

MISSION: SOLDIERS RECOUNT

TANKS FOR



ATTACK: Lt Molloy
Stress of 'surreal' firefights

BY EAMON DILLON

MILITIA men in At Tiri resorted to dirty tricks in bid to get the Irish out of their way to take over the Lebanese village.

Some dressed as civilians rolled burning tyres towards Irish vehicles and threw rocks claiming they were protests against the UN in a psychological battle.

Then a young Lieutenant, Johnny Molloy said the crucial attack he led to knock-out an armoured vehicle came at the end of a long week.

"That was just one incident at the end of very tense volatile week. It brought it to a close."

"We had endured quite a bit of violence from these people both physical and a lot of mental violence. We had a lot of casualties, people that were traumatised," he said.

SHOOTING

The Limerick native, who went on to be a commanding officer of the Irish Ranger Wing later in his career, explained "the biggest thing here was the mental thing."

"You were shooting, you were in the s**t, you were in the height of it and then it relaxed. Then you were back in it again so it was very destructive mentally on people," he told the *Sunday World*.

Members of the so-called South Lebanese Army would shoot at the Irish and then minutes later stroll down the road to cadge a couple of cigarettes

"It was a bit surreal - at times it was very calm and then the shooting would start again trying to intimidate us out of the place," he said.



TENSE: Johnny Molloy

EXCLUSIVE
BY EAMON DILLON

KALASHNIKOV bullets slamming off the armour felt like a giant hammer being used to smash open the Irish Army's 'little white tank'.

The impact sent flecks of paint flying inside, cutting TC Martin's face as he drove the armoured car into position to fire back.

The gunner, Thomas Jones, in the confusion, thought his pal had been hit but it didn't stop him loading the high-explosive anti-tank round and aiming at the militia's armoured vehicle.

Jonesy's fire was on the button and the commander, Johnny Molloy, radioed back to HQ: "I'm finished firing, and he's finished moving."

Forty years ago this week the Battle of At Tiri in South Lebanon remains one of the Irish Army's biggest fire-fights and saved a Shia village from being cleared of its people.

"They were throwing roses at us afterwards," said TC, who turned 22 on that day on April 12.

PUNCH

But it was Jonesy, at 21, who was the youngest of the three-man crew of a Panhard AML 90 armoured car which the Israelis, in a nod of respect, dubbed the little white tank.

The little white tank was small - but with a 90mm anti-tank cannon mounted on top, it packed a powerful punch.

A native of the garrison town of Newbridge, young Jones had won his place in the 46th Irish Battalion after edging out colleagues in target shooting.

The Irish troops, who were part of the United Nations missions, had been thrown into the sharp end of the complex geo-political game between the Americans, Israelis and Palestinians.

In April 1980 that meant Israel was using Major Saad Haddad's murderous 'South Lebanese Army' to create a buffer zone north of the Israeli border.

They didn't care how they did it, with Shia families being kicked out of their homes at gunpoint as the ill-disciplined militia rode roughshod over people's lives.

When they went into At Tiri on April 6, the Irish Battalion was holding their sports day.

"That's when we got the call out. I had to borrow a uniform, I think I had Norwegian trousers and a Dutch top," said Jonesy.

His reconnaissance unit armed up and got their vehicles at Tibnin and went straight to At Tiri, where Irish troops on checkpoints were cut off.



SMALL BUT DEADLY: The AML 90 back on patrol after the battle

"We were hit about 13 or 14 times, it was like someone outside with the biggest hammer you can imagine"

Forty-year anniversary of Irish UN troops' legendary

It settled into a week-long stand-off with sporadic bouts of intense gunfire. The Irish had to get permission each time to return fire.

"It was long periods of just sitting there looking at them wondering what was going on. Then suddenly there'd be a burst of gunfire," said Jonesy.

In the distance Israeli armour could be seen moving about while Haddad's men had their own Super Sherman tanks adding to the tense situation.

Referring to when one of the tanks appeared in the village, he said: "That was the day we s**t ourselves, when we saw

that yoke coming up the road."

During that time Galway man Stephen Griffin was hit, badly wounded and died a few days later in hospital while a Fijian soldier, Sevati Sovonavalu, was shot dead.

