

# Blue Beret

January 1997



# 1997





## SANTA CLAUS VISITS SAN MARTIN CAMP

On 24 December at around midnight, about 30 Argentinian children experienced the highlight of their Christmas in Cyprus. Jangling his bell, along came Santa Claus to visit them. He was wearing his usual red outfit and so did his lovely assistant, whom he brought along all the way from Finnish Lapland. The children's eyes were full of happiness and joy when they saw him, especially his big sacks filled with presents.



Father Christmas enters, followed by his beautiful assistant!

their presents. Some of the parents also received gifts, but they, especially, the fathers, seemed to derive more pleasure from giving a kiss to the beautiful assistant!

Lots of photos were taken, since Santa Claus' visit is slightly different in Argentina. Over there, he usually arrives some time during the night, leaving the presents under the Christmas tree, and then disappears without anyone seeing him.

Many questions were also asked. Parents had to answer why he had such a big belly, why he was wearing a belt and why he had such a long beard, but the most original question was "who was the assistant with him?" (they assumed she was Mother Christmas, wife of Father Christmas!).

The last surprise for the children was when Santa Claus and his assistant waved goodbye and left by car. Wasn't he supposed to travel in a sledge pulled by reindeers?? Well, maybe even Santa has become more modern today, but one thing will always stay - the Christmas spirit and the joy of children.



Wow, Santa really does exist!

## THE MISSION WAS ACCOMPLISHED

After six months of peace-keeping in Cyprus, it is time for the Argentinian Task Force 7 to say goodbye. There are mixed feelings in the air - happiness at the thought of returning home, but also some sadness. Having spent six months on this island, we have made many new friends and we wonder if we shall ever meet again.

We really enjoyed our tour here and feel proud of our contribution to the UN on this divided island. We are grateful to all those in UNFICYP and the Cypriots in both communities who made our stay so memorable.

We are leaving Cyprus, hoping that in the near future there will be a peaceful

solution on this beautiful island. If we ever return, let us hope it is for a holiday on a united Cyprus.

*Thank you for everything and goodbye.*



The officers of Argentinian Task Force 7

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The Blue Beret is the journal of the United Nations Force in Cyprus and, as such, is intended to provide a source of information on current events within the Force, on UN matters of general interest and on local tourist advice.

Articles of general interest are invited from all members of the Force. Photographs, together with captions, should accompany the articles.

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### FRONT COVER:

THE UNITED NATIONS  
1997

Photo by Cpl Barry Sheerin

# The Blue Beret



## EDITORIAL

In his address to the staff on 9 January, shortly after assuming his duties, the new Secretary General, Mr Kofi Annan, said among other things:

*"... Service with the UN is more than just a job. It is a calling... We join the United Nations because we want to serve the world community; because we believe this planet can be a better and more secure place; and because above all, we want to devote our time, our intellect and our energies to making it so. Wherever we are - in New York, Geneva, Vienna and Nairobi, in the regional commissions, the information centres and every mission, programme and operation - and whatever task we may have, political, technical, military or clerical, we are there because we want to ensure a brighter future for all the human race... We are the United Nations, and we believe our organization can fulfil the vision of our Charter, of a world where 'we the peoples' strive together for peace, freedom, economic and social justice and human rights... I appeal today to every staff member in every duty station to work with me to make our impossible job possible - to fulfil the enormous expectations the world has of us. There is no alternative to the United Nations. It is still the last best hope of humanity. That is our collective challenge. Now let us get on with the job".*

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On 4 March 1964, the Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 186 (1964), by which it noted that the situation in Cyprus was likely to threaten international peace and security, and recommended the creation of a United Nations Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP), with the consent of the government of Cyprus. As for the Force, the Council said its composition and size were to be established by the Secretary-General, in consultation with the governments of Cyprus, Greece, Turkey and the United Kingdom. The Commander of the Force was to be appointed by the Secretary-General and report to him. The Secretary-General, who was to keep the governments providing the Force fully informed, was to report periodically to the Security Council on its operation. The Force's function should be, in the interest of preserving international peace and security, to use its best efforts to prevent a recurrence of fighting and, as necessary, to contribute to the maintenance and restoration of law and order and a return to normal conditions.

