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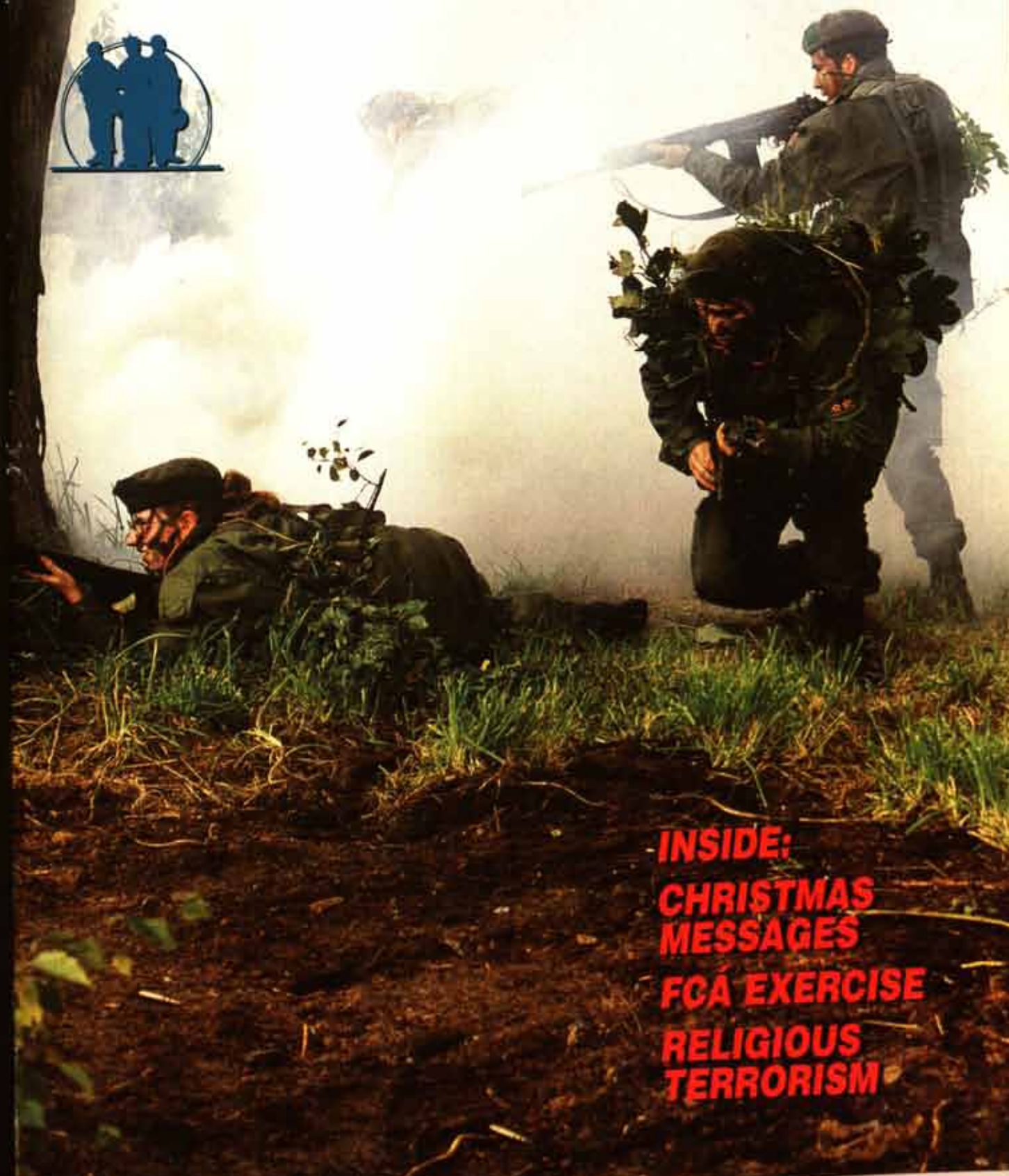
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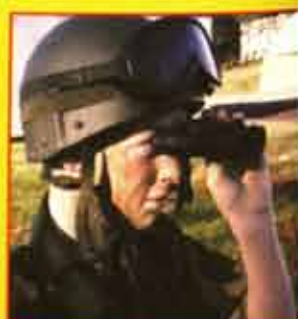
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New FCA officers at a recent commissioning ceremony. For the Minister's announcement on funding for the FCA see this month's Connect enclosed.

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FRONT COVER:
Members of 15 Inf Bn give a section-in-attack demonstration during a recent Open Day in Ballynashan Barracks. For more FCA activities see 'Forest Shield' page 23. Photo: Joe Hanley

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Notwithstanding their heavy workload the lads of 1 Tpt Coy still have to take time out to keep their vehicles in tip-top condition. See 'The Movers' pages 20-21. Photo: Cpl Willie Barr.



An Uachtarán

Don Cheann Foirne,
An Leifteanant-Ghinearál David F. Stapleton

Is mór an chúis áthais dom Nollaig mhór mhaith a ghui ar gach uile bhall de na Fórsaí Cosanta agus buíochas ó chroí a ghabháil libh as an obair thábhachtach atá ar siúl agaibh sa bhaile agus thar lear. Déanann sibh an obair seo ar bhealach atá gairmiúil agus ciúin, agus de thairbhe sin is fuirist a dhearmad cé chomh contúirteach is atá an obair seo a dhéanann sibhse ar ár son uilig. Ar an drochuair cailleadh baill de na Fórsaí Cosanta i mbliana nuair a fuair bhuir comh-chosantóirí bás go cróga sa Liobáin agus sa Trá Mhór i gCondae Phort Láirge. Tá cuimhne mhaith agam ar an dúbhrón a bhí orm féin agus ar gach duine a bhí i láthair ag na sochraidi agus muid ag fágáil stán leis na fir chróga sin a sciobadh ar shiúl go hanaibí. Tá mé ag smaoinéamh go speisialta um Nollaig ar chlanna na bhfear seo, ar a gcairde agus ar a gcomhghleacaithe.

Is fada agus is glórmhar an taithí atá ag Fórsaí Cosanta na hÉireann i dtaca leis an tsiocháin a choimeád, agus is mór liomsa ag le pobal na tíre an taithí sin. De bharr na hoibre seo is iomaí comhlúadar ar fud an domhain atá in ann bheith ag siúl leis an Nollaig i mbliana agus ar son na siochána agus is mór an chúis bhróid i an obair seo dúinn uilig.

Is mór an chúis mhórtas dúinn fosta an chabhair a thugann sibh do na daoine áitiúla agus sibh ag obair thar lear, agus is iontach an cur chuige pearsanta a léiríonn sibh sa saothar seo. Ba mhór an phribhléid dom an chuairt a thug mé ar na trúpaí Éireannacha i Honduras níos luaithe sa bhliain. Chonaic mé ansin le mo shúile cinn cé chomh mór a chuaigh siad i gcionn ar phobal Santa Rose de Aguan, agus an dóchas a mhuscail siad sa phobal ann leis an obair a bhí ar siúl. Nuair a thóg siad scoil agus ionad sláinte nua ní amháin go raibh siad ag freastal ar riachtanaisí fisiciúla an phobail ach d'adaigh siad creideamh agus dóchas sa chine daonna arís sna daoine ann. Tá mé ag labhairt thar ceann mhunitir na hÉireann i ngach cuid den domhan mór seo nuair a deirim go bhfuil muid ar fad bródúil as an obair atá déanta ag na Fórsaí Cosanta chun cuidiú le munitir Honduras teacht chucu féin arís i ndiaidh na tubaiste a scrois iad. Tuigean muid chomh maith go bhfuil iliomad scéalta laochrais eile ann nach bhfuil a oiread céanna caint orthu, agus is mór linn gach uile cheann acu.

Ceiliúir faoi leith uaim daoibhse nach mbeidh ábalta an Nollaig seo a chaitheamh le bhuir gclanna agus bhuir gcairde sa bhaile. Tá a fhios agam go gcuideoidh an comhlúadar cosanta le díribt an uaignis. Tá a fhios agam chomh maith go dtabharfaidh bhuir gclanna sa bhaile tacaíocht dá chéile agus go bhfaighidh siad solás agus sonas ó chlann mhór na bhFórsaí Cosanta.

Guim sonas agus séan ar na Fórsaí Cosanta agus ar bhuir gclanna um Nollaig, agus guim rath agus beannacht na siochána oraibh sa Mhíleaois nua.

Máire Mhic Ghiolla Íosa
Uachtarán na hÉireann

Teachtairí Nollag chig na Fórsaí Cosanta Christmas Messages to the Defence Forces

To the Chief of Staff,
Lieutenant-General David F. Stapleton.

It is my very great pleasure to extend warmest Christmas greetings to each member of the Army, Air Corps and Naval Service and to thank you for the invaluable work you are carrying out at home and overseas.

You do it so professionally, so quietly that it is easy to forget the risks which you take on behalf of all of us. This year tragically these risks claimed too many lives as Defence Force personnel died courageously in the line of duty in Lebanon and in Tramore, County Waterford. I recall with great sadness attending those funeral services and witnessing the outpouring of grief at the loss of such dedicated men who had so much to offer in life. My thoughts and deepest sympathies at this Christmas time are with their loved ones, their families, their friends and colleagues.

The record of service of the Defence Forces in international peacekeeping is exemplary and the experience and expertise that you have acquired are greatly valued. As a result of the peacekeeping efforts to which you are contributing, many communities throughout the world will be able to enjoy Christmas and look forward to the new Millennium with hope for the future. You exercise an unique ambassadorship for Ireland and for peace and you exercise it in a way which reflects enormous credit on Ireland and brings a deep sense of pride at home.

One vital element of your work overseas is the humanitarian assistance you provide whenever possible. Members of the Defence Forces bring a level of personal commitment to this humanitarian role which is remarkable. It was a great honour for me to visit Irish troops in Honduras earlier this year. There I saw at first hand the hope they were able to bring to the devastated community of Santa Rose de Aguan. The new school and medical centre they built there have given a heartbroken people new faith in human kindness and in the future. I know Irish people everywhere join me in taking great pride in the wonderful spirit of caring and dedication which they demonstrated in helping the Honduran people to rebuild their lives. And we all know that there are many such stories of a job well done, out of the spotlight but bringing an end to darkness.