CIVILIANS

A number of Irish troops, including Jonesy's brother Michael, were decorated for rescuing wounded men while under fire.

The militia also forced civilians to throw rocks at the UN soldiers who had to fire over their heads to stop them

reaching the position.

The tactics had worked in other areas where UN vehicles were burned out.

"After that they started to roll the burning tyres down the hill. My job then was to shoot at the tyres to knock them down before they got to us. There was mayhem," said Jonesy.

After a week of the tense stand-off it was decided that the time had come for the Irish troops to take back the village and push Haddad's men out.

The first job that had to be done was to take out the half-track vehicle armed with .50 calibre machine guns that

dominated the village from the high ground. That task fell to Molloy, Martin and Jones in the AML 90 and they went forward into a hail of fire to destroy the half-track that threatened the Irish troops.

TURRET

"We were hit about 13 or 14 times. I hadn't a clue, it was like someone outside with the biggest hammer you can imagine hitting the 90 as hard as they could," recalled Jonesy.

"There was nothing but flames coming off the inside - just down the turret ring you

THEIR TERRIFYING DAY IN AT TIRI

THE MEMORIES



BATTLE: A local surveys the damage (above left), the checkpoint at At Tiri in (below left) and Thomas Jones with a chunk of militia half-track (below right); and before it was blown up (below centre)



firefight to save villagers in Lebanon

could see the flames coming off, flashes and sparks, the paint flying off the inside of the turret.

"We hadn't an idea what was after happening, that was the first time. That was battle in-olation, to get hit that hard that close."

TC, who wasn't getting his preferred style of birthday party, remembered thinking that if he got out alive he'd light 12 candles in the church.

"On the way home from Dublin Airport with my mother and father we stopped at Kill. I went into the church on my own and did that," said TC.

TC's prayers were helped by the AML 90's position as well as its thick armoured-plating.

Johnny Molloy said that two militia men had opened up at them from close range; "There were two SLA guys lying in a field or ditch there and we were driving up they lacerated with Kalashnikovs as we were driving up the road."

ARMOUR

He fired two high-explosive rounds into the now unmanned half-track which went straight through its thin armour.

"The first two rounds seemed

to have no effect, it turned out to be the thinnest part of the half track, face-on.

"We didn't destroy it but there was nobody on it. Then we were given the order to go back up and neutralise it."

This time the two rounds fired from the AML 90 completely destroyed the half-track which went up in a spectacular explosion.

They managed to avoid the attention of the Super Sherman tanks, although later a round from one of the tanks came close.

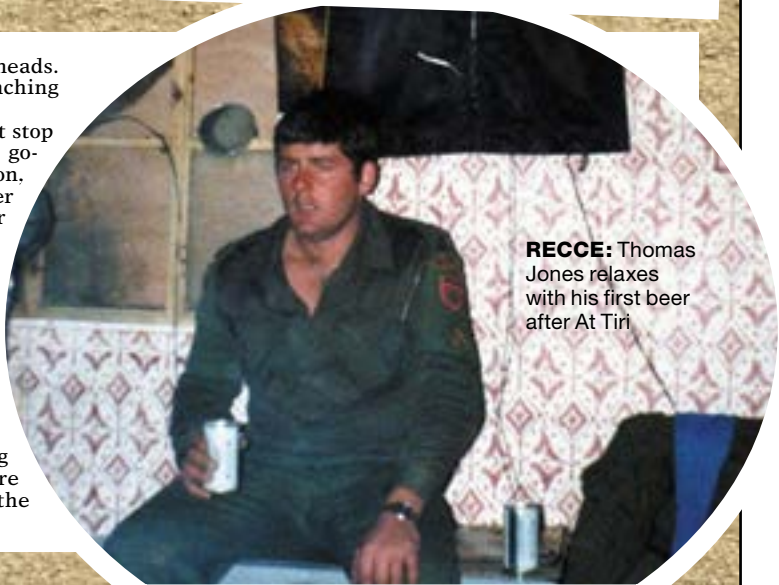
"At one stage one of the Shermans fired, I could hear the

round going over our heads. There was a serious clenching of arse," he added.

