

THE Blue Beret

March 1996





IRCON'S NATIONAL DAY CELEBRATIONS

by Flt Sgt John McCormick



The Irish Minister of Defence, Mr Sean Barrett TD, and the Irish Permanent Defence Force's Chief of Staff, Lt Gen Gerard McMahon, arrived in Cyprus on 13 March.

The purpose of their visit was to attend the IRCON Medal Parade and to celebrate St Patrick's Day with all IRCON personnel serving with UNFICYP.

As the Minister and the Chief of Staff traditionally visit Irish troops serving with UNIFIL and UNTSO on St Patrick's Day (17 March), Irish personnel in Cyprus brought forward celebrations two days so that guests could also take part in the event in Nicosia.



The Minister cutting the St Patrick's Day cake with the Force Commander on his left

An Irish Naval replenishment ship, the LE Aisling, arrived in Limassol on 7 March. It was en route to Beirut to offload its priority cargo of weapons and ammunition. The ship also carried additional supplies of Irish food and drink for the IRCON personnel in Cyprus, which added a special touch to the festivities on the day.

Prior to the Medal Parade, a soccer match took place in the UNPA on 8 March between the Irish naval personnel and a team from UNFICYP consisting of Camp Command, BRITCON, ARGCON and AUSCON troops. It was a tough match, but the crew of the LE Aisling proved to be the stronger team and came out on top with a final score of 6:1.

On the morning of 15 March, the Minister inspected an Honour Guard at HQ UNFICYP, commanded by Sgt John Kilroy, Camp Command. Members of the Honour Guard consisted of personnel from Camp Command and the PFR. The Minister and the Chief of Staff then visited the Chief of Mission, Mr G Feissel, the Force Commander, Brig Gen ATP Vartiainen, and the UNFICYP Chief of Staff, Col RI Talbot.



The FC presenting the UN medal to Sgt Patrick Archbold

At 1600 hrs, the Medal Parade took place with 26 personnel receiving UNFICYP medals and numerals from the Force Commander. Sprigs of shamrock, the Irish national symbol, were then presented to the VIPs and the extended Irish Community by the SIO IRCON, Comdt P O'Callaghan, OC Camp Command, Comdt John Tolan, and LO NG, Comdt Michael O'Donnell, also gave shamrock to IRCON personnel on parade.

When the formal part of the ceremony was completed, a reception was held in the International Mess, with a performance of Irish dancing and music by IRCON family members. Later that evening, the festivities continued in the Hibernia Club until the early hours. Pints of Guinness flowed like the river Shannon and tasted like milk - according to some connoisseurs.



From the left: Mr Sean Barrett TD, Mr Gustave Feissel and Lt Gen Gerard McMahon

Finally, the personnel of No 4 Camp Command would like to say farewell to all their friends and comrades with whom they had the pleasure to serve and work with in UNFICYP for the last six months.

Ó Boinn 4, Camp Comd, Guimid Gach Gui agus Beannachtaí Na Féile Padraig ar Gach Ball Do UNFICYP.

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FRONT COVER:

**CAMP COMMAND
PERSONNEL UNLOADING
SUPPLIES FROM IRISH
NAVAL SHIP AT LIMASSOL**
BY CPL JOHN DALY

The Blue Beret



EDITORIAL

Stay long enough in Cyprus and you are sure to make friends - perhaps many, sometimes only a few. But along the way, there will always be those who are memorable because of their particular personality, energy or ideas.

Recent circumstances within UNFICYP brought about the return of two former "UN Cyprus hands" on short term assignments as the UNFICYP Spokesman. Charles Gaulkin's return during the second half of 1995 coincided with the UN's 50th anniversary celebrations. Mr Gaulkin will be remembered because of his efforts and commitments aimed at getting people from both communities together.

In February, we saw the arrival of Steve Whitehouse for a two-month term. Being an old friend of Cyprus, he has expressed his admiration at the fact that although the force is now half the size it used to be during his first term of office in the mid 1980s, the general atmosphere on the cease-fire lines remains calm and peaceful.

Welcoming back UNFICYP veterans like Mr Gaulkin and Mr Whitehouse is always pleasant. And - as with all UN missions - it is always hard to say goodbye.

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HEROES IN THE HEAT

by Lt K Gould

On 5 December 1995, 12 Regt RA became peace-keepers in Sector Two and 15 chefs took over seven kitchens and a great challenge. RCWO (Master Chef) Rush explains: "The chefs have to cater for the troop and battery locations as well as with the local conditions - not an easy task". I went along the line and talked to some of the chefs who will soon be working in daily temperatures of over 35°C.

The most isolated is LCpl MacLachan who feeds the Adventure Training team and the course participants. Healthy and hearty appetites are the order of the day at Dhekelia.

LCpl Jones (26) works at UN 45, known as the 'Little House On The Prairie'. He feeds up to 16 but more usually 10. Unfortunately he loves fishing, and being about as far away from the sea as possible means he has to wait for his day off to get to the coast.



