the films developed. Chassery said that this was at about 3 a.m.

Odekerken said that he went home in a terribly distressed state, had an agonised conversation with his wife and a long discussion with Laurent Sola. In the end, they decided to sell the photographs. They were developed, scanned at about three and then sent out.

The trouble with that statement is that Sola was already selling them at 1 a.m. and they had arrived on Ken Lennox's desk at The Sun by 2 a.m. Chassery said that Sola was surprised that several magazines around the world knew that he had photos. He and Odekerken then went home.

The truth is that they rushed to the Angeli agency to have the films processed so that Sola could start selling them immediately. Chassery said that, when they learned of Diana's death, they ordered Sola not to sell the photos. If that is true, Sola clearly took no notice of that order. He dispatched Mark Selle with the photos and Selle was arrested in the Hotel Meridien at 7 p.m. on the 31st trying to sell them.

Another strange fact is that a record of the search for Odekerken's cameras shows that they were found at his mother's flat along with the keys to his Mitsubishi Pajero. When questioned, Odekerken stated that he used the Canon EOS in the daytime on that Saturday and the smaller silver Contax in the tunnel. Not only that, but Chassery's cameras were also there. Why would professional photographers leave the tools of their trade and car keys at Odekerken's mother's flat? It appears that, for some reason, they were attempting to hide them there. The French police didn't question them about this.

At the Inquest to Inspector Carpenter:

Q. 'So it would look like Mr Chassery and Mr Odekerken, both of whom trot out this particular story, have gone to the French police, agreeing to lie as to precisely what photographs they had and how they would disseminate them?'

A. 'Well, they have had four days to work on their story.'

Mr De La Mare to Inspector Carpenter:

Q. 'Mr Odekerken is another one of the paparazzi with a problem with the truth, isn't he?'

A. 'He is, yes.'

Q. 'We do know that he was in the Rue Cambon.'

A. 'When the Mercedes left. Yes.'

Q. 'And we do know that he was attempting at the very least to take photographs.'

A. 'We have seen that in Benhamou's photographs.'

Odekerken said, 'At the moment of my arrival, I was going to park when I noticed the procession had set off.' That was a lie. One of the photos taken at the rear of the Ritz as the couple were entering the Mercedes shows him taking photos from behind. He was identified at the inquest.

At the Inquest:

Q. 'So it suggests, doesn't it, the evidence that, Mr Odekerken was fairly close to the Mercedes but perhaps not up alongside it?'

A. 'That is what it suggests, yes.'

French Report:

'In conclusion, it is not possible to determine exactly which of the people under examination who followed the Mercedes for the whole of the journey right up to the place of the accident, as a doubt exists on this point with regard to Fabrice Chassery and Nikola Arsov.'

Pierre Suu & Pierre Hounsfield

Suu and Hounsfield both worked for the SIPA agency. They followed the decoy cars that took the same route as Henri Paul, but managed to turn off at the Exit Slip Road. This is Suu's statement.

'Although I was not in the South of France in the summer of 1997 to cover the relationship between Diana and Dodi, I was aware that a kind of euphoria had developed amongst the paparazzi covering them because they never had such an opportunity to command such high fees for photographs before. This was a new phase for the Princess and people were waiting to see what happened.

'The English press were paying large fees for photographs of the couple; it was a unique situation, with the most photographed woman in the world openly courting the press. Such was the interest that there was even a private jet on standby for the use of a French agency called Eliot Press who are owned by Frank Doveri and whose English partner at the time was Jason Fraser.'

Suu heard about the crash and drove to the tunnel. He could not enter and stayed outside. At one point, he changed his lens and went back to the tunnel.

'I bumped into Frederic Herve, one of the owners of Eliot Press. I spoke to him and we both realised that something really important and nasty had just happened and I realised that it was huge. At one stage we saw a police van driving some of the paparazzi away and Herve said to me, "You don't realise what has just happened, these guys are going to be in trouble". I also took some photographs of the ambulances that were in the tunnel.

'Whilst I was still in conversation with Frederic Herve, I noticed one of the ambulances leaving the underpass against the usual flow of traffic towards Place de la Concorde and I decided it was my job to find out who was in the ambulance and to which hospital they were going. In addition to myself, there was Thierry Orban, who was on a scooter and who was working for Sygma at the time, and a woman journalist in a small car who I think was with Europe 1.