To those of you in the Defence Forces whose duties will keep you from families and friends, I send special greetings. I know your camaraderie will keep the loneliness at bay and at home families will support each other and be supported by the great family that is our Defence Forces. I wish all our Defence Forces and their loved ones the happiest of Christmases. May this Millennium be for you a time of peace.

Máire Mhic Ghiolla Íosa
Uachtarán na hÉireann



The Minister

I am delighted to have this opportunity to convey season's greeting to all members of the Defence Forces and their families.

I wish to extend a special greeting to all members of the Defence Forces who will spend Christmas serving in the cause of peace overseas. The number of personnel serving overseas is at its highest level for many years. This year Irish troops are serving in Kosovo and East Timor for the first time. All in all, over 870 members will spend Christmas and the new year serving abroad and they will all be missed by their families at home.

During the past year, we have been sadly reminded of the hazards faced by members of the Defence Forces as they go about their day-to-day work. Defence Forces personnel have lost their lives in tragic circumstances at home and abroad in the past year. My thoughts and prayers are with their families this Christmas. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a n-anamacha uilig.

I congratulate each member of the Army, Air Corps, and Naval Service on the invaluable work they continue to perform both at home and overseas. On my own behalf, and on behalf of the Government, I wish you a very happy Christmas and a peaceful, successful New Year.

Guim sonas agus sábháilteacht do chomhaltai na bhFórsaí Cosanta agus dá muintir an Nollaig seo agus san Athbhliain.

Michael Smith
Minister for Defence



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1 Air Corps students who completed their Standard NCO course recently in the DFTC. L-r: Cpls Eamonn Magner, Gerry Cassidy, Brendan O'Callaghan, Dominic Fitzgerald, Jonathan McMahon, Joe Payne, Roddy Molloy, and Liam Cotter. Photo: Tony Flynn

2 Chief of Staff, Lt Gen Dave Stapleton, and GOC 2 E Bde, Brig Gen Edmund Heskin, with Denmark's Chief of Staff who recently visited McKee Bks.

3 Pte Chris McCarthy (A Coy, 86 Inf Bn) fronts his first minesweep after understudying with personnel of the departing 85 Inf Bn. Photo: Sgt Willie Braine

4 Lt Gen Stapleton (COS) and wife, Maureen, with Boyzone's Ronan Keating at the People of the Year awards in the Burlington Hotel. Photo: Cusack Photography

5 & 6 Pte Anthony O'Sullivan, who is serving with 1 Tpt Coy in Kosovo, couldn't believe his eyes when former Irish soccer legend Frank Stapleton walked into his kitchen. Frank, and a film crew from TV3 were in Macedonia for the Ireland game. On the morning of the match they visited the Irish contingent in Kosovo and after the match that evening Frank presented 1 Tpt Coy with \$500 from TV3 to go towards the refurbishment of two local houses that the lads are working on. (For more on that see 'The Movers', pages 20-21.) Meanwhile a lucky group of off-duty personnel were able to attend the match in Skopje. Rev Fr Muldowney's photo shows (l-r): Pte Murphy, Pte Molloy, Cornal Gibson (Coy OC), & Pte O'Brien on their way to the match.

7 In September, 4 W Bde, in conjunction with the Western Health Board, conducted a Food Hygiene Certificate course for 44 personnel, over half of the food workers in the Brigade. The course was a resounding success with all 44 receiving their certificates at a ceremony in Dún Ui Mhaoliosa. Our photo shows Brig Gen John Martin (GOC 4 W Bde), Capt M Daly (course co-ordinator) and lecturers from the WHB, Ms Maria Larkin and Ms Máire Brennan, with the successful students.

8 Former OC 3 Coy, Slua Muiri, Lt Cdr Michael Burke, who retired from the organisation in 1988, was recently honoured by becoming the first Irish person to be awarded the prestigious title of Ton Class Association Member of the Year. He is pictured here (right) with Vice Admiral Sir John Cox at the presentation ceremony in Glasgow.

9 Minister of Defence, Michael Smith, inspects a Guard of Honour from 'A' Coy, 15 Inf Bn FCA, during his visit to Ballymullen Bks, Tralee. (For the Minister's announcement on increased funding for the FCA, see this month's Connect.) Photo: Joe Hanley

10 Cpl Martin Griffin (Codre NCO, 15 Inf Bn) demonstrates the 84mm anti-tank rifle to some interested young visitors at the well-attended open day in Ballymullen Bks held at the end of October. Photo: Joe Hanley

11 Pictured are Sgt Noel McDermott and Cpl John Conroy with the Air Corps Golf Society's Perpetual Trophy, which they won this year.

12 Members of the Year II NTCB class with DFSC staff and instructors outside the School in McKee Bks.



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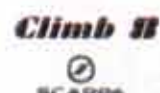
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MILLENNIUM, or Y2K, hype in the media has for many of us, fuelled the fires of fear. Cyber chaos, 'planes falling from the sky, power failures, hospital confusion, crashing stock markets, public disorder and the possibility of human-induced Armageddon! Are these scenarios likely from January 1st 2000? In a recent newspaper article Jerusalem was cited as being 'likely to be seriously unfestive' as it is a probable destination for 'fundamentalists anticipating the Second Coming'. Sites such as Stonehenge 'or the nearest sacred mountain top' are likely to 'be packed with zealots for the world's end'.

There are those who might put forward that the media are themselves somewhat guilty of scaremongering or creating an ambience of terror for Y2K. Maybel Nevertheless the reality is that throughout the world defences against such turmoil and agitation are being taken seriously. Security in Israel is taken as a normal fact of everyday life; but next year it will be extra special. In the US, the FBI has clamped down on extreme right wing Christian and millenarian terror groups. The Vatican has set up a special unit to monitor potential threats to Pope John Paul. In addition, recent trends in terrorism have contributed to a growing awareness that the nature of terror is changing just as the nature of modern geopolitics has changed over the past decade or so. Superpower rivalries no longer exist, and old ideologies are defunct, thereby leaving unstable vacuums in many regions. This has resulted in a range of potential flashpoint situations, ranging from extreme ethno-nationalism to religious fundamentalism.

There are many definitions of terrorism because by its nature it is difficult to define. The Oxford English Dictionary defines it as 'the practice of using violent and intimidating methods, especially to achieve political ends'. The US Department of Defense defines it as 'the calculated use of violence or the threat of violence to inculcate fear; intended to coerce or to intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious or ideological'. It is in this sense that terrorism can be distinguished from criminal violence. The FBI defines terror-

Holy Terror!

religious terrorism and the millennium



Osama Bin Laden, a Saudi Arabian businessman who went to Afghanistan to join the Jihad against the Russian invaders. Bin Laden has since become America's most wanted terrorist leader.



ism as the 'unlawful use of force or violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives'. Peter Taylor however puts forward that terrorism is 'one of the most emotive words in the English language. It is a value judgement itself'.

Terrorism has a number of characteristics. Anyone can be a victim – attacks which may seem random to us make perfect sense to the terrorist. They need to publicise their attacks. As well as instilling terror in the general populace, gaining media attention is one of the primary objectives of any terrorist operation.

Modern terrorists have become more sophisticated. They are very mobile and have access to up-to-date communications and explosives technology. Concerns over the possible use of weapons of mass destruction, such as biological weapons, by terrorists are mounting. In addition, many newly emergent terrorist groups have no clear organisational or communications structures, therefore making it difficult for police and intelligence agencies to assess the level of threat posed. And as the end of this millennium approaches, more groups and cults with an apocalyptic view of the world are emerging to add to the problem.

In spite of increased global economic integration and growing international political interdependency, re-emergent nationalism has become a feature in areas once dependent on Cold War superpowers. Old scores are being settled and pre-Cold War ethnic and religious tensions remain unresolved, resulting in open warfare and terrorism. This has been especially evident in Eastern Europe, the Balkans, and the Caucasus states of the former Soviet Union as manifested in recent conflict in Chechnya, Tajikistan and Dagestan.

Religious terrorism has been a close second to extreme nationalism and the two are often found in combination. The horrific and indiscriminate bombings in Russia earlier this year have been

attributed to Islamic militants from Dagestan who are seeking independence from Moscow. International spillover of such conflicts in the form of terrorist attacks are common. Militant supporters of belligerents in a given theatre of ethnic or religious conflict may attempt to gain support for their respective causes by committing acts of terror, such as the Algerian GIA's hijack of an Air France Airbus A300 on Christmas Eve 1994 and Islamic Fundamentalist attacks on the World Trade Centre in 1993.

Over the past two thousand years, terrorism has been a feature of many societies, though not referred to as such until this century. Early terrorists, such as the Zealots, the Assassins and the Thugs, were primarily religious in motivation.

The millenarian Jewish group, The Zealots terrorised the Romans in Roman-occupied Judea in the first century AD. They attempted to maximise coverage of their attacks by slitting the throats of prominent Romans, with a primitive dagger called a *sica*, in crowded market places.

Reputed to have killed more than 800 persons per year during their twelve hundred year existence, the Thugs, a cult which operated in India, engaged in brutal acts of terrorism, in worship of the Hindu god of terror, Kali.

The Assassins, whose name means 'hashish eater', were an extreme wing of the Muslim Shi'a Ismaili sect who engaged in ritual intoxication before committing acts of terror against Christian Crusaders attempting to take over present day Syria and Iran between 1090 and 1272 AD.

For the Assassins, their actions were regarded as sacred. In addition to repelling the Crusaders, they believed their acts would bring about the dawn of a new millennium.

Indeed the Crusaders themselves committed acts of terror

and violently suppressed political and religious opposition, in response to the sermon of Pope Urban II at Clermont, France in November 1095.

It has been argued that this oration was one of the milestones in history that served as a legitimisation for the subsequent acts of terror perpetrated by the authors of the Holocaust and modern ethnic cleansers – a form of terror perpetrated on a mass scale, most recently in the former Yugoslavia and East Timor.

In view of the above it can be argued that religious violence and the legitimisation of these acts are viewed by various doctrines and religions as sacramental acts. For example, the modern Islamic suicide bomber is guaranteed a place in heaven.



Above: A recent danger that has arisen is the possibility of weapons of mass destruction falling into the hands of terrorist or millenarian groups. This danger was highlighted with the use of Sarin nerve agent by the Aum Shinrikyo attack on the Tokyo underground.

Left & far right: Protesters on the streets in Algeria, a country which has suffered greatly from religiously motivated terrorism in the recent past.