Upon the arrival of troops of the Canadian Contingent on 13 March 1964, the Secretary-General reported that the Force was in being. However, it did not become established operationally until 27 March, when sufficient troops were available to it in Cyprus to enable it to discharge its functions. The three-month duration of the mandate, as defined in Resolution 186 (1964), began as of that date. The Force now consisted of the Canadian and British Contingents, and advance parties of Swedish, Irish and Finnish Contingents. The main bodies of the last-mentioned three contingents arrived in April. A Danish Contingent of approximately 1,000 as well as an Austrian Field Hospital arrived in May, along with additional Swedish troops transferred from the United Nations Operation in the Congo. By 8 June



1964, the Force had reached a strength of 6,411 all ranks. UNFICYP was thus established in 1964, with military contingents from Austria, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Sweden and the United Kingdom, and civilian police units from Australia, Austria, Denmark, New Zealand and Sweden.

The consolidation of the security situation that was achieved by the beginning of 1965, however limited and tenuous, made possible a gradual reduction of the strength of UNFICYP. From a total (military and

police) of 6,275 in December 1964, the Force was reduced one year later to 5,764, and to 4,610 by the end of 1966. The strength of the Force in December 1967 was 4,737. The general lessening of tension throughout the island in 1968, in addition to creating a favourable atmosphere for the Clerides/Denktaş intercommunal talks, also led to a further significant reduction in the strength of the Force. Between April and December 1968, its strength was brought down to 3,708. Further reductions took place gradually in the next two years; thereafter, the strength of UNFICYP from 1970 to 1972 remained stable at approximately 3,150. The strength of the Irish Battalion was reduced from 420 to 150 during this period. In this connection, Austria agreed in 1972 to augment its contingent,

which had consisted of the UNFICYP Field Hospital and an UNCIVPOL unit, by providing also a battalion of 276 ground troops. In October and November 1973, personnel of the Austrian, Finnish, Irish and Swedish contingents of UNFICYP were transferred to the Middle East to form the advance elements of the United Nations Emergency Force. Replacements for the Austrian, Finnish and Swedish personnel were promptly sent to Cyprus by the governments concerned; however, Ireland agreed to dispatch additional troops only to the Middle East, and the Irish Contingent in Cyprus was reduced to a token detachment at UNFICYP Headquarters.

## HISTORY OF THE NUMERICAL STRENGTH OF UNFICYP

A further reduction of 381 troops was made in the spring of 1974. However, this was soon overtaken by the events of July 1974, which made it necessary to increase the strength of the Force once again. They arrived between 24 July and 14 August, increasing the total strength of the Force by 2,078 all ranks to a total of 4,444.

When in October 1977, after more than 13 years of service, the Finnish Battalion withdrew from UNFICYP, the Secretary-General decided not to replace the Battalion. A compelling consideration in this regard was the critical financial condition of UNFICYP. A partial redeployment was carried out to fill the gap left in the area of the Nicosia International Airport, and for many years, the Force's strength stabilized at around 3,000 all ranks.

In February 1987, Sweden informed the Secretary-General that it had decided to withdraw its contingent by the end of the year, unless substantial improvements could be achieved, both in the Force's financial

situation and in the prospects for a political solution. The subsequent withdrawal of the Swedish Infantry Battalion was followed by the decision of Austria and Canada to augment their contingents, resulting in a net reduction of 206. In 1992, due to the deteriorating financial situation of the Force and frustration over the lack of progress towards a lasting political solution to the Cyprus problem, a number of troop-contributing governments decided to reconsider their participation in UNFICYP. In December 1992, the size of the Force was significantly reduced by the withdrawal of the Danish Battalion (323 personnel) and reductions in the course of 1992 in the British, Austrian and Canadian Contingents by 198, 63 and 61 personnel respectively. This reduced UNFICYP's strength by approximately 28 per cent. In June 1993, the Canadian Battalion was withdrawn. As a result, between June and September 1993, the Force's

strength temporarily dipped below 1,000.

However, this did not last long; the decision of the Security Council to change the system of financing of the Force that ensured payments to troop contributors was followed by an offer by the government of Argentina of a line battalion of some 350 personnel. Consequently, and after arrival of the Hungarian Platoon incorporated into the Austrian Battalion, as of December 1996, UNFICYP comprised 1,162 troops and 35 civilian police. The military personnel came from Argentina (390), Austria (314), Canada (2), Finland (2), Hungary (39), Ireland (32), and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (383). The police were provided by Australia (20) and Ireland (15).