LCpl Jones

Next down the line is UN55 Kingston, the Bty HQ where Cpl Lunny and LCpl Warren cook for 35. Cpl Lunny has served in Norway, Canada, Iceland, France, Northern Ireland, Germany and now Cyprus. He is hoping for a posting to China, as his favourite food is Chinese. LCpl Warren

from Cardiff (22) wanted to do something different every day - so he became a chef. He would love to get to the Italian restaurants on the island. He is looking forward to getting a tan in Cyprus and enjoys the independence and challenge of cooking.



Left to right: Sgt Rawcliffe (being served) with Cpl Lunny and LCpl Thomas

The Ledra Palace Hotel is home for 144 soldiers, JNCOs and SNCOS. The kitchen has not changed in 22 years and is a constant hive of activity. Sgt Trigg is the 'production manager', responsible for 458 meals a day. Within that are selections for vegetarians, Muslims and those with food allergies. Cpl Kerr heads up the sharp end. He admits having had to learn a little diplomacy whilst working with the six civilian staff. When asked why he joined the Army to become a chef, he answers: "Why not?" in a broad Scottish accent! LCpl Wilson-Brown is the youngest member of the team at just 18 years old.

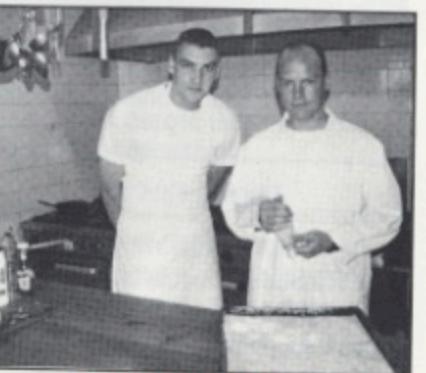
Cyprus is his first tour and he's looking forward to the chance of SCUBA diving and Adventure Training. The hardest part of his job is understanding Cpl Kerr; he understands the locals perfectly! The last member of the Ledra Palace crew is LCpl Thomas. Cyprus is also his first tour, and

he is enjoying the variation and challenge of the job. He is a keen skier and cannot wait for the slopes of Troodos to open to sharpen his skills. Ration NCO is Sgt Salt who controls the food for the 390 personnel, ensuring correct and safe storage and distribution to the seven kitchens along the 35km Sector. A keen golfer, he has had a few games of adventure golf on the UN golf course.



Left to right: Pte Wilson-Brown, Sgt Trigg and Cpl Kerr

The Officers' Mess team of Cpl Campbell and LCpl Jones have the most varied work. As well as providing the standard fare, they have had to cook for a total of 18 functions in one month. This has stretched resources, and they have been seen dashing down the road with pork en croûte which has been cooked in another kitchen's oven!



Left to right: LCpl Jones and Cpl Campbell



by Lt K Gould

by Lt K Gould

The most demanding conditions exist in Maple House, where LCpl Bolt works in a tiny, cramped and only just functioning kitchen. Despite being on crutches, he still manages to produce meals for the City Troop. The temperature in summer here will reach well above 45°C. His favourite dish to prepare is Beef Stroganoff, and the lads like it too.



LCpl Bolt

LCpl Thomas (21) works in Ortona House. He enjoys preparing meals for the Troop and they like his roast beef and Yorkshire puddings. The kitchen is the second

smallest, but small is beautiful to LCpl Thomas. On his day off, he loves to go shopping in the north. If he was given £1,000 to go for any meal, he would head home to mum for dinner. He admits to missing his family and his motor bike.



LCpl Thomas

LCpl Stokes was 25 last month and has developed a passion for rock climbing, earning him the nickname "rock cake". Having worked in a household kitchen in Northern Ireland, he thinks Camp Liri is luxury. The Tp Comd jokes that his food is so good, the

men are getting fat, despite the daily BZ run. "I enjoy being part of the Troop, playing sport and going out".



LCpl Stokes

The summer will soon be here, but the heat is already on in the kitchens of Sector Two. The Master Chef has had three UN tours to Cyprus, which meant he knew where to go Haggis-hunting for the Officers' Mess Burns Night! The morale of 12 Regt RA is high and that is, in a way, due to the hard work of the chefs who are part of the teams and sub-units along the line.

UNDER PRESSURE

Kneeling in the road holding a young woman's lacerated arms was not the way two UN soldiers from the British 12th Regiment Royal Artillery expected their day to end.

On the evening of 21 February, the young soldiers had been in the Queen Anne Marie's Pub when they heard smashing glass from the rear. Bdr "Sharky" Finlayson rushed out to see a young woman lying in the road. As he ran towards her, he saw she was covered in blood. "There was so much blood, I realized I had to get something to stem the flow", he said. The pub had no first aid kit, but along with Bdr "Dickie" Dickinson, they improvised with bar towels.