Right: The bombing of the US embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam graphically illustrate the vulnerability of even the strongest military powers to random acts of terror.

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, however, the nature and motivation of terrorist violence underwent significant change. During most of this century terrorism has tended to be ethno-nationalist or secular in nature, especially up to 1968.

There is a crucial difference between the secular and reli-



gious terrorist. Secular terrorists tend to choose their targets carefully and generally attempt to minimise casualties in order to avoid 'bad press'. At the opposite end of the spectrum acts of religious terrorism are less discerning. The more 'infidels' killed the greater the glory. 'Violence is a sacramental duty executed in response to some theological demand'.

In the latter half of the century, however, there has been a swing back to the religiously motivated terrorist. In 1968 there were eleven identified terrorist groups, eight left wing and three post-colonial, ethno-nationalist or separatist groups. In 1980 of sixty-four identified terrorist groups, two were religiously motivated. By 1992 the number of religious terror groups had increased to eleven and included various forms of extremism.

In the 1990s the number of ethno-nationalist groups declined. Newer nations who had joined the UN perceived the use of terrorism as an embarrassment. On the other hand the number of religious and fanatical groups increased. By 1994, sixteen of forty-nine identified terror groups could be classified as religious in character. In 1995, twenty-six of fifty-six identified terror groups (almost 50%) could be classified as religious.

Major terrorist attacks in the 1990s have been predominantly religious or fanatical in motivation. Examples include, the 1995 bombing of the Federal Building in Oklahoma City, USA, by the extreme Christian Patriots, which killed 168 people; the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Centre by Islamic militants; the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin by a lone Jewish extremist in November 1995; a Sarin gas attack in the Tokyo underground in March 1995, carried out by the apocalyptic Japanese Aum Shinrikyo cult; intermittent suicide bombings in Israel carried out by Hamas; GIA attacks in France in 1995 and 1996; mass indiscriminate killing of foreigners and journalists in Algeria; the killing of over 300 people in Russia in the August and September bombings of

1999.

From the above it can be seen that three distinctive types of threat are emerging for the next millennium:

- from individuals as exhibited in the Rabin attack and more recently in race and religiously motivated attacks by lone gunmen in the USA;
- from religious fundamentalist, racist, or millenarian groups;
- from extreme political groups, both left- and right-wing.

Furthermore, it can be argued that ethno-religious conflict has undermined the socio-economic fabric of many countries, leading to a greater vulnerability to the formation of new terrorist groups. Yusuf Bungara¹² argues that increased secularisation in the West has created feelings of anomie among large groups of people. He contends that there is an intrinsic link between economic marginalisation and social exclusion, leading to a search for 'spiritual upliftment'. He further contends that four different types of movements bring out the political significance of religion in most regions of the world. These include, culturalist, community-oriented, syncretistic and fundamentalist movements, all of which have the potential to draw ordinary individuals into the spiral of violence.

As the trends outlined above indicate, religious terrorism is now leading the field while secular terrorism is in decline. Violent acts are more random, indiscriminate, and less discerning. In 1998 all terrorist incidents that killed eight or more persons involved religious motivation. Shi'a Islamic terrorists in 1998 were responsible for only 8% of incidents but over 30% of resultant deaths.

As we approach the end of this millennium none of the major world religions have been immune from extremism and fundamentalist terror. In order to counter growing religious terrorism the sharing of information and co-operation on an international scale is necessary. This however is a short term fix and generally tends to be reactive rather than pro-active. More impor-

tantly, greater effort should be placed on reforming existing states and making them representative of diverse cultures and religions.

As part of this reform, conflict resolution and management strategies need to be evaluated and updated. Policies to tackle the promotion of stable ethnic relations need to be put in place. These, according to Bungara, should include proportionality and affirmative action, devolution of power, power-sharing arrangements, electoral schemes for balanced political representation, and public education and culture.

In essence, in the next millennium democratic, multicultural societies are necessary in order to minimise the rise of extremist terrorist groups. Moreover, international economic policies and programmes, UN-based or otherwise, must address socio-economic marginalisation in order to minimise the risk of ordinary people being drawn into extremist violence. If people do not find economic security, and indeed spiritual fulfilment, they will turn to the cults, the fundamentalists (Christian, Islamic or otherwise) or the extreme right in order to find identity. History holds too many warnings. ■

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TO THE WATERS AND THE WILD

Would any sane person volunteer to spend a week at the end of an Irish November splashing about in freezing, fast-flowing rivers, bone-chilling lakes, and icy Atlantic waves? No, of course not. Which would lead us to have some doubts about the sanity of the 14 students from around the Defence Forces who attended the All-Army Intermediate Kayak Course in the West last month. Here, to put the case for the defence is one of the students, who wishes, for obvious reasons, to remain anonymous...



A/Tel Brian Moyter on the Erriff River...and, yes, there is a kayak under there somewhere.

IT WAS a Monday morning and my first time in Custume Bks. A group of us sat quietly, lost in our own thoughts. What will it be like? How cold is the water in November? Am I good enough? Even though it wasn't freezing the ice had still to be broken amongst the students of the 3rd All-Army Intermediate Kayak Course. The opening address by Capt Rossa Coleman allayed our fears somewhat and we relaxed further after we were introduced to each other.

Our first day's activity was to be a paddle on the River Inney at Ballymahon, County Longford, fol-

lowed by a practise session on Eskimo rolling instruction and support strokes in Tuam Swimming Pool.

About an hour later we resembled a bunch of multi-coloured Michelin Men, dressed in our wet-suits, buoyancy aids, helmets, and ... the skirt-like things that I typically couldn't remember the name of.

We were told we would be learning 'break-in' and 'break-out' techniques, although to be honest I was more concerned about whether my kayak would 'break-up' or 'break-down'.

We embarked on our river trip at Newcastle Bridge all wondering how bad the rapids could be on the 2.5 mile stretch between there and Ballymahon. Scenes from the film 'Deliverance' plagued my private thoughts ... after all we were kayaking through the heart of the midlands wilderness.

Split into two group, we paddled towards the unknown. Each meander on the river teased us with further suspense and posed the burning question, "What lies around the next corner?"

Before long we hit our first rapid which everyone negotiated successfully. It gave us all a great

confidence boost and a thirst for more. We were warming up now and sharing the excitement offered by the river. Bob, our instructor, demonstrated break-in and break-out techniques using a combination of strokes we had learned on our basic courses. We tried to mimic him. That was fun with a hint of suspense, as every few minutes someone would do an 'ompaigh thart' through the horizontal plane. The result of these sporadic dunkings would be the 'dunkees' getting very wet and the rest of us cheering and joking at their misfortune. However, the instructors were 'on the ball'

Capt Rossa Coleman's white helmet can just be seen as he emerges from the bottom of the falls at the start of the Cascades in Ennistymon.

above: Lt Con Barber hopes that the cameraman is going to get out of his way!

Left: Cpl Séamus Kelly navigates the rapids on the Bun Dorcha River.

Cpl Brian Kearney picks his spot and goes for it on the Bun Dorcha.

whisking all victims to the safety of an eddy or the river bank.

The ensuing rapids were challenging and we loved it. Capsizing became more common and less traumatic. We were learning how to cross the flow without being swept downstream – a technique called 'ferry gliding'. On quiet sections we drifted side-by-side exchanging friendly banter and awaiting the next challenge.

Two-and-a-half hours from Newcastle Bridge we reached our point of egress in Ballymahon Village. We had completed our first river of the course and we were as happy as we were wet.

After a quick change of clothes it was back to Athlone for 'nosh' and then to Tuam Swimming Pool for our rolling session.

We were each paired off with somebody who could roll and practised this difficult self-rescue technique. As the session drew to a close some were successful while others packed away their determination for the next session on Tuesday night. At the end of a long day we headed for Dún Uí Mhaoliosa where we were guests of an Céad Cath.

The following morning we rose with slight muscle pains reminis-

cent of mornings following IT 2/96 (only joking, Sir). We were briefed by Capt Coleman that the day's activities would take us to the Lower Corrib River in Galway for the morning and out to Clifden in the afternoon. I think it was the first time that I saw disappointment on someone's face because it wasn't raining. Weird or what?

We travelled the short journey to NUIG Kayak Club House from where we embarked on the river. The Corrib is a larger river than the Inney and as such, seemed in more of a hurry to get to the sea.

We were comfortingly informed that only four of 16 flood gates were open at the Salmon Weir – I shuddered to think of how fast the river would be if all 16 were open. As it was, the river was a step up in difficulty from the previous day's escapades.

We navigated down the river practising and perfecting techniques which we had learned the previous day. There was more aggression and less capsizes, which boosted everyone's confidence levels.

We returned to barracks for lunch and then headed west into the scenic Connemara landscape and on to the village of Clifden.

We were told that we would be paddling on a salt water lake connected to the ocean by two arches under a road bridge. For a few days around the spring tides each month the water gushes through the tunnels forming a standing wave on one and a large stopper (a water obstacle which can grip a craft indefinitely) on the other.

The flow of water through the tunnels can only be described as frightening and fantastic. It provides for an excellent kayak playground.

We carried our crafts to the western side of the tunnels and shot through to the lake side. I now feel I have some appreciation for the way a round feels as it is propelled from the barrel of a rifle. New techniques were introduced here such as surfing standing waves and more complicated freestyle moves like 'enders' and 'flat spins'.

On the return to Galway we learned that the following day's activities would be determined by the rainfall that night and I finally realised the reason why canoeists pray for wet weather.

The night passed and the dawn brought a few hours of rain. Before we knew it we were in the

Transit again, heading westward towards the village of Leenaun and the Delphi Adventure Centre. Jaws dropped as the transport pulled up in full view of the spectacular Ashleigh Falls and the section of technical rapids downstream of it on the River Erriff.

I think most of us were rapidly developing an aversion to water when the instructors burst into laughter and explained that the real mission for the day was the Bun Dorcha river about five miles further along the road. Were we relieved?? The Bun Dorcha is a Grade II river with a short section of Grade III at the end before it flows into Killary Harbour.

It was indeed more challenging than the previous two rivers and as such was more fun. Rapid sections were more continuous and obstacles such as rocks and trees were more plentiful. Little did I realise three days before this that I could even attempt to negotiate such a river in a kayak.