The function of the United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus is defined by the Security Council in its Resolution 186/1964 (see page 4). That mandate, which was conceived in the context of the confrontation between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities in

1964, has been periodically extended by the Security Council.

In connection with the hostilities in July and August 1974 and the establishment of the UN Buffer Zone, the Security Council adopted a number of resolutions which have affected the functioning of UNFICYP and have required the Force to perform certain additional functions relating, in particular, to the maintenance of the cease-fire. These put additional pressure on the Force, added to a daily workload and forced changes in UNFICYP's *modus operandi*. All in all, with the new additional tasks life brings daily, the quality of the job being done has to be constantly improved. Efficiency and the best possible daily performance is of the essence.







## 32 REGIMENT ROYAL ARTILLERY SECTOR TWO



### 74 BATTERY (THE BATTLE AXE COMPANY) ROYAL ARTILLERY MARCHES THE BATTLE AXE INTO WOLSELEY BARRACKS



Members of 74 Battery (The Battle Axe Company)  
Royal Artillery on parade

74 Battery, the new Line Battery East in Sector Two, marked their arrival in Cyprus by marching the Battle Axe into Wolseley Barracks at 11 o'clock on Thursday morning, 12 December 1996. This is a time honoured tradition whereby the Battle Axe is ceremonially marched into every barracks that the Battery is posted to. The Battery was inspected by the Chief of Staff UNFICYP, Col RI Talbot, who was accompanied by the CO of 32 Regiment, Lt Col RNM Eggar, and the Battery Commander of 74 Battery, Maj RC Crawshaw. Bdr Steven Taylor is the present Battle Axe Man. He carried the Battle Axe on parade, and the pipe band came from the Scottish Signals Regiment.

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE BATTLE AXE

The following is an extract from the citation traditionally read out to all members of 74 Battery (The Battle Axe Company) Royal Artillery on 24 February every year:

"In December 1808, originally known as No 7 Company, 7th Battalion, Royal Artillery, based at Halifax, Nova Scotia, the Battery was ordered on expedition for the purpose of taking Martinique. Along with 7th Fusiliers, 8th King's Own and the 23rd Welch Fusiliers, the Company made up the Halifax Brigade under command of General Provost. After a short stop at Barbados, they landed at Martinique on 30 January 1809.

While General Maitland with the West Indies Division and Admiral Cochrane, with some of the largest ships of war for that time, attacked from the coast, the Halifax Brigade were tasked to attack from the land side.

On 2 February 1809, approximately six miles from Martinique, they were confronted by the French. The French took considerable losses and were forced

to retreat. Equipment was rushed forward and on 19 February 1809, the Battery, consisting of six 24 pounders and four 10 inch mortars, under command of Captain St Claire, opened fire. For five days and nights a continuous brisk cannonade of shot and shell was kept up. On 24 February 1809, the French hoisted a flag of truce and surrendered the Garrison with the honours of war to the number of 3,000 to 4,000 men.



Bdr Steven Taylor -  
the Battle Axe Man

The General Officers decided to bestow on the Company a beautifully mounted 1 pounder French gun, as a reward for the bravery and good conduct the Company showed during battle. But with the likelihood of a war in America, and knowing they could not take the French gun with them, the Company Commander chose an Axe mounted with a brass eagle and a brass drum. The Axe must be carried by the tallest man in the Battery on all general parades and shifting of quarters. As a distinguishing feature, the Battle Axe Man must wear a moustache."

A moustache in those days included facial hair everywhere with the exception of the chin.



Clockwise from the left:  
the COS, the Battle Axe  
Man, CO 32 Regt RA and  
BC 74 Bty RA



## 32 REGIMENT ROYAL ARTILLERY IN SECTOR TWO



32nd Regiment Royal Artillery assumed operational control of Sector Two at 2000 hrs on Sunday 8 December 1996. Approximately 40 members of the pre-advance party arrived in Cyprus on 25 November and, by 10 December, the last members of 39th Regiment Royal Artillery had left Nicosia on their return to the UK. The final flight of 32nd Regiment's personnel landed at Larnaca that afternoon.