The experience didn't stop Trooper Thomas Jones going back to the Lebanon, serving four tours over the course of a 32-year career.

Likewise, Lieutenant John Molloy enjoyed a long military career and after retirement worked as UNIFIL's civilian political officer in south Lebanon.

Corporal TC Martin was also happy to return to Lebanon, serving seven tours of duty there during his 24 years in the Defence Forces.



RECCE: Thomas Jones relaxes with his first beer after At Tiri

IRELAND'S

€180M

SEX TRADE

Crime gangs rake in easy money from trafficked women to funnel into deals for drugs and weapons

ORGANISED crime gangs have an iron grip on Ireland's €180 million a year vice trade and use the cash to fund drugs and gun deals.

And the vast majority of women working as prostitutes have been trafficked into the country to be exploited by the ruthless pimps.

Most people aren't even aware that the sex trade exists, despite an average of 800 prostitutes being advertised on a daily basis across every county on the island of Ireland.

The women, and some men, provide sex services for between €80 and €150 per customer up to 10 or 12 times a day, making it a money spinner for heartless gangsters.

MESSAGE

The *Sunday World* can reveal that more than a dozen organised crime gangs are involved in the trade at different levels, from running brothels and trafficking women to sourcing apartments and hotel rooms.

But the senior cop in charge of tackling the trafficking gangs warned this week that a crackdown is on the way.

Chief Superintendent Declan Daly said extra staff are being drafted in to be used to target prostitution and trafficking.

"It's an area that's going to get favouritism in terms of allocation of resources, because it needs it. We are about addressing the harm and

EXCLUSIVE
BY EAMON DILLON



that's where the harm is, and that's where we need to have our focus."

While infamous Irish pimps such as Martin 'the Beast' Morgan are suspected to still have an interest in the trade, the sleazy underworld is dominated by foreign criminals.

A Chinese Triad-linked operation was recently uncovered in Ireland when two people were caught running a brothel in Rathmines, Dublin.

Di Wei and Chunjie Wang were jailed for their roles, while it was also discovered many of the mobile phone numbers used by the pair were also used in adverts for massage parlours.

Despite the garda success it didn't disrupt the vice trade operations for very long.

Romanian gangs have also been at the forefront of Ireland's sex trade and just last month a leader of the infamous Ghenuso gang was sent back to his native country where he is accused of murder, blackmail and money laundering.

Evidence was previously heard how the Ghenuso gang had been trafficking women to Ireland to work as prostitutes for a number of years, making as much as €2 million in the process.

Accused leader Florin Ghinea was arrested in August last year in the UK and extradited back to Romania two weeks ago.

In 2018, rival Romanian gangs in Ireland also clashed. In one incident a man's car was rammed in Dublin city centre before he was stabbed multiple times.

West African gangs have also been behind the exploitation of women in the sex trade who came to Ireland on the promise of getting a proper job – but they were instead forced to work as prostitutes to pay off their 'debts' to traffickers.

Many of the victims were subjected to voodoo rituals to ensure their co-operation with the traffickers.

At the lower end of the scale, an organised crime gang based in Longford are suspected of sourcing properties for use by the vice gangs in Midlands towns.

Those controlling prostitutes will pay four times the going rent to ensure their sleazy business keeps the cash rolling in.

This week, the head of the Garda National Protective Services Unit told the *Sunday World* that organised

criminals are deeply entrenched in the sex trade.

"Because it's a profitable business it is attractive to organised criminals, it also brings in with it the international element where you have criminal gangs from overseas jurisdictions involved in organised criminality in this jurisdiction," said Chief Supt Daly.

ACTIVITY

"It is fluid in relation to gangs who will work together in relation to prostitution, it is a little bit more of cross-pollination between gangs. It's a little bit more nuanced and difficult to investigate.

"Somewhere along the route that money is converted into drugs, into firearms and further acts of exploitation," he warned.

"What is important is that there is huge international law enforcement co-operation, particularly in Europe — Europol and Interpol and ourselves are all working together very, very closely. The world has become a very small place, so that's good and that's positive," he added.

