BBC News - Penarth professor saved from 77 bomb by

Posted by fredjoseph00 - 2013/06/25 09:28

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12 November 2010Last updated at 09:53 GMT Penarth professor saved from 7/7 bomb by suitcase

A professor caught up in the 7/7 London bombings has told an inquest he was probably saved by his suitcase.

Professor John Tulloch was trying to get to Paddington to travel home to Cardiff when the terrorist attack at Edgware Road hit.

He told a London inquest into the deaths of the 52 people killed he was partially shielded from the blast by the luggage at his feet.

He said he suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder following the atrocity,http://www.replicahandbags4sale.com/louis-vuitton-handbags/damier-azur-canvas.html.

Shards of shrapnel were also embedded in his face during the explosion.

Prof Tulloch, a sociologist who works at Brunel University in London, told the hearing he had just returned from a trip to Australia at the time of the bombings.

He had been sitting with his roller case, cabin bag and laptop bag ready to leave the carriage when bomber Mohammad Sidique Khan detonated his device.

He said: "I had my three bags because I wanted to be out the door first. Almost instantly something quite severe happened.

"I had no recollection, I didn't ... hear anything, but there was a strong yellow to deep orange colour - the whole carriage was this colour.

"I briefly saw the carriage and the best way to describe it was, it seemed it was being stretched and pulled. I don't recall seeing anything flying about."

Darkness

He came to lying on his back in the darkness amid debris and shattered glass.

Prof Tulloch quickly became aware of the blood on his face before he noticed two injured American women in the carriage, identified as sisters Kathleen and Emily Benton.

He said: "As soon as I saw the American ladies in that condition, I think the whole adrenaline cut in, I started feeling my legs.

"I seemed to have forgotten all about the pain in my head and could see my legs were there.

"I wouldn't say it was a feeling of euphoria, but it was a very good, very positive feeling which focused me on those legs and got me up from my seat."

As he shakily got to his feet, the academic's eyes were drawn to a male body lying in the crater close to where the bomb was detonated.

He said: "I could see the top half of his body and the arms seemed to be apart. I thought this person was

dead."

'Scrabbling'

In the process of the inquest Prof Tulloch, once a head of Cardiff university's school of journalism, media and cultural studies, revealed he had previously experienced an IRA bombing.

In the depths beneath Edgware Road station he recalls silhouettes of standing people in another carriage "scrabbling" at the windows.

He also remembered losing focus and being dragged back to reality by a kindly passenger who engaged him in conversation.

He said: "I remember he talked to me about what his daughter was doing in her A-levels and the universities she was thinking of applying to.

"This was so deeply embedded and grabbed me so strongly I can almost reel off to this day what four universities those were.

"He also asked me about my sons in Australia and that focused me."

When paramedics arrived, Prof Tulloch was placed on a stretcher and assessed as a priority three casualty.

To this day he still has shrapnel inside his head.

Both ear drums were also damaged in the blast.

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