Mr Malcolm Rifkind meets Capt  
Tshering Lama of the Gurkha  
Engineer Squadron

Electrical and Mechanical Engineers and a Royal Engineers Detachment from 69 Gurkha Engineer Squadron. The Regiment also has a training team

The Regiment is now settled in at Nicosia, with Line Battery West (18 Battery) based at UN 51 Kingston and the Battery Headquarters and Ledra Troop from Line Battery East (74 Battery) based at Wolseley Barracks. The Headquarters elements are mostly drawn from 46 Battery, with additional support from the Royal



From the left: Padre Ray Hayter, Revd DMT Walters,  
Bishop Clive Handford, Revd V Dobbin and Lt Col RNM Eggar

based in Dhekelia and provides soldiers and the Commander for the Permanent Force Reserve, based in the UNPA.

The Regiment has had to settle in very quickly, with over 70 OPFOR (opposing forces) incidents, including two shootings in the first week, as well as two VIP visits from the British Foreign Secretary (The Rt Hon Malcolm Rifkind QC MP) and the Chaplain General of the British Army (The Revd Dr V Dobbin MBE QHC DD). We hope that this hectic pace of life will soon quieten down and that 1997, "Reconciliation Year", can truly be the year in which Cyprus finds a solution to its problems.

### VISIT OF MR MALCOLM RIFKIND MP

On 16 December, just one week after 32 Regiment Royal Artillery had arrived in Cyprus, Mr Malcolm Rifkind, the British Foreign Secretary, visited the island and Sector Two. He was met at Wolseley Barracks by the Chief of Staff, Col RI Talbot, and CO Sector Two, Lt Col RNM Eggar RA, and he was given a short brief on Cyprus and Sector Two. There was then a quick flight to Flatro Bastion, courtesy of the UN Flight, followed by a drive through the old city of Nicosia along the Buffer Zone. The Foreign Secretary stopped at Maple House to meet and talk to some of the soldiers before moving on to UN 65, the OP at Paphos Gate. He then departed, via Wolseley Barracks, for a meeting and lunch with Mr Denktash, the Turkish Cypriot leader.

After lunch, Mr Rifkind returned to the Ledra Palace Hotel for a bi-communal Press Conference. This was transmitted live by Cypriot television and

was attended by over 70 journalists. As well as media reps from both communities in Cyprus, these included the BBC, CNN, Reuters and UK national press who had flown out from the UK with the Foreign Secretary to cover the trip.

After the Conference, he had just enough time for another quick meeting in the south, followed by a high speed convoy to the aircraft steps at Larnaca Airport before returning to the House of Commons to vote on a fisheries bill!



Mr Rifkind (left) with Lt Col Eggar  
(centre) and Gnr Hughes at UN 65



## A BRIEF ENCOUNTER WITH THE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF CYPRUS - Part V

The Kyrenia Range belongs to another world: that of the fourteenth century. Although this range is about 100 miles long, its highest peak is just over 3,000 feet. Running as it does along the northern coastline, its graceful and numerous foothills are rich with running streams and picturesque villages.

The Byzantines recognized the strategic importance of the Pentadaktylos range and fortified the northern part of the island by building huge castles on specifically selected sites. These castles served as observation posts, keeping under surveillance the northern coastline. For exactly

the same reasons, the Frankish kings, who ruled Cyprus between 1192 and 1489, rebuilt and improved the castles.

Today, their very names remind us of the crusaders and the Frankish period between the 12th and 15th centuries. These castles hold so much of the spirit of romance that if it had not existed, the word would have had to be invented to describe Hilarion, Kantara, Buffavento and Kyrenia, whose names fall upon the ear like the echo of a vanished world.

In this issue, the Blue Beret will cover the two castles of Buffavento and Kantara.

### BUFFAVENTO CASTLE

Buffavento Castle stands at 954 metres above sea level. Its exhilarating views in all directions will stun almost any visitor, a necessary reward after the long and strenuous hike to

Both chroniclers and travellers have pointed out that a lot of effort must have been made to build a fortress at such a height and on such dangerous terrain. Detailed descriptions of the castle underline the fact that nature has done everything needed for defence, and the aim seems to have been to build an inaccessible stronghold, rather than a proper fortress.