A number of high-profile 'action days' have been carried out in the last year where nearly 100 men suspected of paying for sex

with a prostitute were stopped and questioned.

Since a law came into force making it a crime to pay for sex, three people have been convicted of the offence and another 13 cases are pending.

The top cop also said gardai are going to target prostitution around sporting events, adding: "We can see spikes of activity around certain events and we are going to target that. I want to see disruption in the business because that means women are safe and not exploited."

There was also a warning for convicted pimp Peter McCormick, whose *Escort Ireland* website advertises 90 per cent of the prostitution services in this country.

Anti-prostitution campaigner Rachel Moran said she finds it hard to believe that the website can operate from abroad even though advertising sexual services in Ireland is illegal.

"We have got to shut down these websites. We have this ridiculous and absurd situation in this country where we have 98 per cent of all indoor prostitution being run through one website. They are making untold millions year in year out off the backs of human misery," said Rachel.

"Why does the biggest pimping ring this nation has ever seen get away with flagrantly breaking our laws just because they are hosting their illegal activity off-shore?"

Chief Supt Daly said his unit of specialist officers are on the website every day and are still making efforts to find ways to shut down the website for good.

He said he had been involved in efforts to block access to sexual images of children, which he described as "complex" and took a long time to do.

"Somewhere along the route that money is converted into drugs, into firearms and further acts of exploitation"



CRACKDOWN: Chief Supt Declan Daly

DARKER SIDE OF IRISH PROSTITUTION



100
Last year 100 men suspected of paying for sex with a prostitute were stopped and questioned

800
800 prostitutes are advertised on a daily basis across every county on the island of Ireland

12
Prostitutes provide sex services for between €80 to €150 per customer up to 10 or 12 times a day — making it a money spinner for gangsters

SLEAZY MONEY

CRIME: But just three men have been convicted of paying for sex



EXTRADITED: Florin Ghinea



WEBSITE: Peter McCormick



FLAT FOR SEX: Di Wei was jailed



CONVICTION: Martin Morgan

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Mental health wards are full to bursting of women who have come out of the sex trade

'BOUGHT AND SOLD': Fiona Broadfoot says the smell of the night air can trigger bad memories

TRAUMA AND HORROR 'NEVER GOES AWAY' EVEN AFTER PROSTITUTES FINALLY ESCAPE THEIR PIMPS



LONG-TERM EFFECTS FOR WORKERS

HUNDREDS of women this weekend are at the bottom rung of Ireland's sex trade, giving the cash-paying 'punters' what they want.

For the mostly middle-aged married men in well-paid jobs who pay for the 30-minute sex session, the encounter doesn't cost a thought.

But the women who have lived through the experience of the prostitution business dominated by criminals tell a different story and how the psychological scars never heal.

Fiona Broadfoot, who was trafficked to London to sell sex when she was just 15, told the *Sunday World* how the trauma never goes away.

She finally broke free from controlling pimps after 11 years when she saw the news of her cousin's death at the hands of a sex buyer on TV.

"The further you get away from the abuse and torture you have experienced the more it hurts, really," she said.

"I was so shut down and disassociated. When you're entrenched you kind of don't even wake up for a long time after exiting [prostitution]."

"For me it can be the smell of the night air, it's a real trigger for me. I struggled to have a social life after six o'clock."

"I was bought and sold indoors and out and seriously it can be anything and you go right back there. It's life-long trauma," she said.

"It doesn't float away."

MEDICATION

Fiona said many women who get out of prostitution struggle to cope with the trauma and can end up on long-term medication.

"Mental health wards are full of bursting of women who have come out of the sex trade — breakdowns, the fibromyalgia, the physical conditions that many, many women I know have got."

"When you are being screwed sideways by between 10 and 12 men every day for years, that does something to you," she added.

She said that it is very difficult for women to get out of prostitution unless they already have an escape route planned.

"The reason why we say we are fine [when working as prostitutes] is because we don't have an exit strategy there and then."

"There's very few resources for the women to help them get out. It is the easiest thing to get into and hardest thing to get out of," she added.

She works with Dubliner Rachel Moran and the campaign group SPACE International, which wants to see the purchase of sex made illegal in every country.