So severe were the cuts to the girl's arms that it took both of them gripping tightly to slow the bleeding. Bdr Dickinson remembers thinking "this woman is going to bleed to death", as he watched incredulously while a river of blood flowed down the gutter.

A 30-strong crowd had gathered to watch, but "no one seemed to understand that an ambulance was needed". As time seemed to stand still, they attempted to calm their patient and gritted their



Bdr Dickie Dickinson (left) and Bdr Sharky Finlayson

teeth, determined to hold on for as long as it took. After 20 minutes the Cyprus police arrived, put the victim into a car and took her to Nicosia General Hospital. The doctors commented that had she arrived a few minutes later, she almost certainly would have died.

The two young soldiers were pleased, though rather matter-of-fact about their part in the incident. "We had to do it - someone was dying in front of us".

AROUND AND ABOUT IN AUSTCIVPOL

NEW MINIBUS FOR AUSTCIVPOL

On 8 February 1996, AUSTCIVPOL took delivery of a brand new Toyota 30-seater bus. The bus is the latest donation from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (Special Mission in Cyprus), more commonly known as the UNHCR. The UNHCR Chief of Mission, Mr Mike Menning, handed the keys over to Commander Barry Carpenter who then promptly handed them on to one of the men at the coal face, Sergeant Greg Corin. "We are very happy, the new bus will enable us to move more people and respond better to daily requirements," Commander Carpenter said. "It's a step in the UN's effort to normalize the situation between the north and south," he added.

The bus replaces an old Isuzu minibus that was recently retired. The vehicles donated by UNHCR play a major role in the transportation of patients from the hospital in the north to various medical facilities in the south. "UNHCR are very pleased with the co-operation and arrangements we have with AUSTCIVPOL. They can now continue to help Cypriots to receive medical care," said Mr Menning.



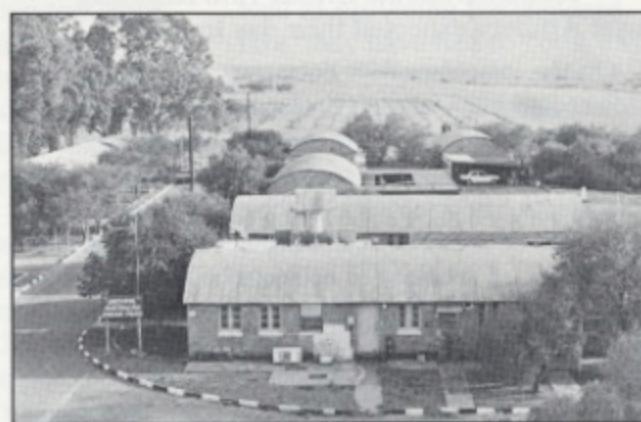
Comd Carpenter hands the keys of the new hospital bus over to Sgt Greg Corin, whilst Supt George Burton and Mr Mike Menning look on

The humanitarian nature of this work is very rewarding for members of AUSTCIVPOL. Two members carry out the "Hospital Run" on a regular basis each Tuesday and Friday for patients who cannot obtain the necessary treatment in the north.

AUSTCIVPOL also carries out a range of other humanitarian functions, including MEDEVACs for persons requiring emergency medical treatment.

Shown right is the Australian Police work and accommodation area in the UNPA.

Over the years, AUSTCIVPOL have made considerable improvements to make the facility more comfortable. After all, the Australians are well known for liking the 'comforts' of life!



A number of local farmers have authorisation to use the land within the United Nations Protected Area and the Buffer Zone.

Shown left, a farmer tends to his goats on the edge of the disused Nicosia International Airport within the UNPA.



NEW CO ARGCON: LT COL GUSTAVO ENRIQUE CALVI

Lt Col Gustavo Calvi was born in 1950 and joined the Argentinian Military Academy in 1967. He was commissioned as a 2/Lt (Infantry) in 1970 and appointed as a Platoon Leader with the 20th Mountain Infantry Regt "Cazadores de los Andes". As a junior officer, he was posted to several other infantry units and, before being promoted to a senior officer, he attended the Command and Staff Course at the Army War School.

From 1989 to 1990, he was appointed as a Military Observer in UNTSO in the Golan Heights, SO2 Ops Info in UNIFIL, Lebanon, and as AMPO at UNTSO, HQ Jerusalem.

During 1990/92, Lt Col Calvi was posted to the Doctrine/Tactics Branch in the Army General Staff. At the end of this tour, he took over as Commander of the 12th Mechanized Infantry Regt "General Arenales" until December 1994.

Last year, he was appointed Chief Operations Officer



at the HQ of the 10th Mechanized Brigade "Teniente General Levalle". This tour was interrupted when he was posted as CO of the 6th Argentinian Task Force, UNFICYP.

Lt Col Calvi is married to Raquel. They have two daughters and three sons from 21 to 9 years of age.