The history of Buffavento goes back to the time when King Richard the Lionheart captured the island in 1191. It is said that the King of England, hearing that Emperor Isaac Comnenos' daughter was in a very strong



castle. It provided an observation post and from its summit, ships could be surveyed. When any danger was perceived, beacon signals were sent to Nicosia or to the castle of Kyrenia.

Buffavento Castle originally gained its name from the Italian ("buffare" meaning to blow, and "vento" meaning wind). The Castle is also known as *Buffevent*, *Castello de Regina*, *Castle of Leonde*, *Castle of the Lion*, *The Hundred Chambers of the Queen* and *The Hundred and One Chambers*.

On his arrival, she came to meet him and put herself and the castle at his mercy, whereupon he captured it, and all surrounding towns and fortresses of the Empire were surrendered. This and other records prove beyond doubt that the castle existed since Byzantine times.

Being almost inaccessible, the castle was a political prison in times of peace and a sure refuge for the Lusignan Kings in wartime. The first definite information about Buffavento

in Lusignan times states that in 1232, Eschive Montbeliard, the wife of Balian d'Ibelin, took refuge in the fortress. In 1312, King Henry II, on his return from exile, imprisoned his brother there. Then in 1368, still under Frankish rule, Peter I transferred the unfortunate John Visconti, who had informed the King about his wife's adulteries, to Buffavento where he was accused of slander and left to starve to death.

The Castle is divided into two distinct groups of buildings whose plan is determined by the configuration of the terrain on which they are constructed. The lower section seems to have been barrack rooms and store rooms, and the upper part in the redoubt consisted of three groups of buildings. Here, the top of a flat rock supports an isolated rectangular building, inside which there are traces of plaster and painting. Possibly it was a chapel, but it might have been the mysterious "Queen's Chamber".

At the time when the Venetians concentrated their forces in Nicosia and the sea-port towns, they destroyed the staircase which linked the two halves of the castle. Nowadays, only one or two rooms are preserved, but in a ruined state. The remains of two churches also still stand, one dedicated to St Chrysostomas, an Archbishop of Constantinople, and the old one, said to have been built for St Helena after her visit to the Holy Land.

## THE MOUNTAIN CASTLES BUFFAVENTO AND KANTARA

### KANTARA CASTLE

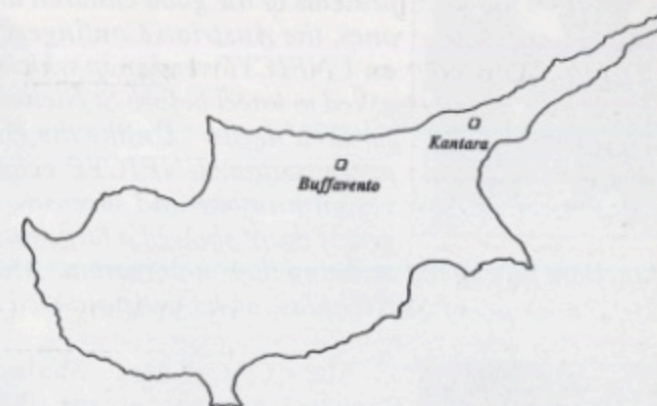
Kantara Castle is situated on one of the last peaks at the eastern end of the Pendadaktylos range at a height of 630 metres and at a distance of 67 km from Nicosia.

The name probably comes from the Arabic word meaning a "bridge" or "arch", most likely by the Arab invaders in the past or by the Maronites from Lebanon who are said to have had settlements in this part of the island. In fact, the whole setting looks like an arch and, like the other castles, it commands a breathtaking view of the sea and land surrounding it.

The castle was apparently built in Byzantine times, 200 years before Richard the Lionheart took possession

ness of the third crusade that, after the battle of Tremithousa, Duke Isaac Comnenos, chased by Richard the Lionheart, found refuge at Kantara. In this chronicle, the castle is mentioned as *Candasia* or *Candaira*.

Then, again during the Frankish period in 1228 at the beginning of the Lombardic War, the imperialist faction of the German Emperor Frederick II managed to capture the castle. The army, devoted to the



regent John of Ibelin, besieged the castle under the leadership of Anseau de Brie.

During Venetian rule and the Genoese occupation of Famagusta, which lasted almost a century, the castle of Kantara appears to have served

subsequently dismantled and abandoned.