The last section of the river was more difficult and required bank inspection, whereby you walk the bank to assess how you need to navigate the river. Here we were taught how to pick out a 'line' or a course to follow. This

was easier said than done, as demonstrated by Lt Fran Kehoe who skilfully picked out his line which his kayak then followed ... but unfortunately he didn't!

The instructors positioned bank rescue (personnel on the river bank) to help the unfortunate capsizers. The rescuers were armed with throw-bags as a rescue aid to those who were rendered craftless by large rocks or ambushed by unforgiving stoppers.

Shooting this section was exhilarating and gave us another great confidence boost and a major sense of achievement. The return journey to Galway was packed with tales of near misses and the odd hit, by the now somewhat experienced paddlers as we exchanged stories of our aquatic escapades.

After a quick dinner it was off to Tuam Pool for the second rolling session. Our efforts that night proved more fruitful with increasing numbers of successful Eskimo rolls.

The next morning was set aside for kayak surfing. Kayak surfing? In my mind this phrase initially conjured up an image of a surfer standing in a kayak as

Christy Moore polishes off 'fourteen pints of stout'. Could I have been more wrong? Well I was somewhat correct in that kayak surfing does indeed involve a kayak.

Lahinch beach in County Clare was the scene for our surfing and the waves were so big that we could have been in Hawaii, except of course for the continuous drizzle and the somewhat cooler water temperature.

Although far removed from the wild rivers of Connemara this new aspect of the sport was just as exciting. We had great fun riding the breakers for about two-and-a-half hours before stopping for lunch.

Unfortunately, our break gave the wind enough time to play with the waves. So much so, in fact, that it prevented an afternoon sortie. As buckets and spades were in short supply the only thing left to do was to leave the beach and head for nearby Ennistymon and the spectacular Cascades.

The Cascades is a 200m stretch of challenging rapids preceded by a 12ft waterfall. Not for the faint hearted, only seven of the group decided to attempt this series of obstacles. Thankfully all

were successful and even our seasoned instructors, who thought they had seen everything, were left open-mouthed when Cpl Pat Dease managed to negotiate most of the proverbial creek without his paddle. Well done Pat!

This dramatic decent brought the practical sessions of the course to a close. Friday was to be our day of briefs none of which in fact were very brief. Firstly we were briefed on the DFKA Safety Statement and then on the ICU (Irish Canoeing Union) Level 1 Instructors Course which we would undertake the following weekend. This was followed by a video of kayaking on the Zambezi River in Africa where the sport is taken to its ultimate extremes... er, maybe next year.

Our guest speaker was a Mr Hugh O'Donnell, of 'River Deep, Mountain High' in Galway. We were inspired by his in-depth knowledge of kayaking equipment and kayaks. None more so than Pte Kevin O'Riordan and the aforementioned Cpl Pat Dease who both purchased kayaks. I think Pat would have been better advised to have purchased a paddle or two. (Also in the area of equipment purchase, rumour

spread amongst the course that Cpl George Hannon is having a special kayak made for him by Harland & Wolfe.)

And so concluded the 3rd All-Army Intermediate Kayak Course. I only hope these few words are able to describe a fraction of the excitement, enjoyment and confidence we gained over that week in November. All going well 14 individuals, who became 14 friends, will become 14 kayak instructors by February 2000, and will continue to run courses throughout the Defence Forces for all who have a zest for water-based adventure sports.

The roll of honour of students and instructors was: 1 S Bde – Pte Carol O'Keeffe (4 Inf Bn), Cpl Séamus Kelly & Cpl Brian Kearney (3 Inf Bn); 2 E Bde – Gnr David McCabe & Gnr Andy Moran, (2 Fd Arty Regt), Cpl Pat Dease (5 Inf Bn); 4 W Bde – Capt Rossa Coleman (4 W Bde MP Coy), Lt Francis Kehoe (6 Inf Bn), Sgt Bob Lacey (Band W Bde), Cpl JJ Flanagan (4 Cav Sqn); Naval Service – A/Mech Philip Doyle; A/Sea Deirdre Doran, A/Tel Brian Motyer; Air Corps – Lt Conrad Barber, DFTC – Cpl George Hannon ■



*Behold the face of God
Now try to ignore him.*

If the idea of this man having the face of God makes you uncomfortable, join the club. If it's easier to pass him by than to stop and help him, then all you're guilty of is being human.

But if you think those feelings mean you're not suitable for life as one of our brothers, you're wrong.

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The Vocation Centre,
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Tel: 490 4621

ARW in East Timor

East Timor is part of a small island not too far off the coast of Australia. It shares the island with West Timor and since gaining independence from Portugal in 1974 it has been under the control of Indonesia. The East Timorese are predominantly Roman Catholic unlike the mainly Muslim, pro-Indonesian population of West Timor. Following a referendum in which the East Timorese voted overwhelmingly for independence from Indonesia a wave of violence was unleashed by pro-Indonesian militias in East Timor. In response to the devastation and bloodshed that followed the UN reacted by establishing a multi-national force to be sent to the island to restore the peace. A contingent from Ireland consisting of ARW personnel and support staff joined the mission in November 1999 and in this feature Capt John Whittaker (Staff Officer) reports on the initial phase of our involvement.

in security tasks and a 'hearts and minds' campaign along the border with Indonesian West Timor.

The ARW is ideally suited for such tasks as it is an experienced, robust unit which has refined its many SF (special forces) skills over the years at home and abroad. Personnel from the unit also have wide ranging overseas experience in theatres including Lebanon, Somalia, the Former Yugoslavia, and Iraq.

The International Force for East Timor (INTERFET), was established under UN Security Council Resolution 1264. It is a Chapter 7 (peace-enforcing) mission and is mandated to restore peace and security to East Timor; to protect and support the United Nations Mission in East Timor (UNAMET) in carrying out its

tasks; and to facilitate humanitarian assistance operations.

The Australian-led INTERFET includes troops from Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Canada, New Zealand, Ireland, Italy, Germany, Denmark, Norway, France, the United States, Great Britain, the Republic of Korea, the Philippines and Portugal.

The force is continuing to expand and may soon include contingents from Fiji, Egypt, Kenya, and Jordan. INTERFET has a considerable range of assets available and the force's total strength stands at 9,500. Within this is a strong air component, containing both fixed and rotary wings and a sizeable maritime capability.

The 1st Irish Component (1 IRCOM), commanded by Lt Col

Derry Fitzgerald, is made up of 40 all-ranks and is serving a four month tour. The unit is dispersed over a wide area from Darwin in Australia, to Dili, to Suai. The contingent office is run by the National Command Element, based in Dili and comprising Lt Col Fitzgerald as the Senior Irish Officer, Capt Johnny Whittaker (Staff Officer), Coy Sgt Alan Came, and Sgt Ben Lindsay. The National Support Element (NSE), based in Darwin, is commanded by Comdt Pat Phelan and has a staff of three, including COMS Stan Hurley, Sgt Gerry Campbell and Cpl Noel Luttrell. The NSE's function is to provide logistical and administrative support to the troops in the field.

Currently, INTERFET is in transition with the United Nations Temporary Administration East Timor (UNTAET), who are co-existing with the force in East Timor. The role of INTERFET is expected to be completed and handed over to UNTAET sometime in early 2000. Until that time 1 Irish Component will continue to play its part in helping to ensure that peace and security are maintained in East Timor and that these gentle people can begin to look forward to their future with hope. ■

EAST TIMOR AT A GLANCE

Area	14,809 sq km.
Capital	Dili
Population	884,636 (1998) (9.5% is urban)
Literacy	46%
Language	Tetum, Indonesian and Portuguese
GDP	< \$150 million (1998) Approximately \$168 per capita, which is the sixth lowest in the world.
Industries	Handicrafts, woven cloth and cement
Agriculture	Coffee, coconuts and cinnamon



The Central and Regional Fisheries Boards would like to take this opportunity to wish members of The Naval Service and The Air Corps a Happy Christmas and prosperous New Year.

Any service person, family or friends with an interest in angling (game, coarse or sea) can contact the Central Fisheries Board Angling Information Service at 01-8379206, Fax - 01 8360060 or email: info@cfb.ie

Central Fisheries Board, An Priomh-Bhord Iascaigh
Mobhi Boreen, Glasnevin, Dublin 9.

Manning a road-block



1 Tpt Coy have been in Kosovo for four months now and in this feature Capt John Prendergast & Sgt Paul Byrne give us a taste of what life has been like for the personnel of the Unit.

'The Movers'

ON Sunday 29th of August, 1999, 1 Transport Company (KFOR) left Ireland for Kosovo. We landed in Thessaloniki, Greece, at 2330hrs and spent our first night in a Greek Army barracks. After a restless night we proceeded to the docks to organise the transport for the long haul to Lipljan, Kosovo, which was going to be our home for the next six months.

After an uneventful journey we arrived in Camp Clarke early on Tuesday morning to be greeted by the engineer group and our advance party, elements of which had been in-theatre since August 6th.

The Company consists of five officers, 36 NCOs, and 62 privates, drawn from S&T, artillery, signals, ordnance, cavalry, medical, engineers, infantry and Air Corps. The personnel involved have extensive overseas service, with all but three having previous experience abroad. Ten members of the company had also served in the previous deployment of a transport company to Somalia.

This mission has proved, however, to be different to anything any of us had experienced before. For the majority of us it was the first time to work on a non-UN mission. It has also proved interesting and challenging to be involved in a mission from its inception. The day-to-day teething problems of a new mission have provided interesting tests for all of us.

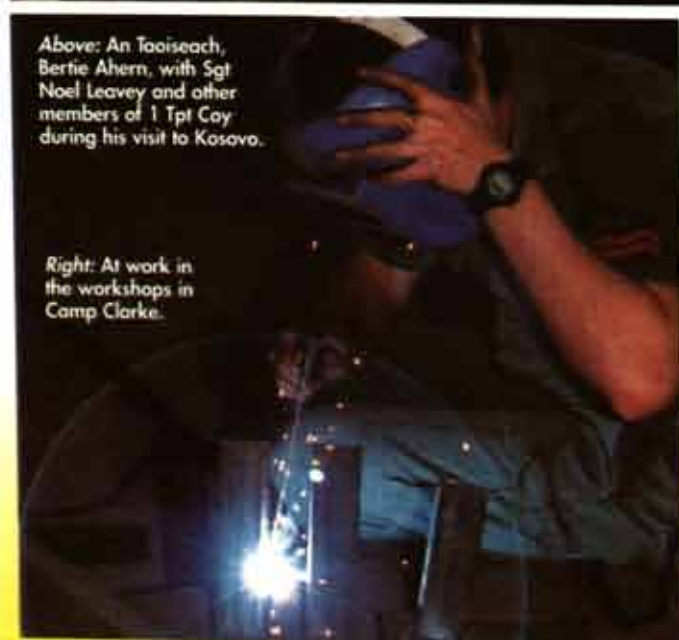
The Unit is under the operational control of HQ KFOR Main (Pristina) and our mission is to provide on order equipment and material lift to military units and humanitarian organisations to enable them to support their operations.