UNFICYP VOLLEYBALL COMPETITION

by Capt S Perr



Players in action at the Volleyball Competition



HOW VERY THOUGHTFUL!

Whilst cruising at 30,000 feet, bringing the new AUSTCIVPOL crew to Cyprus, Captain (also known as Station Sergeant) Steve Turnbull wound down the window, due to his co-pilot being a non-smoker....

INTERVIEW

Mr Charles Gaulkin, the outgoing UNFICYP Spokesman, talked to the Assistant Editor of the Blue Beret a few days before leaving Cyprus last February, having completed a six-month assignment in Cyprus. This was the second occasion that Mr Gaulkin was entrusted with the delicate post of UNFICYP Spokesman in this part of the world. The first time he served in Cyprus was between September 1985 and August 1991. During this meeting, he expressed his mixed feelings and aspirations, and emphasized the importance of establishing regular contacts between the two communities. Excerpts from this interview follow.

BB What made you join the UN?

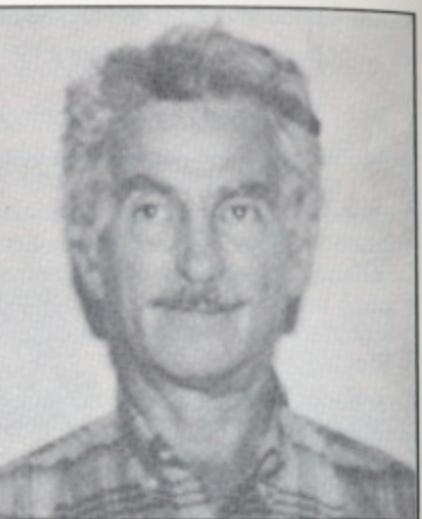
CG I am old enough to remember the early days of the UN, even before the Cold War, when there were high hopes that the new organisation would solve most of the world's problems. I can recall listening as a teenager to radio broadcasts of the Human Rights Commission when it was drafting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The exchange of views among people from different countries impressed me and I continued to be interested in the evolution of the organisation. After about 14 years in various newspaper jobs, I decided to give the UN a try and a few days later, I found that I'd been there for 25 years!

BB What do you think are the guidelines for a good Spokesperson?

CG The first requirement, of course, is to be well informed on the subject you are talking about. Naturally, in UNFICYP or in any other United Nations operation, impartiality is of major importance. Responding to the media, I have always felt that one aim is to provide a bridge between the journalists and UNFICYP, and not to consider the press as a hostile force. As a former journalist, I understand their needs and have tried to help them as much as possible within the limitations of our mandate.

BB What do you think is the future for peace-keeping forces?

The events of the last couple of years have shown both the increased desire to make use of the possibilities through the UN and, at the same time, have made us aware of the potential problems. Recently, the UN has been unjustly criticized over its effectiveness in



INTERVIEW

BB Is the local press fair in reporting about the UN in Cyprus?

Yes, at least most of the time. In fact, my impression of news coverage in the past six months is that it has been less sensationalized and distorted than it seemed a few years ago. But there are still too many instances when reporters fail to be sufficiently careful in checking the facts. Some journalists seem to follow the policy, "Don't let the facts get in the way of a good story!" When a paper runs banner headlines based on anonymous phone calls, for example, I wouldn't call that responsible journalism. Reporters should take the trouble to check with the relevant sources first, before publishing hearsay. But the more common problem is that even after 32 years of UNFICYP in Cyprus, there are still many Cypriots - journalists included - who don't have a clear idea about UNFICYP's role.

BB What do you think is the perception of local people regarding the UNFICYP role, and how can this perception be improved?

I believe there is a recognition that we are

still needed here, and that we are doing a reasonably good job in helping to prevent any outbreak of hostilities, and in our humanitarian activities. Of course, problems still arise when UNFICYP soldiers have to face unruly demonstrators who try to enter the buffer zone. People sometimes forget that UNFICYP has to maintain the integrity of the buffer zone. We also hear complaints from time to time that we are favouring one side or the other - but the complaints come from both sides, and that shows that we are in fact impartial. Impartiality does not necessarily make us popular, though.

BB How would you like to be remembered by your colleagues in UNFICYP and the Cypriot communities?

I fear that some of my colleagues may not wish to remember the aura of cigar smoke around me! My Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot friends, I hope, will remember me as one who believes that *contacts between people of the two communities can help the efforts to reach a solution*.