Together they helped launch the 'Don't Buy It' campaign by Ruhama this week which seeks to highlight the savage exploitation behind the sex trade.

In her book Paid For: My Journey Through Prostitution, Rachel said: "I wasn't a prostitute, I was prostituted. There's a very big, significant difference."

She wrote how when she was just 14 years old her father died by suicide and her mother's mental illness worsened.

She ran away from home and found herself sleeping on park benches.

"The only thing that I had to sell was my body," she said.

Her older boyfriend coerced her into prostitution and soon she was, as Rachel puts it, "the service and product" for up to 10 men every day paying for sex.

For two years she worked on the streets and then spent five more years working in brothels and as an escort.

"I think the deepest damage really

EXCLUSIVE
BY EAMON DILLON



to me was how I came to feel about who I was," Moran says.

The danger and trauma caused by violent and manipulative pimps is difficult to comprehend for people who haven't gone through the experience.

One young African woman, 'Rena', told in a statement how she was trafficked into Ireland as a 20-year-old and ended up working for the notorious Irish vice-merchant TJ Carroll over ten years ago.

Her nightmare began in Benin City, Nigeria, when her step-mother introduced her to the vice trade, taking cash from bar customers who had sex with the teenager.

A businessman promised her a new life in Europe and took her to Dublin using a bogus passport.

After a month in a bed and breakfast in Ireland, her boyfriend told her that she was going back to work as a hooker.

CONDOMS

"He told me straight that I would be doing prostitution. I felt like killing myself that day," she said.

A Nigerian woman named 'Mary' came the next day. She told Rena that she owed them €50,000 for bringing her to Ireland.

'Mary' drove her straight to Sligo, stopping only to buy condoms, wipes and a mobile.

Rena was told to charge €160 for a half hour and €260 for a full hour. Mary then left and she never saw her again.

The clients, however, began turning up straight away.

"My mobile phone would ring and somebody would tell me a client was on the way. The clients would come any time after 11 in the morning up until two or three in the morning," she said.

"Some of the clients when they see me would just leave because they would say I am too young. They would feel for me."

A driver would call to collect the cash and deliver food and condoms.

In Drogheda Rena met a South African prostitute who advised her to get to Dublin and to look for asylum.

"When she left I had to start thinking of how I leave, if they find me they might kill me. I was scared."

RAIDED

The next day, despite being in fear of her life, she caught a bus to Dublin with €400 she had scraped together from tips given to her by clients.

She later went on to help gardai build their case against TJ Carroll.

A Romanian woman, 'Anna', whose story was later dramatised by the BBC, previously told the *Sunday World* how she made a dramatic escape from her pimps.

Incredibly, she had been arrested by gardai when a brothel in Galway was raided but the pimps were waiting for her immediately after the court hearing.

Eventually, nine months after being kidnapped by the gang, she decided on a desperate course of action to escape the Romanian pimps in Belfast by going to a local drug-dealing gang.

The gangsters had previously hired her, but instead of sex they wanted information on the Romanian gangsters.

"They thought I knew people more dangerous than them, so they had to leave me alone," she told the *Sunday World*.



"The clients would come after 11 in the morning to three in the morning"



TRAPPED: Rachel Moran (left) wants the sex trade made illegal in every country

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MEMORIAL: SIX MILLION JEWS WHO

BY EAMON DILLON

EACH year the survivors of the Holocaust grow fewer but the memory of Europe's darkest chapter still burns fiercely.

Two of those survivors will be present today at a commemoration for those who died, making sure that memory stays alive.

One woman whose family risked their own lives to save a Jewish family in Poland from the Nazi extermination camps said she feels responsible to keep the legacy alive.

"The responsibility falls on our backs, it doesn't matter if you're Jewish, Irish, Polish or Traveller it's all 'us' it's not 'us and them'," said Kinga Paszko, who works and lives in Ireland.

She will join Holocaust survivors Tomi Reichental and Suzi Diamond at the Mansion House today to mark the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz.

VICTIMS

SURVIVED: Irish Holocaust survivors Tomi Reichental, Suzi Diamond and Walter Sekules



ALL THOSE PEOPLE WHO WERE KILLED IN THE HOLOCAUST WERE KILLED AS RESULT OF RACISM...