One can gain access to the castle only on the east side where the main entrance gate offers some space to stand upright, while the other sides are extremely dangerous for anyone to walk.

At a short distance from the castle is the site of an ancient monastery of the Kantariotissa Virgin, which in the 13th century was the centre of resistance of the Orthodox Church to the Latin clergy.

The castle is in a fairly better state of preservation than Buffavento. The main entrance gate on the east side still has well preserved defences. A number of chambers, possibly used as guard rooms and the so-called Queen's room, can be identified. Cisterns, store rooms and a small Christian chapel still survive. The narrow gangway adjoining the cisterns is thought to be a secret passage.

The young forest in the district is called after the castle. The old Kantara forest of pine and cypress trees was destroyed by fire in about 1912.

The view from Kantara Castle is its most astounding feature that has made a strong impact on all visitors. It commands the Messaoria plain and, on a clear day, one can practically see the Taurus mountain on the opposing shores of Karamania.



of the island in 1191. In the 10th century, it served as an observation post, keeping under surveillance the movements of the Seldjuk Turks on the opposite coast.

However, some historians believe that it was built during the first years of the Frankish rule. At least it is certain that the Frankish kings improved it. It is reported by a wit-

ness of the third crusade that, after the battle of Tremithousa, Duke Isaac Comnenos, chased by Richard the Lionheart, found refuge at Kantara. In this chronicle, the castle is mentioned as *Candasia* or *Candaira*.

Under the Venetian dominion, the castle was guarded by a company of Italian soldiers detached from the garrison of Famagusta until 1525. It was then judged to be of no further use by the Italian engineers and was





## KRAMPUS NIGHT 1996

by WO1 R Storch



The Austrian Krampus Night for the last few years has become one of the highlights in UNFICYP's Event Calendar. Based on a traditional Austrian custom in which St Nicholas hands out presents to the good children and the Krampus punishes the bad ones, the Austrian Contingent altered this custom and adapted an UNFICYP version in which certain UNFICYP celebrities are asked to kneel before St Nicholas and receive "nominal awards" for their deeds. Unlike the Hollywood equivalent of the Oscar presentation, UNFICYP celebrities are subjected to hilarious verbal humour and sarcasm, to the delight of all guests. This year's event showed a large number of dignitaries attending the

function, all eagerly awaiting their nomination. Maj Höchtl proved to be an excellent choice for the role of St Nicholas, as he truly amused the audience with his black humour.



The CAO, Mrs Shirley Baptiste, did not escape the Krampus with the much discussed issue of working hours. St Nicholas suggested eliminating the UTC (Universal Time Coordinate) so that everyone is in the same time zone, thereby solving the ongoing dispute!

The COS, Col Ian Talbot, was yet again chosen to stand trial. It has been whispered down the corridors of power that he still had a score to settle with some countries which, once upon a time, were behind the iron curtain. It appears that the COS would like to raise the iron curtain again for a certain Hungarian who, as soon as he walks through the doors of the HQ building, causes a shooting, an earthquake or total failure of all computers in the UN.

The COO, Lt Col Nick Parker, couldn't avoid the Krampus this year. Rumour has it that he is trying to install video cameras all along the Buffer Zone to take care of manning problems...



Ms Elaine Krall and Ms Allyson McCordy, UNFICYP's "twins", were ushered to St Nicholas by the eager Krampusse. Due to the fashion followed by these trendy ladies and

the length of their skirts, there is a distinct possibility that UNFICYP may have to employ a full medical section to take care of a serious health risk - all the jaws which have dropped and eyeballs which have popped out of their sockets.



Maj Udvardy was next, and was exposed to rumours about certain vehicle establishment orders. Ever since his arrival, members of Pers/Logs Branch are desperately looking for their assigned vehicles...??

Commander AUSCON, Lt Col Viktor Horatzuk, could not avoid the spell of evil as the Krampus ushered him before St Nicholas. As the one responsible for this event, he suffered dearly, watched gleefully by all those in attendance. Nevertheless, he received a "decision-making" device to minimize his obvious pain at making decisions..

Last, but certainly not least, came Mr Peter Schmitz, the Senior Adviser. He was questioned on certain language interpretations, especially since St Nicholas happens to come from a neighbouring country which speaks (almost) the same language as his mother tongue!