NEW UNFICYP SPOKESMAN - MR STEVE WHITEHOUSE

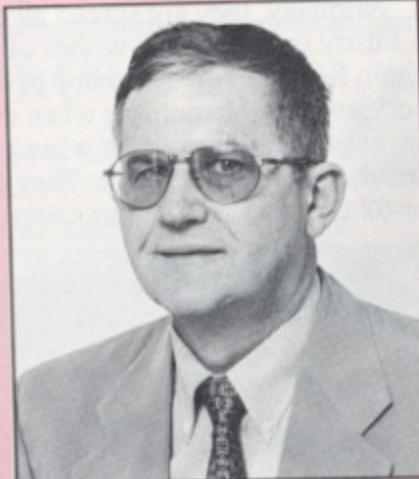
Arriving back in Cyprus for a two-month stint as Spokesman for UNFICYP reminds me that the chilly winter weather is the best kept secret in Cyprus. For our soldiers, policemen and civilians, it's a time when the clichéd image of Club Med peace-keeping is even more unfair than ever.

UNFICYP today has only half the number of personnel it had when I was stationed here in the mid 1980s. Down-sizing has meant that the same responsibilities have to be assumed by fewer people. The fact that the incidents which arise on the peace-keeping side are almost always relatively minor ones is a tribute to how well the Force has adapted itself to reduced circumstances. It's a 24-hour a day job for UNFICYP to make sure the small incidents do not blow up into confrontations that could threaten the peace on this highly militarized island. If only progress towards a political settlement in Cyprus went as smoothly as the military and police side of keeping the peace.

On a final note, I am glad to say that my own country, New Zealand, is represented here in a very tangible fashion. The smart Blue Berets worn by most of the contingents in UNFICYP (BRITCON excluded) were

made in a suburb of my home town, Wellington! So every time you adjust your headgear, remember: patient New Zealand sheep have sacrificed their virgin fleeces to keep you looking good.....

Keep up the good work, UNFICYP.





PIONIERE WIE IMMER!

by Capt A Riedmüller

With the integration of HUNCON into the Austrian Battalion, it became necessary to find an office for the Hungarian Contingent Commander, Maj A Ughy, in Camp Duke Leopold V, Famagusta. This office should ideally have been placed close to the CO AUSCON, Lt Col WFJ Wildberger. However, there was nothing available, and the CO's office was not in a very good condition either. So, the decision was easy - a new office for the CO and DCO had to be erected.

The Engineer Platoon received the order in the middle of last November, and after two weeks of planning, calculating and organizing the finances and material, they started with the basement area on 4 December. Believe it or not, after only seven weeks (which included the Christmas period), the building was ready on 19 January. Then on 26 January, the official handover to the CO took place.

This event seems a good opportunity to introduce the Austrian Engineers to all of you, and I am proud to do so. The Platoon consists of 23 soldiers in all, including one officer, four NCOs, four electricians, four plumbers, two joiners, one carpenter, two bricklayers, one tile layer, two locksmiths, one tinsmith and one painter. Unlike the CO, they seldom have the opportunity to work in public. Most of the time they seem to be invisible - perhaps you'd like to know why?

Normally, they are spread all over the place to satisfy the needs and wishes of their comrades within Sector Four. On many occasions, they start work early in the morning when everyone else is still asleep, and then finish when others have already gone to the beach! They are responsible for 62 OPs and OPTs, four camps and accommo-



Some of Sector Four's Engineer Platoon, together with the CO (centre)

dation for 330 soldiers. There are too many tasks to fulfil during duty hours, so they work long and hard with no regard for the hot, burning sun or the rain which sometimes soaks them to the skin.

But who else can reconnect the electricity, just at the moment when the video you are watching is at its most thrilling scene, or at night when a burst pipe makes the toilets unusable? The men in this Platoon have to use material of a quality they are not used to and equipment which is no longer in use in Austria. Sometimes, they have to be very imaginative to solve a particular problem.

They are probably the most liked and disliked personnel in the whole Battalion! Everyone loves them when they arrive late at night to fix something which has gone wrong, but if they don't arrive soon after they are called, they are the first to receive complaints! Perhaps they are an odd bunch of men at times. Due to the type of work they do, they are often dressed in a shabby fashion and certainly don't have perfect military manners. But they are the busiest workers in the Contingent, and if it were not for them, where would the rest of us be?

One thing is for sure - they certainly know how to celebrate. At an engineers' party, there is no stopping until the last barrel of beer is empty. The Engineers' Mess is always a good place to go to. We have discovered in Sector Four that the Argentinian and British engineers seem to be of similar

character, so whenever all UNFICYP engineers meet up, and that has happened quite often in the last few months, no other unit has comparable relations with the other sectors than the engineers. There is always a lot of fun and they have no problem understanding each other. Such close contact between all UNFICYP sectors is rare.

As the Engineer Officer in Sector Four, I would like to thank my men for the great cooperation which exists within the Platoon and for your patience and endurance of all the strain which goes with the job. You're a great bunch!

PIONIERE WIE IMMER!



Lt Col Wildberger, giving a helping hand!