Since our arrival in-theatre the unit has been involved in a variety of tasks which have changed as the mission has evolved.

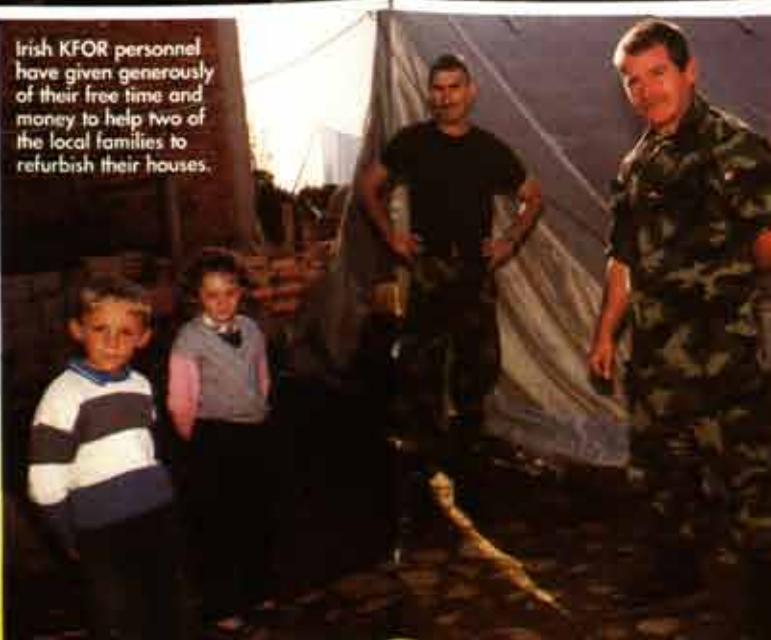


Above: An Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern, with Sgt Noel Leavey and other members of 1 Tpt Coy during his visit to Kosovo.

Right: At work in the workshops in Camp Clarke.



Irish KFOR personnel have given generously of their free time and money to help two of the local families to refurbish their houses.



For the months of September and October we were heavily involved in the rotation of KFOR units through the port of Thessaloniki in northern Greece. This involved travelling through three sovereign territories and crossing two international borders. Coupled with this was the fact that convoys are not allowed travel through Greece in daylight hours. These convoys provided good experience for all ranks in the role of heavy logistical support. They were particularly beneficial in enhancing the leadership skills of our NCOs who were heavily involved in the planning and conduct of these convoys.

As the mission developed so our tasking changed. The railway facilities were improved by KFOR and this led to the Unit being involved in the transportation of military equipment from the railhead in Pristina to various sites throughout Kosovo. To date we have assisted in the rotation of Italian, British, Swedish, and Norwegian material. These tasks have involved Irish soldiers staying overnight in the camps of the various nationalities and it is only after seeing their living conditions that we realised how good our facilities are.

The Company has also been involved in a variety of other military tasks ranging from the transportation of bridging equipment to repair bomb-damaged bridges to the collection and distribution of uniforms for the newly formed Kosovo Protection Corps.

As well as military tasks the Unit has also been involved in the distribution of humanitarian aid. One of UNMIK's (United Nations Mission in Kosovo) main priorities was the provision of shelter kits for those families whose houses had been destroyed during the conflict. For a number of weeks now we have been involved in the transportation of these kits from Pristina to the Pec area – an area which was particularly devastated during the war.

Other humanitarian convoys have involved the distribution of firewood to Serb and Albanian villages. We have also been involved in distributing aid from the 'Train for Life', a trainload of school equipment collected by British families in Germany.

One of the more chilling tasks we have carried out so far is the transportation of a mobile mortu-

ary for the International War Crimes Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY). This involved the transportation of bodies from mass-grave sites to proper graveyards.

We have also been involved in other tasks apart from the ones we receive from HQ. One mission of mercy came from inside our own camp. One of the local workers now employed in our camp had fled his home during the war, together with his brother and their families. On returning they found their homes had been severely damaged by fire. The personnel



Maintaining the peace.

of 1 Tpt Coy took it upon themselves to try and help these unfortunate families.

Since starting this project the unit has received generous donations from unit members' families and friends. The funding has been used to put a new roof on one house and a new floor in the other one and to replace all the windows and doors.

On November 4th we were visited by An Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern TD, who was accompanied by the Chief of Staff, Lt Gen Dave Stapleton. During his time with us the Taoiseach visited the troops at work while they were transporting building materials for UNHCR and helping ICTY with the exhumation of mass graves. He then paid a visit to Camp Clarke where he met the majority of the Company.

Later that day the Taoiseach attended various meetings with COM KFOR (Commander,

KFOR), UNMIK officials and representatives of the Albanian and Serb communities. That evening he returned to Camp Clarke for a dinner held in his honour. The visit was a great success and was much appreciated by all the members of the Company.

Other visitors to the camp have included Mr Pat Cox MEP and a Liberal delegation from the European Parliament. COM KFOR has recently paid us a visit and we have also had visits from Irish people working with UNMIK, OSCE and various other aid agencies.

With the weather now changing for the worse, things are becoming more interesting for us. Temperatures are slightly above freezing during daylight hours but at night they have dropped to as low as -10°C. This change in weather has had an adverse effect on driving conditions and has led to a need for even greater vigilance on the roads of Kosovo.

Even though our workload is heavy we do have some leisure time. The leave period has now started and many of our personnel have opted to spend it at home while others are going to places like Cyprus, Malta, Greece, Austria, and Italy. Sport features largely in our leisure time and highlights included a KFOR version of the rugby world cup. Teams from England, Wales, Scotland, USA, Fiji, France, and Ireland, all competed for KFOR's World Cup trophy with the American team emerging as victors.

On the soccer front, a small number of the Company were able to attend the Ireland versus Macedonia game in Skopje. We have also had a number of competitive soccer matches against teams from the Royal Irish Regiment and the Irish Guards, as well as a local selection.

To date this mission has proved to be of great benefit for all members of 1 Transport Company. We have worked with armies from most of the major military nations and we have seen that we can hold our own with the best of them. It also appears that this type of mission will be the blueprint for peacekeeping missions of the future and if that is the case then important lessons have been learnt which can only benefit our involvement in future missions.

AIR MOBILE AND ARMoured

By Paul McMahon

SINCE the end of the Cold War the security climate of the world has become very unsettled. The threat of a major confrontation between the eastern and western blocs has receded somewhat only to be replaced by bitter inter-ethnic regional conflicts. With these simmering disputes threatening to boil over, the UN has begun to formulate a policy of rapid intervention using forces made available to it by its members. In order for this policy to work a rapid reaction force would have to be placed into the area of operations (AO) quickly, with the equipment to deter aggression and protect the troops of the force.

Many of these hot spots often have poor infrastructure, such as narrow roads and light bridges which would be unsuitable for heavy vehicles such as main battle tanks (MBTs). In light of this, a force equipped with a family of standardised light armoured vehicles (LAVs) which benefit from strategic mobility through rapid air transport could play a very important part in giving substance to the UN policy.

Alvis Vehicles of Telford (UK) are one of the world's leading LAV producers, with over 14,000 vehicles sold to 40 different countries. These vehicles have seen reliable service in terrain varying from bogs and rice fields to desert and snow.

One of Alvis Vehicles' most successful products has

been the Scorpion CVR(T) range. Initially designed to equip the British Army's reconnaissance squadrons, the Scorpion light tank and Scimitar reconnaissance vehicle evolved into a family that could serve as specialised APC, command, ambulance, recovery and anti-tank platforms. The original 76mm-armed Scorpion has been superseded for export by the Scorpion 90 light tank. This vehicle is armed with the lethal 90mm Mk III Cockerill gun in an electric powered turret. Equipped with a combined day/night sight, laser range finder and carrying 34 rounds of main weapon ammunition, the Scorpion 90 can play a full part in reconnaissance, fire support, escort, armour in advance/withdrawal, and internal security duties. The Scorpion's aluminium armour gives its crew protection from HMG fire, mines and shell splinters whilst allowing the vehicle to be transported by medium/heavy-lift helicopters. For existing Scorpion users an upgrade package is available to Scorpion 90 standard allowing them to extend the effective service life of the vehicle.

Continued design work has seen the Scorpion CVR(T) family evolve into the Stormer multi-role combat vehicle range. These vehicles are bigger and

Below:
The Scarab, a wheeled, armoured, scout vehicle.

Right:
The Starstreak Stormer air defence vehicle.



electric powered turret can traverse through 360° and elevate the main weapon from -10°/+60°. As an option two single TOW anti-tank missile launchers can be mounted either side of the turret thereby allowing the Stormer to pose a

more capable than their predecessors whilst still retaining their ability to be airlifted by CH53 Chinook-type helicopters. The new vehicle range consists of the Stormer 30 reconnaissance/light tank, APC, air defence, command, ambulance, recovery, mine layer and bridging systems.

The Stormer 30 is a three-man light tank/armoured reconnaissance vehicle protected by spaced steel armour over an aluminium hull designed to resist 14.5mm Soviet HMG fire and artillery shell splinters. The fully stabilised HITFIST turret is armed with a double belt feed 30mm

Bushmaster II auto cannon with 180 rounds ready to fire and a co-axial 7.62mm GPMG with 700 rounds ready to use. The

sure of 0.42 kg/cm² carries a crew of three plus a nine-man section. The vehicle can wade up to 1.1m and is fully amphibious, with preparation, travelling at 5kph using its tracks for propulsion. Armoured to resist heavy machine gun fire, the Stormer is still light enough to allow two to be transported by C-130 Hercules, or slung beneath a CH-47 Chinook helicopter. When travelling by road at an average 60kph it has a range of over 400 miles. This vehicle is in service with the armed forces of Malaysia, Indonesia and Oman.