'The road had been blocked and so was empty, and no-one prevented us from following the ambulance, which was being driven at walking pace. I deduced that whoever was in the ambulance must be in very, very bad shape because the expressway is really flat. Had they driven fast, they could have reached the hospital in five to seven minutes but they ended up taking about 20 minutes. At one point, after it had left the embankment and had crossed the Pont d'Austerlitz, the ambulance stopped by the Jardin des Plantes. (See photos)

'Orban and I looked at one another thinking that whoever was in the ambulance must be dying because the hospital was only 300 to 400 yards away. The Pitié-Salpêtrière Hospital was the obvious destination because of its reputation and because it has some of the best specialists. As soon as the ambulance stopped outside the Jardin des Plantes, *a doctor jumped out of the passenger side of the vehicle and rushed round the back of the ambulance and got inside*. He was wearing a white doctor's jacket.

'It was only later that I found out that it was Diana, Princess of Wales who had been inside. One police car arrived while the ambulance was stationary but we were not stopped or questioned. The ambulance stopped for what seemed like half an hour before eventually continuing on its way to the hospital.

'I found out from Hounsfield the following morning when I saw him again at the agency that he had witnessed police removing a portable radar camera from the Cours Albert 1er about 300 yards from the entrance of the tunnel. It is a camera the location of which many of us were familiar with, that was deployed mainly on weekends and which points towards the Place de la Concorde to catch vehicles approaching the Alma tunnel from the direction of Concorde. Pierre Hounsfield was quite categorical. He remembered seeing an old-fashioned tripod-type camera.'

Comment:

The Stevens Report says, 'Asked what direction he had been coming from when he saw it, Pierre Hounsfield said that he had come from rue Arsène Houssaye via avenue Marceau or avenue George V. He himself then realised that if that were the case, he would not have passed the camera site as he had described it (i.e. Cours Albert 1er). He wondered if his memory was playing tricks.' 'Therefore, Pierre Hounsfield's recollection of seeing the tripod camera at that location at that time could not be correct.'

Hounsfield told Suu about this at the time, which means Hounsfield did think he saw it at that time. It was, however, established at the inquest that, if he had followed the decoy cars to Dodi's apartment in the Arsene Houssaye, he would have seen it.

He would have turned off the Riverside Highway at the Exit Slip Road from where the camera would have been visible. The French police probably confused him as to the route he took because they denied that there was a speed camera there. The inquest lawyers obviously saw one that matched Hounsfield's description on a film. See photo of speed camera at the intersection with the Entry Slip Road on the website.

For some strange reason Suu felt the need to introduce the statement about the Pitié-Salpêtrière Hospital being the obvious destination. If, as it appears, the SAMU doctors in the tunnel did not know the extent of Diana's injuries, I very much doubt that a photographer, who didn't even enter the tunnel, would have known what treatment was required. I also doubt that a photographer would have been qualified to make a judgement about the most appropriate hospital.

Unless this was hindsight and he was medically qualified, I'm convinced that this was yet another example of coaching by the French authorities. The only photographer to give evidence to Operation Paget was probably cajoled into testifying purely to deliver that incorrect statement. The fact is that the Val-de-Grace was the most appropriate hospital and a great deal closer than the Pitié-Salpêtrière.

Stéphane Darmon

Rat's motorcycle driver, Stéphane Darmon gave evidence at the inquest via videolink and an interpreter. He was interviewed twice by Captain Nouvion on August 31st, twice by Lieutenant Isabelle Defez on September 1st, and then by Judge Stéphan on October 16th 1997. He also took part in the confrontation with witnesses on June 5th 1998.

On their way from Le Bourget airport to central Paris, passengers in the Mercedes S600 and the Range Rover had described the paparazzi as acting dangerously to take photos. Darmon was asked at the inquest if he remembered Chassery's black 205 overtaking the Mercedes and the Range Rover, on the right-hand side and then very suddenly cutting in front of the Mercedes and braking hard. He said he would have remembered that. Maybe he overtook them, but to brake like that would be very dangerous. He didn't recall Rat trying to take photos on the motorway because they were going fast and there was wind. Maybe it was the case, but he couldn't remember.