VISIT OF BRIGADIER IW FULTON OBE PROVOST MARSHAL BRITISH ARMY



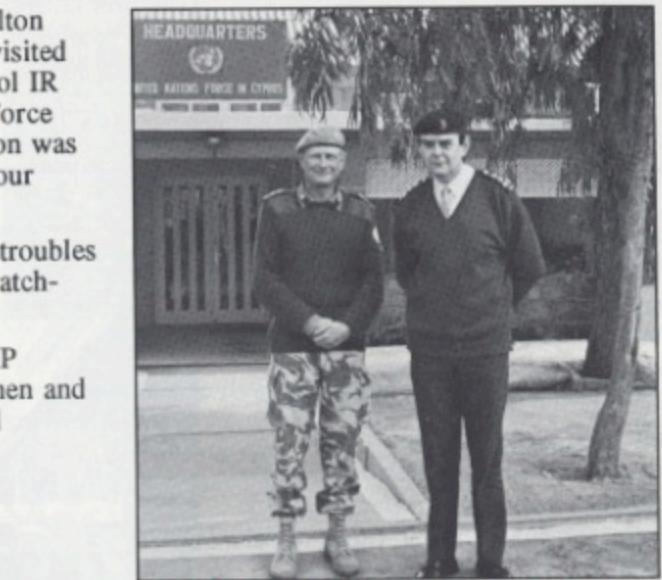
On Wednesday 14 February 1996, Brigadier Ian Fulton OBE, the Provost Marshal of the British Army, visited UNFICYP. He was met by the Chief of Staff, Col IR Talbot, following which he had an office call with the Force Commander, Brigadier Ahti Vartiainen. Brigadier Fulton was then given a UN brief by the COS, followed by a line tour with Sector Two.

The Provost Marshal was last in Cyprus during the troubles in 1974, when he was sent from the UK to work as a Watch-keeper in the Operations Room at Kyrenia.

During this trip, Brigadier Fulton visited the UN MP Element where he was able to see how Military Policemen and women from Argentina, Austria, Ireland and the United Kingdom work together in this unique environment.



Brig Fulton (centre) with Mr Johnson (left) and Mr Harrison



Col Talbot greets Brig Fulton during his recent visit to UNFICYP

Brigadier Fulton also found time to meet two ex members of the British Military Police, Mr Barry Johnson and Mr Fred Harrison, who have since retired and now live in Cyprus. Mr Barry Johnson served a total of seven years in Cyprus, which included five tours with the UN, his last as the WOIC SIS in 1985.

Brigadier Fulton will spend three years as PM (A) and hopes to visit Cyprus again.

SUMMER-TIME IN CYPRUS

Yes, summer-time is on the way - the time of year that most of us enjoy with the warm weather, the long days and a good time for all.

Many people see this as a good excuse to pack a bag, jump into a car and head off towards the beach. Once at the beach, there is plenty to distract and enable us to forget about our daily chores. It is also a good time to visit a local taverna and sample the delights of Cyprus - the good food and plenty of beer.

Unfortunately, some of us fail to remember our limitations, or that in a few hours, we have to return to our respective units. Some simply ignore all of the rules and get into their vehicles.

Then we start the car and drive off, either to a new area or return home. This is when tragedy can strike us all down. A simple traffic accident around the corner, failing to stop at a mandatory traffic or road sign or the old favourite - SPEEDING. This can lead

to YOU being stopped by both Cypriot Police and United Nations Military Police.

Once you have been stopped and the questions and answers are duly flowing, it doesn't take too long before the policeman can sense that you have been drinking. A good day out can end in a few tears or even worse - DEATH!

That is not all. Consider the barbecue in the back garden, at a friend's house or in the mess. People still ignore the rules within our own environment.

Finally, don't forget about the morning after a heavy night out, especially at the night spots in Nicosia. Many people fail to remember that they can still be over the limit.

DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE



SOMETHING MORE ABOUT THE ARGENTINIAN PEOPLE



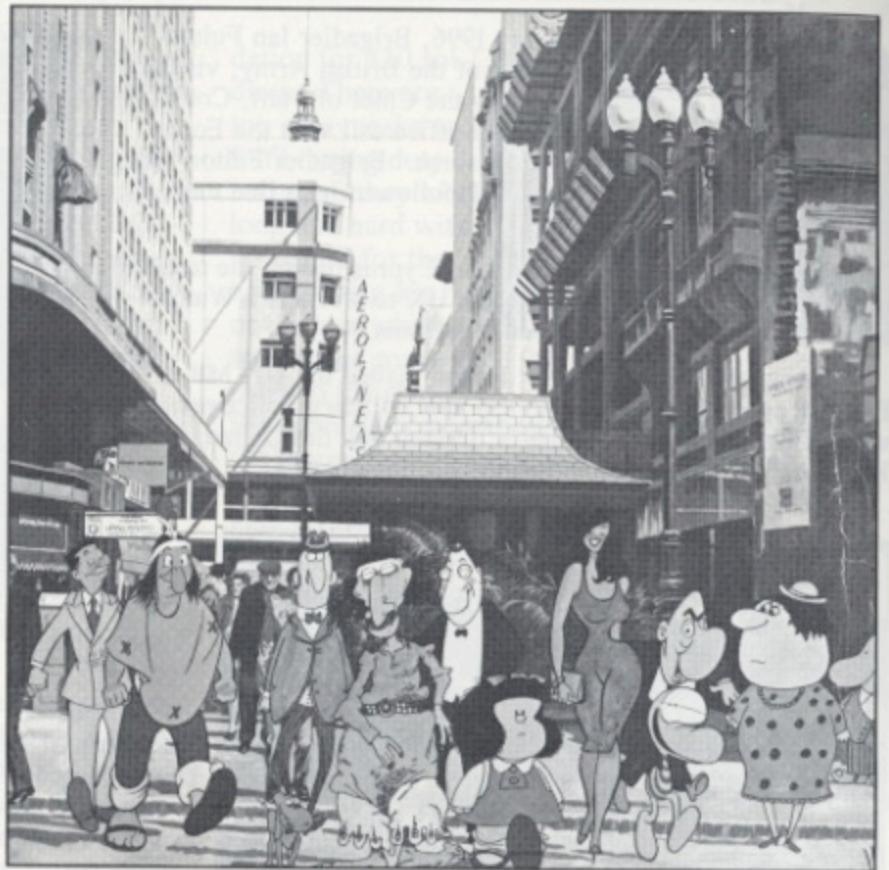
The "Porteño"

The people who live in Buenos Aires are called "porteño", and this term has a special meaning. The word porteño originates from the time of the Conquistadors (the Spanish settlers), who founded Buenos Aires to serve as a port station for goods in transit to Peru from the Atlantic coast. However, it was not long before this meaning was superseded by another definition imposed by the Spaniards themselves and later the criollos (local people), for in the hundred years following 1810, there was an immigration avalanche which multiplied the population of the country by eleven.

Dynamic and colloquial, although emotional (and perhaps because of this, prone to be melancholy, according to José Ortega y Gasset), the porteño are the synthesis of cosmopolitanism. Extrovert and always ready to show their sentiments, they have made a religion of friendship and gallantry, which even the shyest unashamedly display.

Unique to Buenos Aires is the "piropo", usually a discreet verbal compliment to a lady that does not seek reward, but is used by the porteño to show their sensitivity to female beauty. This form of flattery is especially reserved for Saxon and Scandinavian tourists!

This, and other well-known traits of their personality, serve as an inspiration to the numerous cartoonists who find the porteño an endless source for their humorous drawings.



The Divito girls, famous for their wasp-like waists which created a vogue, became as well-known as Tehuelche Superman, the Indian Cacique Paturuzú and his playboy godson Isidoro, created by Dante Quinterno. Mafalda, the acid-tongued and thought-provoking little girl drawn by Quino, finds her opposite number in the complacent fat ladies of Landrú and in childish Don Fulgencio of Lino Palacio. Biting and unpredictable, the Gaucho Inodoro Pereyra of Roberto Fontanarrosa and the creature Clement of Caloi, are among many other joyfully distorted examples of the personality of a people who are sufficiently developed to laugh at their own caricatures.



A "BIFE DE CHORIZO" PLEASE



Two thousand tons of beef are consumed daily in Argentina, and in Buenos Aires alone, the figure is seven hundred and forty tons. The preferred cut of the porteño is the so-called "bife de chorizo", or the T-bone steak. It is presumed that the bife de chorizo existed long before the first tango was strummed on a guitar and the colectivo (small bus) began roving the streets of the city. However, it is possible that it was a contemporary of the maté amargo (bitter maté), a telluric phenomenon found on both sides of the River Plate. Nobody, however, questions the lineage of the steak, whose origins go way back to the first cattle brought in by Juan de Garay towards the end of the 16th century.

Many of these animals managed to escape from the early colonists and, favouring the moderate climate, abundant water and quality of pastures, began to multiply very quickly until their number was very high. A chronicler at the time mentions "herds of thirty and forty thousand head, whose appearance on the horizon was announced by a muffled rumble and a thick cloud of dust, giving the impression of a fire". During the Viceroyship, cows reproduced indiscriminately in lands assigned to Spanish gentlemen who were given the title of "estancieros".

The first indications of refinements in cattle breeding date from the mid 19th century, when in 1848, an illustrious guest arrived from England: Tarquin, the first Shorthorn bull, whose multitudinous descendants were soon roaming the green prairies of Buenos Aires province. Very soon they were mixing with other no less aristocratic and equally prolific cattle: the Hereford and Aberdeen Angus breeds. When in 1872, Frenchman Charles Tellier found the way to artificially freeze perishable foodstuffs while preserving their nutritive qualities, a new era was born for Argentinian livestock breeding, limited until then to the salting and tanning industries.