In 1986 the British Army selected the Stormer as the vehicle upon which to mount its Starstreak high-velocity missile system. Its primary function is to protect the armoured regiments of the British Army against attack helicopters and low flying aircraft. The remote turret carries eight ready-to-launch missiles which have a range of 7km and an estimated speed of Mach 4.

The turret contains the air defence alerting device consisting of an infra-red scanner and processor that allow target detection and prioritisation for interception. The warhead consists of three heavy darts that become armed once the missile motor burns out. These are then individually guided in a triangular formation around the guidance beam to the target whereupon they impact with lethal force. The vehicle, with a crew of three, also has room for an additional twelve reloads, which are manually reloaded when required.

serious threat to heavy armour. These can also be independently elevated through -7.5°/+30°. The vehicle commander views his surroundings through six episcopes which are provided with a switch for gun/episcopes alignment or an optional panoramic sight.

A wide range of turrets armed with machine guns up to 90mm cannons can be easily fitted to the Stormer allowing great role flexibility.

The APC version, which has a combat weight of 12,700kgs, a power-to-weight ratio of 19.68bhp/tonne and a ground pres-

STORMER 30

Crew	3
Dimensions	Length 5.251m
	Width 2.69m
	Height 2.495m
Weight	(depends on variant, eg APC variant 12,700kg)
Speed	Forward 80km/h
	Reverse 80km/h
Range	Mixed terrain 400km
Defence	Aluminium hull
Spaced steel armour	
Armament	1 x 30mm Bushmaster II
	1 x 7.62mm co-axial machine gun
	1 x 8 smoke grenade launcher

Alvis have not forgotten the important role that wheeled vehicles have to play in today's climate. Traditionally, wheeled vehicles have suffered from reduced armour protection and mobility compared to tracked vehicles. With the Scarab (a fast armoured scout vehicle) Alvis have addressed these limiting problems to produce a vehicle that enjoys very high mobility and armoured protection. The Scarab is a highly mobile scout/weapon carrier based on the excellent Unimog chassis and Mercedes-Benz 6-cylinder diesel engine. Designed from the outset to offer superb protection in its class the vehicle's armoured shell can resist 12.7mm AP all round. With additional levels of protection, which allow the vehicle to have a weight range between six and 12

tonnes, medium calibre cannon rounds and RPG-7 type munitions can be resisted over the frontal arc.

The hull is designed to protect the crew from TMRP-6 anti-tank mines and all lesser type self-forging fragment (SFF) mines. The three-man crew operate the air conditioned vehicle which can be armed with anything from a single machine gun up to high-powered autocannons, which had previously been unavailable to light vehicles. The vehicle has a number of armoured glass windows allowing the driver and crew to have good visibility in mobile and dangerous situations. With a top speed of 110kph and a range of 800km on road (560km off-road) long range patrolling in a very capable vehicle allows the user maintain a presence in far flung corners of any area of operations.

As can be seen from the Alvis range a varied fleet of vehicles exists which are able to provide strategic mobility as well as tactical effectiveness to any force willing to serve the United Nations as a 'fire brigade', allowing quick reaction and deployment to hot zones to try and minimise the outbreak and spread of hostilities in which the civilian is always the first casualty. ■

The Stormer 30 Light Tank/Armoured Recon Vehicle. All photos: Alvis Ltd



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FOREST SHIELD

By Capt Ken McManus, 'E' Coy, 7 Inf Bn



Above: Friendly forces patrol the streets of Kells. Photos: Capt Paul Lynch.

Right: Red Force check out the area ahead before advancing.

Below: 'It's been a hard day's night'



Blue Force's 1 Bde was making for a counter-attack against the invading force.

A platoon from Blue Force under the command of 2/Lt Brady was dispatched to locate and destroy the Red Force platoon (under the command of 2/Lt Farrell, 'D' Coy, and subsequently



2/Lt Keogh, 'B' Coy) that was operating behind friendly lines. In the early stages of the exercise Red Force platoon's position was compromised and they moved to an alternative location on Church Island, Lough Sheelin, a distance of 30 miles from their initial position.

Meanwhile, Blue Force platoon established a base camp and commenced aggressive patrolling at Girley Wood/Clonagh Bog. After midnight and a changeover of platoon commanders, information received indicated that the enemy had vacated their initial position. Their new position was known and Blue Force was given orders to move immediately into position to ambush the enemy at dawn when they were expected to leave the island to RV with their transport.

The ambush was the highlight of 'Forest Shield' and troops worn out from constant patrolling and base camp operations found their 'second wind' and gave it everything they had.

On return to Kells both forces were debriefed separately before DS Capt Hugh Coyle and Lt Ray Flood gave an excellent general debrief to everyone together.

Both groups, of course, were claiming victory but as Comd Peter Burns (OC 7 Inf Bn) com-

A 30-hour exercise designated 'Forest Shield' took place over the weekend of 16th/17th October in County Meath. The exercise, organised by 'E' Coy, 7 Inf Bn FCA, based in Kells, comprised 120 personnel, drawn from all companies of 7 Inf Bn with elements from 2 Fd Med Coy, 2 Fd MP Coy, 11 Fd S&T Coy, and 11 Fd Sigs Coy, in support.

The purpose of the exercise was to practice officers and NCOs in the issue and receipt of orders; command and control; and the employment of appropriate tactics in dealing with changing situations in unfamiliar terrain.

Throughout the exercise troops were practised in navigation, communications and signals, base camp and patrolling skills, as well as ambush and anti-ambush drills. There was also amphibious landings included for some of those involved.

On arrival at HQ 'E' Coy on Saturday morning the troops were divided into Blue Force (friendly) and Red Force (enemy) and briefed on the exercise requirements. Each group consisted of a full infantry platoon with attachments, a company HQ, and its own dedicated exercise security element. An officer DS (directing staff) was also assigned to each group. Red Force had an additional element, namely the Special Boat Group, under the command of Sgt Enda Murray, 'E' Coy.

Comdt Eamonn Mooney (Coy Comd, 'E' Coy) and myself (Coy 2/c) took on the roles of company commanders of Red Force and Blue Force respectively. Each of us had our own separate HQ, ops room, and a shared comms centre manned by personnel from 11 Fd Sigs Coy and 7 Inf Bn. Assistance in setting up the unique comms network was generously given by Ronnie McGrane (a former private in 7 Inf Bn).

The general situation for the exercise was that Red Force was invading from the north and was moving south towards Dundalk and Cavan. Blue Force's 2 Bde was deployed in a defensive line stretching from Cavan Town to Clogherhead. Red Force elements had penetrated the defensive line near Ballieborough, however, and were active near Girley, outside Kells. The enemy infiltrators were monitoring Blue Force troop movements and radio traffic, and were generally disrupting the preparations that

mented during his closing address: 'Anyone who took part in this exercise is a winner!'

The most satisfying feature was the professional and dedicated manner in which the other corps personnel and the infantry worked together to achieve their respective missions.

A special word of thanks must go to the PDF cadre staff, HQ 7 Inf Bn, and HQ 'E' Coy, for their valuable input, as well as the corps units and company commanders for their support.

SHELLS

past and present

BY MICHAEL O'REILLY

THE collecting of inert military cartridges can be historically, geographically and technically a most rewarding hobby.

Broadly speaking there are five main categories in the subject, rounds for pistols, rifles, heavy machine guns (HMG), cannons and artillery. Although this article concentrates mostly on aircraft cannon shells some HMG rounds are also included. It is generally accepted that the term cannon is applied to guns which have calibres between 15mm and 30mm.

The cannon shells and HMG rounds used during the Second World War by the Luftwaffe's Messerschmitt Bf109 and Focke-Wulf Fw190 fighters are quite a fascinating study in their own right. The cartridge cases, projectiles and fuses when fitted were each stamped with their manufacturer's codes as quite often they were made in separate factories. Up to 1940 these codes consisted of numerals occasionally on their own, but in the majority of cases the letter 'P' was included as a prefix. However, during 1940 these codes were changed to letters. If a collector has access to an ordnance code list he can thus trace quite a lot of the factory locations both in Germany and the occupied countries. The following illustrates two examples of these codes in the numerals and letter versions respectively: P 346 = H. Huck Metallwarenfabrik, Nuremberg; eeo = Deutsche Waffen- u. Munitionsfabriken (DMW) AG, Posen.

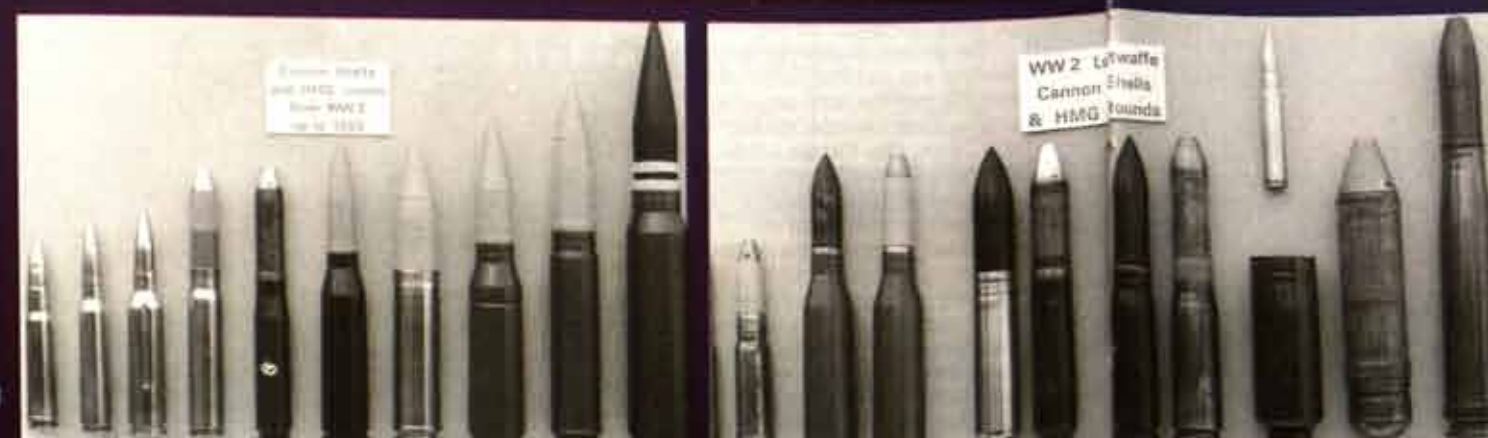
Placenames from the period.