It was pointed out that Darmon drove across the pavement on the Champs-Élysées, to which he answered 'Yes'. However, he said it was not to get Rat to Dodi's apartment in Rue Arsene Houssaye as fast as possible; it was to keep a distance between himself and what was happening. I assume he meant to distance himself from the paparazzi who literally pounced on Diana and Dodi at the apartment, shouting and shoving their cameras in the couple's faces.

Darmon said, 'Benhamou was close to the Mercedes and the French bodyguard told him to move away. Rat got in and there was a big fight - maybe with Benhamou, I am not sure - but with Romuald Rat. It was a fierce fight.'

When Diana and Dodi left the apartment to go to a restaurant, chauffeur, Dourneau said, 'So far as the occupants of the Mercedes and the Range Rover were concerned, there were lots of paparazzi. They were coming from all angles, from front and behind ...'

Later, Darmon and Rat were waiting at the front of the Ritz. When Diana and Dodi left, Rat told him to go to Place de la Concorde. Odekerken had phoned and was following. It was panic outside the Ritz when the paparazzi were told that the couple were leaving. He said there were three or four motorbikes, maybe two or three scooters and several cars. 'We left at the very same time as they did because he was in contact with somebody who told him they had just left, so we started immediately.'

'Rat was told that a third car had just left with the Princess and her boyfriend in it. He was told it was a big Mercedes (a 600SL I think) identical to the one that had been used up to then.' This confirms that Odekerken told Rat that the car was a Mercedes 600.

Questioned by Mr. Croxford at the inquest he said, 'I wrote 600 because maybe Mr Rat told me it was a 600 SL.'

He previously said, 'As soon as the Mercedes saw a gap in the first row of cars, it went for the gap and then pulled away very quickly towards the quais. I was going fairly slowly at first, as Romuald was putting his mobile away and putting his helmet back on.'

Q. 'Could it be that when you made this deposition some six weeks after the accident, by now you knew you were dealing with a Mercedes 280 and not a powerful six-litre car?'

A. 'I do not know. I do not feel any interest in such a question. What I said is what Rat told me. What does it change, this model of car? What does it change if it is a 280 rather than a 600?'

Q. 'Well, Mr Darmon, you now had to find an excuse why your motorcycle, a 650 CC Honda, could not keep up with this 280 Mercedes, didn't you?'

Mr. Croxford then pointed out the top speed and acceleration figures for Darmon's Honda 650. According to the French authorities and the manufacturer's figures, its top speed is 174km/h. Darmon said, 'That is totally stupid'.

Mr. Croxford quoted the following figures:

For the Honda 650 bike, acceleration from a standing start with a passenger would take 7.4 seconds to travel 100 metres and reach 93km/h, whereas a Mercedes S280 with 4 people would take 7.8 seconds to travel 100 metres and reach only 80km/h. Darmon still insisted that he drove normally and stuck to his story of losing the Mercedes.

'When we got to the Crillon (lights before Place de la Concorde and Champs-Élysées), Romuald asked me to slow down as he did not know what direction we should head in. After pausing to think, he saw David Ker's (Odekerken's) Pajero, which was on the Place in the direction of the quai. If I remember rightly, the Pajero was alongside the Mercedes, stationary at the lights. There were four or five rows of cars and I would say that they (the Mercedes and Odekerken) were in the second or third. Asked by Michael Mansfield at the inquest, he replied, 'There were two lines of cars in front of the Mercedes.'

One witness described seeing a scooter level with the Mercedes rear door, ridden by two persons with dark helmets. It was in fact Darmon's motorbike, not a scooter. Darmon said he couldn't see the right side of the Mercedes, so he was clearly on its left. The witness stated that the passenger, Rat, was taking one flash photo after another. Asked what the Mercedes did when the lights changed to green, he replied, 'Well they waited to have some space and they waited for cars to turn right, and suddenly, when there was some space in front of them, the Mercedes accelerated radically. It took off just like a plane.'

Darmon thought that he overtook the Pajero and all the other cars waiting at the lights. When he reached the curve in the road, he couldn't see the Mercedes any more. It had disappeared in the vicinity of the Alexandre III Tunnel. Darmon drove at between 80 and 100km/h because it was out of the question for him to take any risks. Driving towards the Alexandre III tunnel there was nobody between him and the Mercedes. When he could see into the Alexandre III tunnel, the Mercedes had disappeared.