In 1877, the vessel Le Frigorifique was loaded in the port of Buenos Aires with the first consignment of cold-preserved meat bound for Europe. This significant date marks the beginning of the scientific exploitation of livestock resources which formulated



Herds of cattle, grazing in green pastures

the growth of the livestock industry. Breeders began to improve their herds in quantity and quality, jointly building up a stock that allowed Argentina to win over the main international markets.

The outstanding reputation the country enjoys as a producer and exporter of red meat can be summarised in the following figures: the current stock amounts to sixty-one million head of cattle, thirty five million head of sheep and four million head of pigs. Annual production of meat amounts to three million tons, of which some seven hundred thousand, or 23 per cent, are exported.

Although these figures reveal an extraordinary potential, they do not explain the reasons for the preferential acceptance of Argentinian meat throughout the world. This success is primarily the result of the permanent task of selection and cross-breeding of animals whose breeds ensure the highest yields. Secondly, this meat comes from herds bred in open fields under the sun and fed off natural green fodder with a high vitamin content.

The results achieved by the accumulation of these factors are shown annually in the Palermo Rural Exhibition. This festival includes the unique feature of a parade of the animals chosen as champions of each breed and type, and draws as many spectators as an important soccer match. The show, which has been staged for more than one hundred years, is proof that the care taken in livestock production is on the same level as that in the meat industrialization process.



NEW MA TO THE FORCE COMMANDER

Comdt Ray King assumed duty as the Military Assistant to the Force Commander on 12 January 1996.

Comdt King joined the Irish Defence Forces in 1968. He is an experienced peace-keeper, having served on three previous UN missions in UNEF 2 in Sinai, UNIFIL in the Lebanon and as a Military Observer in Israel and Syria. Comdt King actually served with UNFICYP as far back as 1973, when as a Platoon Commander, he was a member of 25 Infantry Group, IRCON, based in Larnaca. This Unit was transferred to Sinai after only two weeks in Cyprus. After all those years, he has returned to finally qualify for his UNFICYP medal!

As MA to the FC, Comdt King has responsibility for arranging details of the FC's visits to Sectors, including visit programmes, collation as required of the problem area, briefs prior to the visit and follow-up action afterwards. He is the focal point for protocol



Comdt King (left) shaking hands with his predecessor, Maj David Scouller and the Force Commander (centre).

matters within HQ UNFICYP, being responsible for liaison between the HQ and Contingents on ceremonial matters which, of course, include Medal Parades.

Comdt King's appointment is for one year.



ALL HANDS ON DECK!

Report and photograph by Cpl John Daly



The Irish Naval Ship, LE Aisling, paid a three-day visit to Cyprus during a resupply cruise to the Middle East earlier this month. The ship was carrying supplies for the Irish Battalion which is serving in South Lebanon with UNIFIL. She was also carrying nearly five tons of clothing for the Humanitarian Cell in IRISHBATT, which would be donated to the local orphanage.

After a 10-day non-stop voyage from Cork Harbour in Ireland, LE Aisling docked at Limassol where she was met by Irish personnel from No 4 Camp Command. The ship was also carrying supplies for the Irish Contingent stationed here in Cyprus, including some very popular "black beverages" due to be consumed at the IRCON Medal Parade!

LE Aisling is the latest in its class of four offshore patrol vessels which were custom-built at Verolme Cork Dockyard in Ireland for the Irish Naval Service. She was commissioned in May 1980 and has a complement of 46 (15 officers plus 41 NCOs and ratings).

LE Aisling was launched in the centenary year of the birth of the Irish patriot and poet, Padraig Pearse. The name Aisling was chosen as it is also the name given to a classic genre of Irish poetry. Literally, Aisling means "dream of vision", and in this type of patriotic poetry, Ireland is personified as a beautiful woman who appears as a portent of better times to come for Ireland.



The ship's captain, Lt Cdr William Donaldson, speaking with Camp Command personnel on board LE Aisling

When the off-loading of supplies was finished, the personnel of Camp Command took advantage of spending a few hours on board ship with their fellow countrymen. The ship's captain, Lt Cdr William Donaldson, is no stranger to UN service either, having returned to Ireland in 1995 after spending two years as a Military Observer with UNTSO in the Middle East.

The ship's crew were glad to sample the relatively good weather of the Med and Cyprus, and it was a welcomed break from the hostile operational environment of the North Atlantic. Before departing for Beirut, the ship's crew presented the Hibernia Club with a plaque bearing the ship's crest as a token of an enjoyable break from life on the ocean waves.



THE UNFICYP SKIING COMPETITION

by Capt S Perr



The start of the Biathlon



Throwing hand grenades during the Biathlon



Winners of the Giant Slalom



Young Cypriot participants being congratulated by the Force Commander



Cpl Pattera, winner of the Giant Slalom



WOII Juan Fernandez, winner of the Biathlon



CO Sector 4, Lt Col Wolfgang Wildberger



The FC at the prize presentation



ARGCON celebrates!



THE UNFICYP SKIING COMPETITION

Photo by Cpl John Daly

