Witness: Michael S. Wilson

Date: 2004-08-03

Proceedings held August 3, 2004

Called by: People (prosecution)

Phase: Guilt

Examinations: Direct – Rick Distaso; Cross – Pat Harris; Redirect – Rick Distaso; Recross – Pat Harris

Day 1 of 1 for this witness

Court: San Mateo County Superior Court, Redwood City (People v. Scott Peterson)

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Direct Examination by Rick Distaso

DISTASO: Mr. Wilson, did you attend the vigil for Laci Peterson on December 31st, 2002?

WILSON: Yes, I did.

DISTASO: And that was the vigil -- candlelight vigil held down in the park?

WILSON: Yes.

DISTASO: About what time did you get there?

WILSON: I don't remember exactly. It was early.

DISTASO: Let me stop you there. Was it before the vigil started?

WILSON: Oh, yes. Long time before that.

DISTASO: Okay. And when you got there, was the stage already in place?

WILSON: No. The stage -- they were bringing the stage around to position it. And at that point in time, because of the wet turf the tow vehicle had stopped. Couldn't be attempted.

DISTASO: When you say that, it was the city workers who were in charge of that?

WILSON: Yes.

DISTASO: Were they having some difficulty?

WILSON: Because of the wet turf they had to stop. Because people tried to cross in front of them, they had a difficult time restarting after that.

DISTASO: When they were having this difficulty, did you at that point have some contact with the defendant?

WILSON: Yes, I did.

DISTASO: When I say defendant, I'm talking about Scott Peterson.

WILSON: Yes.

DISTASO: Okay. And what happened?

WILSON: They were trying to get the tow vehicle restarted. There was myself and a few other people I didn't know were trying to push or jump up and down on the to vehicle to get traction. And at that point in time, Mr. Peterson showed up and was also trying to help in the process.

DISTASO: And at that time, at some point, or somehow, the stage got going again, gets put in the right spot?

WILSON: They brought another vehicle in, and we hooked it up to get the first one started. And at that point in time, once it was in the process of being positioned, I didn't see Scott after that.

DISTASO: Okay. During this -- while this whole period was going on, about how long were you with Mr. Peterson?

WILSON: I would say probably 20 minutes, 30 minutes. I don't know exactly. Just a process.

DISTASO: Were other members of the Rocha and Peterson families somewhere else during that time?

WILSON: They -- basically they were over where the stage was going to be positioned.

DISTASO: Did you say anything to the defendant about, you know, "Why aren't you with your family? Go with your family," something to that effect?

WILSON: Yes, I did.

DISTASO: What did you say to him?

WILSON: You know, my concern was –

JUDGE: No. The question is, what did you tell him, Mr. Wilson?

WILSON: I asked, I said, "Scott, you don't need to be here helping us. We have enough help. You should be with your family members."

DISTASO: What did he say to you?

WILSON: He goes -- I don't remember the exact term, but, "I'd rather be here, be happier here," something in that regard.

DISTASO: Nothing further, your Honor.

Cross Examination by Pat Harris

HARRIS: Good afternoon, Mr. Wilson.

WILSON: Good afternoon.

HARRIS: You first gave this account that you just testified to I believe to the Detective Grogan from Modesto Police Department. Do you recall that?

WILSON: That's correct.

HARRIS: And that was on March 9th of this year?

WILSON: I believe it was in March. No, I believe it was before that. I'm not sure. I don't recall exactly when it was. I thought it was earlier than that.

HARRIS: Was it some time early this year?

WILSON: I believe it was.

HARRIS: Let me just have you take a quick look at a report prepared by Detective Grogan. If you will just look at this. You don't have to read it aloud. Just look at the date. Does that refresh your recollection?

WILSON: Yes, it does.

HARRIS: Was it March 9th of this year?

WILSON: That's what it says. That would be correct.

HARRIS: And he contacted you because your wife is a woman named Linda Wilson; is that correct?

WILSON: That's correct.

HARRIS: Linda Wilson is a close friend of Sharon Rocha?

WILSON: Yes.

HARRIS: So he contacted you because Miss Wilson had told him that there was something you had to add about the vigil?

WILSON: I don't know how that contact came about. It was -- I just got the call from Mr. Grogan, and that's how the process started.

HARRIS: You told him that your wife Linda is, in fact, a long-term friend of Sharon Rocha's; is that right?

WILSON: Yes.

HARRIS: How does she know Sharon?

WILSON: I believe since about the second grade they have been raised together. Their kids were raised together, Laci and Brent. And my wife's daughters.

HARRIS: Just so I'm clear on the timeframe, you arrived prior to the vigil starting?

WILSON: Yes, I did.

HARRIS: Okay. And you when you arrived, did you arrive for the purpose of helping out? Or did you just happen to show up, they needed help?

WILSON: I'm just kind of an early riser, I guess.

HARRIS: Do you remember about what time you arrived?

WILSON: I believe it was probably around five-ish, 5:30,around there, maybe. Maybe a little earlier.

HARRIS: Let me just -- if I told you the vigil actually started at 4:45 or five, would that -- do you think you may have arrived actually earlier than that?

WILSON: I know it was daylight. We were -- there was a lot of people there when we did arrive.

HARRIS: One of the people there was Scott Peterson?

WILSON: My wife and I saw Scott as we were walking in the parking lot by the tennis courts.

HARRIS: So he was there when you arrived?

WILSON: Yes.

HARRIS: And he was helping put together the arrangement, the stage, and everything?

WILSON: Not at that point, no.

HARRIS: When they -- they needed help, he pitched in and helped out?

WILSON: He was there, yes.

HARRIS: After he finished helping out, he went over and stayed with the Rocha family?

WILSON: He was over by -- I was standing pretty close to where the steps are to get to the stage. That's where my wife was at the time and the other friends and members.

HARRIS: That's all I have.

Redirect Examination by Rick Distaso

DISTASO: Mr. Wilson, does the fact that your wife is a close friend with Sharon Rocha have anything to do with your testimony here today?

WILSON: Absolutely not.

DISTASO: Nothing further.

Recross Examination by Pat Harris

HARRIS: Do you consider it to be a coincidence that you were interviewed in 2004 along with all of Miss Rocha's friends about this incident and the candlelight vigil?

DISTASO: Objection, your Honor. Calls for speculation. Argumentative.

JUDGE: Sustained.

HARRIS: I have nothing further.