Witness, Thierry Hackett described the Mercedes being surrounded by motorcycles before the Alexandre III tunnel and drew a sketch. Darmon said that maybe it happened when he couldn't see. Michael Mansfield asked, 'How could four motorcycles arrive on the expressway between you and the Mercedes without you seeing?' Darmon's reply was, 'I wonder too. I do not understand.'

When Darmon reached the tunnel exit, he could see a red spot in the distance going into the Alma Tunnel. He didn't know if it was the Mercedes. There were no other vehicles in front of him at

that point. He said, 'I was quite impressed because I could not imagine how could (sic) this car could have a distance of 300 to 400 metres in between me and the car. It was quite impressive.' That's because it was not true! He insisted that nobody was in front of him between the two tunnels, but didn't know if the red spot was the Mercedes rear light.

Darmon wanted to leave at the Exit Slip Road, but Rat said he should keep going on the expressway. He said that he'd slowed down quite a bit and then, 'I was joined by a group of photographers who I saw in my rear view mirror and by some passers-by. There was a scooter, but I cannot say what the other vehicles were as it was dark and poorly lit. I went down into the underpass first. I did not see anybody.'

In his statement on August 31st to Captain Nouvion, he said, 'I was going at about 60 kilometres per hour at the top of the slope down into the underpass. The whole group was there, four or five cars mingling with the traffic, about three motorbikes and two scooters.'

At the inquest, he denied saying that and it must have been a misunderstanding. Yet he and Nouvion both signed his statement at 1.35 a.m. He then said that he didn't proofread it before signing, but the others arrived later.

In his September 1st statement he said, 'I was the first to pass the crashed car. Right behind me there was a scooter with one person on it and a motorbike.'

When asked about that statement he replied, 'It is what I explained, but maybe because of the emotion, things were not properly perceived, but it is exactly what I explained. It is when I overtook the Mercedes that the others arrived behind and I lost this notion of time.' He then said there was nobody.

Michael Mansfield read part of his statement in which he said, 'The other motorbike stayed at the entrance to the tunnel. This one was a Yamaha with two people on it. It might have been an XT600. They never came out the other end of the tunnel. After the photos had been taken, they left, not using the underpass. I didn't see them again.'

'I read my deposition made to Judge Stéphan, which was certainly clearer because I had more time to think and digest all of these things. There was certainly a motorbike...'
Mansfield asked if he saw them leave or not, to which he replied, 'I do not remember. Maybe. I do not remember. But they certainly left because they were not arrested by the police.'

'It is true that when the stream of cars arrived behind me at the tunnel entrance, there was a Yamaha TDM motorbike. I did not see who was on it. There were two people. I did not see them enter the underpass. Contrary to what I said to the police at D242, I do not remember the two persons on board this motorcycle taking photographs.'

'There was a lot of smoke and there was the horn that was sounding, so I made the decision to go past it and I stopped a little bit further down the road. I would say 10/15 metres because I feared an explosion. I feared that something would go wrong with the Mercedes.'

Asked if he left his bike, he said, 'I left my bike 10 to 15 metres away from the Mercedes and we went towards the direction of the Mercedes to rescue them. Rat opened the door, and at that very moment all of the others got there. Benhamou parked three or four metres in front of Darmon and Arnal arrived next.'

He then said, 'Actually I think that he (Rat) got off my bike first, then I drove away and left my bike 10/15 metres away before I walked towards him again.'

He then described Arnal approaching the others with his mobile phone and telling them that he was calling emergency services. Remember that Arnal said he had to go out of the tunnel to get reception. Darmon couldn't call because his battery was flat. Then all the motorbikes arrived and David Ker (Odekerken) said, 'I have a cellular phone, I am going to call the emergency services.'

Arnal and Martinez stated that they parked in the tunnel; Guizard said that he parked on the exit ramp and Odekerken was also in that vicinity. Arsov testified that he did not drive through the tunnel, but parked near a Chinese restaurant and walked in from the exit slope at the other end. It is therefore interesting that Darmon, possibly inadvertently, answered a question from Mr. Macleod by saying, 'I only remember Arsov's motorbike. He parked his motorbike next to mine.'