Main pic:

This article deals with many of the more common aircraft cannon shells employed from the Second World War to today. A popular calibre over the years has been 30mm and is still in widespread use. These Mirage 2000Cs of the French Air Force are armed with 30mm canons. Photo: French Ministry of Defence

Bottom Left: A selection of cannon shells and HMG rounds from WW2 to the present.

Bottom Right: Some of the cannon shells and HMG rounds used by the Germans during the war.



might now be spelt differently or may have changed completely. For example the Polish town of Posen, mentioned above, is now known as Poznan. This gives the enthusiast a further challenge in pinpointing the locations on an atlas, and can certainly enrich your knowledge of geography.

Original World War Two Luftwaffe cannon shells have now become quite rare and also are seldom seen featured in published photographs. Hence the accompanying previously unpublished photograph of these original shells should be of interest to students of the Luftwaffe. A standard 7.92mm Mauser rifle cartridge is also included to give a sense of scale.

All of the shells featured here have steel cases except the 20mm MG/FF AP which has a brass case. Shells with identical cases are arranged in pairs with their respective armour piercing (AP) and high-explosive incendiary (HEI) projectiles. The incomplete rounds are the cases from a 30mm Mk 108 and the projectile from a 30mm Mk 103.

The 15mm AP was regarded as a formidable round in its day. Its tungsten carbide core was capable of penetrating 38mm of steel armour at 200m. An interesting point concerning the 13mm and 15mm cartridge cases is that whilst earlier batches had conventional percussion primers the vast majority were fitted with electric primers.

The 'odd one out' in the photograph is the 20mm Solothurn flak shell. These were fired from the famous multi-barrelled Flak 38 guns which were manned by the Luftschutz (air defence) gunners throughout the war. Self-destruct (SD) versions of these shells were used in built-up areas and were designed to blow themselves up before returning to earth in the event of not hitting a target. This was achieved by either allowing the tracer or a separate incendiary increment to burn through in the main HE chamber.

Now onto the miscellany of cartridges depicted in the second photograph. The following are just a few observations of these rounds and their associated armaments.

The .55" Boys anti-tank round

has a belted brass case and is derived from a Big Game hunting cartridge. The projectile is a solid shot with no explosive filling. Captain Boys designed the gun in the mid-1930s and it was the only anti-tank rifle in service with the British Army at the time. Five rounds were held in an overhead box magazine. The weapon utilised a simple bolt mechanism and although fitted with a recoil absorbing device still gave its firers a hefty 'kick'.

The Boys saw some service in armoured cars and Bren Gun carriers but due to its projectile's lack of penetrating power in the improved armour being fitted in the early years of the war it was superseded by the PIAT projector during 1942.

The 12.7mm Soviet cartridge which exists in AP and HEI forms was developed in the USSR in 1938 for the DShK M-38 HMG. Still widely in use this cartridge has a heavier bullet than its equivalent .5" Browning, thereby giving it a slightly better performance.

The 14.5mm cartridge was used in Soviet anti-tank rifles during the Second World War. Available in AP and HEI the round is still widely in use today. During the Vietnam War the twin-barrelled ZPU-2 AA guns firing these rounds accounted for a high proportion of downed US warplanes.

The famous 20mm Hispano Suiza cannon is synonymous with the Spitfire, Hurricane, and Typhoon fighter aircraft. Post-war these guns armed the DeHavilland Vampires and Gloster Meteors. The Hispano cartridge comes in AP, HEI and SAP-HEI (semi-armour piercing high-explosive incendiary). The round in the photograph is the nose-fused HEI version.

The SAP-HEI round has no actual fuse. Instead a hardened steel nose piece is screwed into the body. On impact the base of the nose piece crushes the detonator which lies below it, thereby exploding the HEI filling. It was designed to penetrate and set alight armoured fuel tanks.

The ubiquitous 20mm Oerlikon long-case shell was used for air defence by both the Allies and Germans during the war and the weapon is still in

service. The shell shown here is an original German steel-cased HEI version manufactured during the war. The one beside it is a 20mm Oerlikon KAA, a steel-cased modern light anti-aircraft round.

The ancestry of the 30mm Aden gun goes back to the German World War Two 30mm Mauser MG 213a revolver cannon, of which it is basically a modified copy. The 30mm Aden armed the 1950's vintage Supermarine Swifts, Hawker Hunters, and the earlier Hawker Harriers. The name Aden an acronym for Armament Development Enfield.

The gun's cartridge case is belted, made of brass and electrically primed. The French DEFA round, as used in the Mirage Mk1, is quite similar but has an alloy case.

The 25mm Aden cannon has the same external dimensions as its 30mm namesake but fires the steel-cased 25mm Oerlikon KBA round. The Hawker Harrier GR5 has two detachable fuselage pods each containing one of these cannons with 100 rounds.

The 27mm Mauser BK27 gun is also based on the wartime MG 213a cannon. The Tornado IDS version is fitted with two fuselage-mounted BK27s, each with 180 rounds. The belted, steel-cased cartridges are electrically primed and come in seven different types.

The seven-barrelled 30mm GAU-8 Avenger cannon is fitted to USAF A-10 Thunderbolt ground-attack aircraft. The gun is fed from a drum containing up to 1,350 rounds of alloy-cased, electrically-primed ammunition. The cartridge cases measure 173mm in length, 3mm longer than the Rarden cases, and are nicknamed 'milk bottle rounds' due to their size.

Some other significant rounds not pictured here would include the 20mm Vulcan (used by RAF Phantoms), the rarer Second World War-vintage 20mm Danish Madsen, and the Soviet 20mm ShVAK and 23mm Yva types.

Hopefully, this short treatise on cannon shells will give some insight into how this particular realm of ordnance holds such an attraction for those who study and collect them.

The War Goes On

Regular contributor to *An Cosantóir*, Comdt Brendan O'Shea, is currently serving as an observer with UNTSO along the Lebanon/Israeli border. Following on from previous articles he has written on the situation in South Lebanon, he recently sent us his assessment of the current state of affairs.

TWO years ago I wrote in *An Cosantóir* that a simple truth prevailed in South Lebanon. I stated that in my view the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) were well and truly 'bogged down' in what amounted to a military quagmire, and that there was neither the remotest prospect of a political solution in sight nor any potential for an immediate IDF military disengagement.

I drew attention to the fact that on December 1st of that year Lebanon's war of attrition had continued unrelentingly with the detonation of yet another roadside bomb (RSB), which on that occasion immobilised an IDF Merkava main battle tank near At Tiri village. Later that same evening a Hezbollah rocket attack fell well short of its target and demolished part of a schoolhouse in the Christian village of Ein Ibil deep in what for well nigh twenty years we have called the Israeli Controlled Area, or in UN parlance, 'the ICA'. I also wrote that a few days previously an Amal operation had gone horribly wrong when a number of 120mm mortars were fired into this same area but again fell short of target and landed in the village of Beit Leif killing eight innocent civilians.

In the parallel world of Lebanese politics I noted that the then Prime Minister Rafik Hariri had refused to guarantee any security along the border with Israel if the IDF withdrew because he claimed that 'only God could guarantee security', and at the Conference of Islamic States in Tehran Lebanese President Hrawi was uncompromising in his insistence that while occupation of Israel did not amount to terrorism, surrendering to occupation was in his view treason. On the Israeli side of the

fence Israeli Government spokesman Uri Lubrani remained adamant in his belief that a unilateral IDF withdrawal from Lebanon would only be a recipe for disaster which might in the longer term lead the IDF to re-enter Lebanon 'with divisions and brigades and policies of burned earth'. It was all depressingly familiar stuff – existential politics at its worst – coming from nowhere, going nowhere and achieving absolutely nothing, and not the remotest prospect of an end to the conflict in sight.

The human cost of occupying South Lebanon has of course been very high for Israel and up to that point in 1997 I recorded the grim statistics of 219 IDF fatalities and 694 wounded since 1985. Israel was damned for remaining in Lebanon but would most certainly be equally damned if she left. The only certainty I could predict was that in the coming months many further Israelis and Lebanese would spill their blood on battlefields already saturated. Unfortunately we now know that this particular prophecy has indeed come to pass.

Two years later, and wearing another blue beret, I am again in the midst of these same killing fields and have seen for myself those stray Amal shells exploded in Beit Leif, a tiny Muslim village which hangs precariously to the northern slope of a deep wadi (valley) fully exposed to anyone who might decide to shell it. In a

Another Hezbollah poster in Haddafieh village glorifies the armed resistance against Israel.

secluded courtyard just off the narrow rutted winding main street I found a woman who lost her husband that fateful evening, and aged now well beyond her years the futility of the conflict was written clearly in the deep lines which creased her weather-beaten face. Rearing her young family was always a struggle in this part of the world. Now, dependent on the modest contributions her older children send from Beirut and abroad, survival has become her only priority. As I left her sitting on the ground outside her spartan but spotless home, harvesting a meagre

pile of olives which during the winter would be sold for a few inflated Lebanese pounds, I marvelled at her resilience in the face of chronic adversity.

Life is difficult in Beit Leif. The water runs intermittently, electricity is unpredictable, unemployment is almost universal, and the nearby presence of several IDF and South Lebanese Army (SLA) positions ensures this sleepy village will remain a target for as long as the conflict continues.