"It is our responsibility to take notice, to take action," said Kinga about when it comes to racism today.

"Even if it's not on a mass scale, it doesn't mean it's not happening."

She added that "all those people who were killed in the Holocaust were killed as result of racism" that we can't let that happen again.

"We mustn't forget that lesson from history," she said.

During the Second World War, Kinga Paszko's great grandparents and their two sons sheltered the Altschiler family on their small farm in the Polish-Ukrainian village of Czabarówka.

In July 1943, Mojzesz and Liza Altschiler, Jewish shopkeepers from a nearby town, arrived with their son, Dow, at the doorstep.

Despite not knowing them, Kinga's great grandparents, Franciszek and Helena Hołubowic, made an immediate decision to take them.

HIDDEN

"They risked their own lives so they needed to keep it secret. She believed there was no other choice for her, just to come forward and offer help to where it was needed," said Kinga of her great-grandmother.

"To be honest for a long time I wasn't quite sure that I would be that courageous, realising that can actually put at risk your own children, but I think if it's needed to be done it's needed to be done."

They managed to keep the Altschilers hidden and alive until March 1944 when the Red Army took over the area.

The families stayed in touch after the Altschilers made it to Israel in 1947 and in 1993 the Hołubowic family were honoured as Righteous Among Nations — the title for non-Jews who risked their lives to help Jews during the Holocaust.

Kinga will be making a reading at the commemoration event in the Mansion House today where President Michael D Higgins is also due to make an address.

Also expected are two Holocaust survivors who live in Ireland, Tomi Reichental and Suzi Diamond.

Both have been outspoken about their own harrowing experiences as young children in Nazi concentration camps.

WE MUSTN'T FORGET THAT LESSON FROM HISTORY

Survivors keep alive memory of victims in a bid to fight bigotry in the world today

Tomi Reichental was just nine years old when he was sent to the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp.

He lost 35 members of his family in the Holocaust, including his 76-year-old grandmother Rosalia, who he remembers being dragged from their hut after her death and thrown on to a heap of corpses.

Ireland has been his home for the last 60 years but he only began talking about his experience in 2004.

He previously told how he made his decision to speak out because he doesn't want people to forget what happened, as racism and bigotry has become an increasing problem.

In 1944 at age nine, he was captured by the Gestapo in Bratislava and deported to Bergen-Belsen concentration camp with his mother, grandmother, brother, aunt and cousin until it was liberated in April 1945.

"I saw it all with my own eyes," he said.

Like Tomi, Suzi Diamond was also taken to Bergen-Belsen with her family when she was just two and a half years old.

Her mother died shortly after the liberation of the camp while her father had died in 1943 in the Soviet Union after being forced into the slave labour corps of the Hungarian Army. She and her brother Terry, who

passed away in 2007, had believed they were the only surviving members of their family.

In 2016 Suzi was contacted by a cousin living in Hungary who had eventually managed to trace her.

Today's commemoration for Holocaust Memorial Day in the Round Room at the Mansion House is hosted by the Holocaust Education Trust Ireland (HETI).

DIED IN WWII REMEMBERED



HORRIFIC: Piles of clothing at the Dachau concentration camp; (right) the gates of death at Auschwitz; (above right) a body is carried to a lorry; (far right, above) the ovens at Auschwitz

HORROR

ESCAPE FROM DEATH: Children huddle together after the camp's liberation

Quake's death toll now 21

BY **STEVE GAINES**

THE death toll from an earthquake that rocked eastern Turkey has climbed to 21 – with more than 1,000 people injured, emergency officials said.

Rescue workers were continuing to search for some 30 people buried under collapsed buildings in Elazig province and neighbouring Malatya, said health minister Fahrettin Koca, who said the death toll could rise.

Emergency workers distributed tents, beds and blankets as overnight temperatures dropped below freezing in the affected areas.

The quake hit on Friday at 8.55pm local time at a depth of 6.7 kilometres near Sivrice, the Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency, said.

Earthquake monitoring centres gave magnitudes ranging from 6.5 to 6.8. The quake was followed by 228 aftershocks.

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