He added, 'I only remember Nikola Arsov's motorbike, but maybe some people parked there too.' He then said, '...what is for sure is that he (Benhamou) parked his scooter there, on the right-

hand side, past the Mercedes.’

It is obvious that Rat’s first photo with Arnal in the frame was taken just seconds after the crash because there was absolutely nobody else around, yet Darmon insisted that it was taken some time after they arrived on the scene. He was trying to protect Rat, but in fact made it worse by saying they arrived earlier still. ‘What *the police officers explained to me* when I did my deposition after all that is that I lost totally the time notion.’

Darmon moved his bike just outside the tunnel exit and, when he returned, a group of photographers were taking photos. He couldn’t see the Mercedes anymore because of the intensity of light from their continuous flashes. He was shocked and angry. He saw Rat pushing the people around him and heard him shout that she was alive. He saw two people on a Yamaha TDM bike drive into the tunnel, stop, take some photos and then leave.

‘Some photographers, on hearing the fire brigade sirens, fled the scene. Serge Benhamou on his scooter, maybe two on scooters or motorbikes and another one by foot. I tried to stop him to ask him about what had been going on, and actually he almost - we almost got into an accident. He almost ran over me.’

Rat had given Darmon three films he’d used with 79 exposures and Darmon gave them to the police. There was also another film in Rat’s camera with a further 21 exposures.

Jacques Langevin

The Mercedes left the rear of the Ritz at 12:17:46. At 12:17.52, Jacques Langevin left in his Volkswagen Golf. His phone battery had run out, so he couldn’t contact his colleagues.

On August 31st 1997, he stated, ‘A Mercedes came to the back door where I was standing. Princess Diana and Dodi Al Fayed got straight into the back of the car. There was already a man inside, next to the driver. I took four or five photos but the Mercedes left very quickly. I went straight to my car which was about 30 metres further up but I did not manage to follow the Mercedes. I saw a car that seemed to be following the Mercedes, possibly a Peugeot 205. So I gave up and set off for my friends’ place in Paris 15. I got to the Place de la Concorde and drove towards the Maison de la Radio offices.

I got to the Place de l’Alma and about 100 metres in front, in Cours Albert 1er, I saw members of the public blocking the entrance to the tunnel. I parked my car at the lights just before the Place de l’Alma to walk towards where the crowd was. I walked along the slope and got to the scene of the accident. I saw there were some colleagues there and some of them were taking photos. I did not understand what they were doing there.

When I asked what was going on, someone told me it was Mr Al Fayed. I was surprised and it was only then that I realised what had happened. I should say that when I got there a police car and the fire brigade were already at the scene. So I arrived at least ten minutes after the accident, but I cannot tell you the exact time. I took four or five photos with the same film I had used earlier outside the hotel. I only photographed the car and the emergency services resuscitating Mr Al Fayed.’

On October 8th 1997, he stated that certain photographers knew Henri Paul. ‘I heard some photographers say that he was not in his normal state that evening, that he had been drinking.’

Comment:

Jacques Langevin is a renowned photographer. He was unlucky to be on duty that night as he was arrested and taken away with the paparazzi. My only criticism of him would be that he reported what the others said about Henri Paul, but, like the others, he may have been coerced into saying that. Apart from that and with the possible exception of Laslo Veres, he appears to be the only one of the entire pack who told the truth.

Laslo Veres

Veres arrived at the Alma Tunnel when Bouzid and l’Hostis were blocking the road, having left the Ritz at 12:24:50. He said, ‘Press’ and drove through them. It is clear that he didn’t pursue the Mercedes and only went to the tunnel after Benhamou had phoned him as he was leaving the Ritz. The call records identify a call from Benhamou to Veres at 00:25:29.

He arrived before the fire brigade because they reported seeing his black Piaggio scooter parked by the 11th pillar as they arrived. He took a few shots of the Mercedes and Dodi's body. The police also arrested him and, whilst at police headquarters, he remembered Christian Martinez saying, 'While we are here, LSD (Laurent Sola Diffusion) is raking in the money.' That was a reference to Chassery and Odekerken, who ran away before the police arrested them.