And it is clear this dogged struggle still has some significant distance

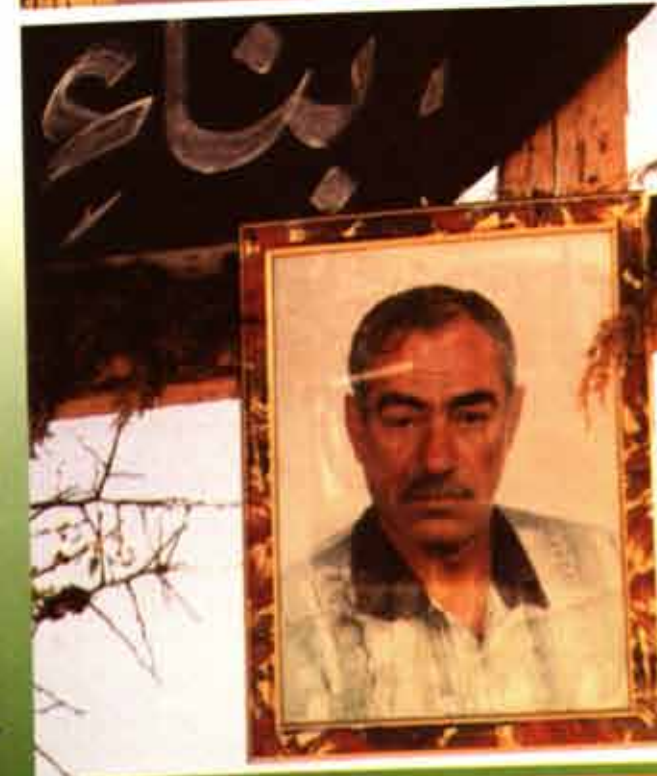
to run. When my Danish colleague, Major Robin Rahbek, went to meet the village Muchtar a noisy crowd gathered round to witness what was happening. They ranged in age from eight to eighty and though they bore the UNMO team no ill their eyes revealed the full spectrum of emotion in the ICA today – anger, apathy, excitement, resentment, even commitment to their cause, – but overwhelmingly they revealed a stoic acceptance of their current lot and the fact that this is very likely to remain their only lot for a considerable time to come. Beit Leif remains

Right: Sheikh Nasrallah the spiritual leader of Hezbollah, whose picture proliferates in villages in Southern Lebanon.

Bottom right: A photo of Fawzi al-Zaghire hangs outside the gate of his house in Bint Jbeil after his death. All photos: Author

a village on the front line, a village trapped in a war its people did not seek but from which they now have no escape. There is no respite for any of them because tomorrow may bring another hail of death hurtling from the sky or the detonation of another RSB along its pock-marked broken roads. The only consolation – if one could call it so – is that several other places in the ICA also suffer the same fate on a daily basis, and in some instances the level of violence is appreciably worse.

A case in point is the village of Beit Yahun where further chapters of atrocity were written on 27 September when Fawzi al-Zaghire, the 51 year-old senior SLA figure who commanded the crossing point into 'Free Lebanon', was badly injured by an RSB which detonated beside his car and then executed in the ensuing ambush. Also taking the life of his bodyguard, and wounding two others, the attack signalled a major triumph for Hezbollah as al-Zaghire had previously been badly wounded on several occasions but always managed to survive. His demise also signalled the commencement of a sustained co-ordinated Hezbollah attack on the crossing point, which resulted in sev-



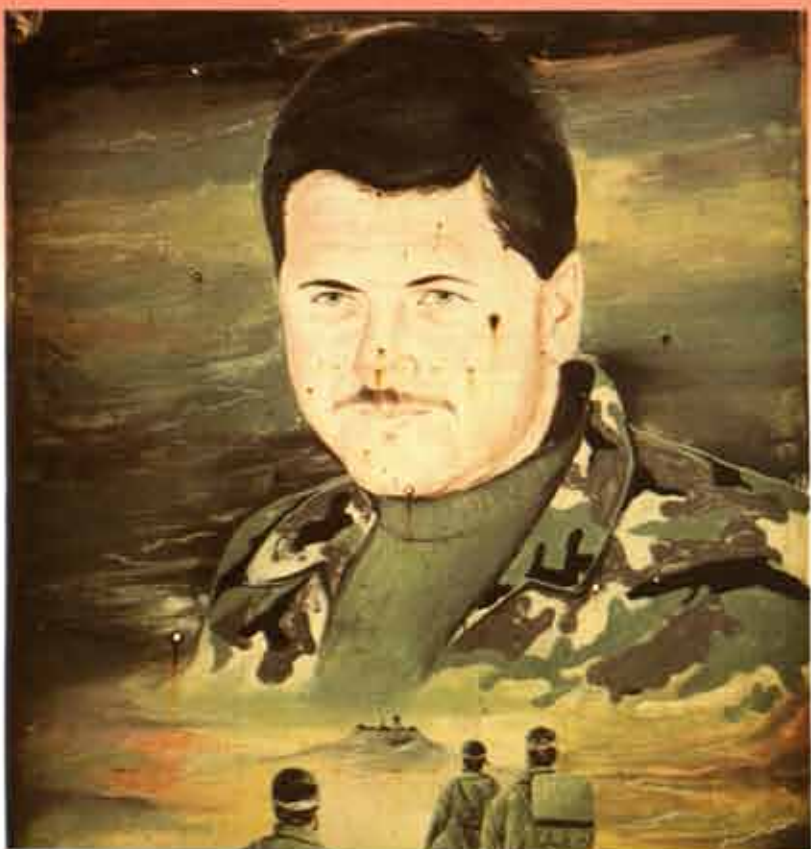
anal firings close to the nearby Irish position, affectionately known to peacekeepers down the years as the 'the Black Hole'.

Not for the first time UN troops were caught in the middle of a cross-fire and Hezbollah's 'Manar TV' later claimed the attacks had successfully destroyed a Sherman tank and several M113 APCs for the loss of one of its fighters. This was most probably correct given the scale of the IDF artillery retaliation which rained down in the aftermath. The various UNMO teams who observed and reported on the day's proceedings were all well aware that this has for the most part become the daily pattern of life in South Lebanon. Life is cheap in this dogfight. It is only those families, Israeli and Lebanese, left with no option other than to endure and survive the death of parents and children who can quantify the real indelible cost of it all.

But this has never been a one-sided war and to pretend otherwise would be disingenuous. IDF Chief of Staff Lt Gen Shaul Mofaz may well believe that his forces are winning the war against Hezbollah, and while he is openly on record to that effect¹, most independent commentators would disagree with his assessment. Certainly the modus operandi of the IDF is more sophisticated in terms of equipment but the essential elements of their combat operations remain no different to those of their adversaries. Take for example the following extract from 'Foreign Report' in relation to the recent killing of Ali Salama, a senior Hezbollah commander...

According to security sources in Israel, commandos planted the explosives in Salama's car the night before they were detonated by a signal from a remotely controlled, pilotless mini-aircraft. Lebanese sources indicate that the Israelis have built more radar stations monitoring south Lebanon and are using more high technology in a conflict that experience has shown they can never win. They have several uses. Among them: detection of Hezbollah drones by ultra-violet radiation; detection of guerrilla movements by thermal radiation; and jamming Hezbollah's electronics. Another new weapon is the hot-air balloon capable of carrying

surveillance equipment, such as high-tech cameras, which back up reconnaissance of problematic areas and go deeper into Lebanese territory. Israel has deployed these balloons near the border village of Remiya and on the slopes of Mount Hermon².



A mural on the roadside between Tibnine and Haddathah celebrates another Hezbollah martyr.

All of this invariably leads of course to the inevitable critical question of whether new Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak can actually deliver on his election promise to withdraw the IDF from Lebanon by July 1st 2000³ and whether the new millennium will herald a new beginning in this part of the world. The 'smart money' suggests that he will unquestionably try because he has built his political career squarely on this key issue. However, his stated objective is to achieve this 'within the context of an agreement with Syria' and in that scenario the odds are stacked against him with several seemingly insurmountable obstacles still to overcome⁴.

The issue of the Golan Heights is not resolved. President Assad of Syria is critically unwell and the suc-

cession of his son Bashir is by no means guaranteed. In the event of a power struggle in Syria, Hezbollah in Lebanon may well cut loose and/or left to their own devices, a state of affairs which would clearly make it impossible for the IDF to withdraw to the international border (ADL of

phenomenon of precision ethnic cleansing, with refugee columns pouring in all directions.

No, it's not all over yet in Southern Lebanon where for 21 years the absence of meaningful political dialogue has necessitated the permanent establishment of a UN interim force and the expansion of an unarmed military observer mission which has itself been in place for over half a century. Progress to the time of writing in late 1999 has been painfully slow and a final solution is certainly not immediately to hand. With Sheikh Naim Kaouk, Hezbollah's political leader in the south, claiming that all diplomatic attempts to halt the hostilities were doomed, and that Hezbollah 'will not accept anything less than the total defeat of the enemy and all its collaborators',¹³ the road ahead in the coming months will prove tortuously difficult. With the advent of a new millennium peacekeepers across the Middle East remain hopeful that a resolution to Lebanon's incessant blood-letting may finally be in the offing. But we have hoped before and been frustrated... unfortunately we may well be disappointed again. ■

23/3/99) as all the towns in northern Galilee would become a 'target rich environment' for Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah's fanatical warriors.

Notwithstanding his public statements to the contrary Gen Mofaz may well have his plans already drawn up to exfiltrate the Galilee Division from Lebanon at some point in the new year, and serious increased fortification of the border posts may well commence as previously announced by President Barak. But the ultimate success of this initiative depends entirely on how events unfold in Damascus over the crucial coming months.

Hezbollah cannot under any circumstances be left to their own devices in Lebanon, as indeed the SLA cannot be abandoned by Israel¹⁴. Any attempted IDF withdrawal in either scenario could plunge the ICA into a civil war and provide the international media with yet another opportunity to catalogue the barbaric

- 1 Haaretz 30-11-99 & UNIFIL Daily News Summary 1/12/97, No 1, [249]
- 2 The Daily Star (Beirut) 4/12/97; UNIFIL Daily News Summary 5/12/97, No 1.
- 3 The Daily Star (Beirut) 9/12/97; UNIFIL Daily News Summary 10/12/97, No 1, [256].
- 4 Haaretz 5/12/97
- 5 IDF/SLA positions around Beit Leif were shelled again on the evening of 1/10/99 - thankfully without casualty on this occasion.
- 6 UNIFIL Daily News Summary 29/9/99, No 1, [203].
- 7 UNIFIL Daily News Summary 28/9/99, No 1, [202].
- 8 Maariv 26/9/99 & UNIFIL Daily News Summary 27/9/99, No 1, [201].
- 9 Foreign Report 9/9/99, Issue 2559.
- 10 The Daily Star (Beirut) 24/9/99, p2.
- 11 The Jerusalem Post 1/10/99, p2.
- 12 The Jerusalem Post 30/9/99. On a visit to Marjayoun in the ICA on 29/9/99, the Israeli Deputy Defence Minister Efraim Sneh accused SLA Brigades and Battalion commanders that the IDF would not abandon them.
- 13 The Jerusalem Post 30/9/99, p4.

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