*Be very careful - next year, it could be YOU.*



## AUSTCIVPOL DEFENSIVE TACTICS TRAINING

The Australian Civilian Police has recently introduced training courses in defensive tactics. These courses were first taught to 39 Regiment RA, and AUSTCIVPOL are now in the process of training 32nd Regiment RA.

The courses are being coordinated by Sgts Leech, Meagher and Morris. All those involved in the coordination and training have extensive experience, both training and operationally, in defensive skills and officer-survival techniques in their regular duties in Australia. The topics covered include the introduction to crowd control and crowd behaviour, the use of force and crowd control tactics and formations for handling demonstrations within UN guidelines. Senior officers and NCOs within 32nd Regiment have also received training in command and control in this topic.

The courses included theory and practical training, with examples of demonstrations and circumstances that may be encountered. The training was received enthusiastically by all members.



AUSTCIVPOL's Sgt Leech demonstrating crowd control techniques

It was decided that this training would be of use to all UN personnel serving in Cyprus, following the demonstrations which took place in August 1996 in Dherinia. The courses allow the UN to be seen to be taking a forceful and organised control of any demonstration situation.

## DID YOU KNOW?

The tail rotor is one part of the helicopter which is not very noticeable when the helicopter is in flight. In fact, the pilot himself cannot see the tail rotor when in the air. If you take a glance at the back of the aircraft, you will notice it, although it is difficult to distinguish in a photograph.

The tail rotor turns at more RPM (revs per minute) than the main rotor and is much louder. The shorter length of the blades does not mean that it is any less important, in fact it is essential to the aerodynamics of flight. The tail rotor is more delicate than the main rotor, and it is vital that its components are regularly serviced so that the two rotors are in complete coordination.

By the same token, the technical staff in UN Flight are known as the "tail rotor". Headed by 1Lt Eng Runza, the personnel in this section are rarely noticed or given much consideration by the



Some of the technical staff at UN Flight

public in general, however without their most valuable contribution to the maintenance and upkeep of the Hughes 500 helicopters, UN Flight would not be in a position to operate as effectively, efficiently and safely as it does at present.





# 1996 IN RETROSPECT



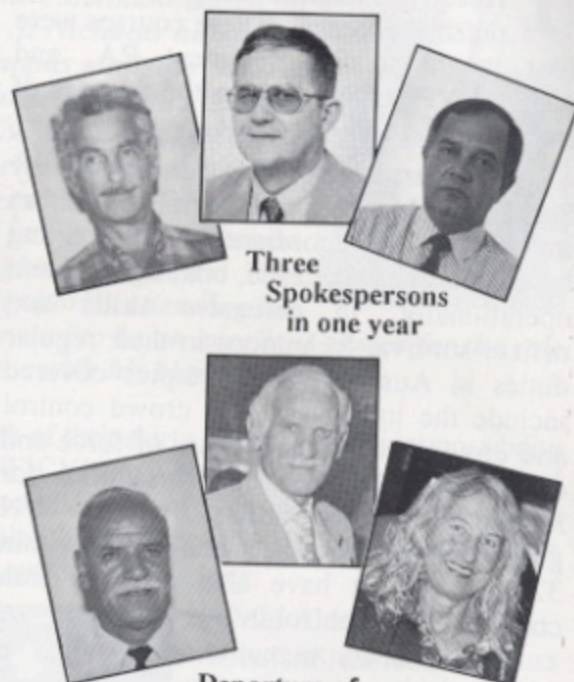
The SRSG, Mr Han Sung-Joo (second left) with the CM, Mr Gustave Feissel (second right) inspecting the Buffer Zone



Cyprus and its Cultural Heritage



Argentinian, Austrian and British soldiers from the Permanent Force Reserve



Three Spokespersons in one year



Departure of long service UN personnel



The CM, Mr Gustave Feissel, with Cypriot children during the celebrations of the 51st Anniversary of the United Nations



An Argentinian Officer and a wounded British serviceman during last August's unrest



Austrian and Hungarian soldiers shortly before taking action during the August 1996 unrest



The Humanitarian convoy in northern Cyprus



The two wounded British soldiers being presented with their UN Medals by the Force Commander, Brigadier General Ahti Vartiainen



The new SA, Mr Peter Schmitz



The new CAO, Mrs Shirley Baptiste



An Argentinian family celebrates Christmas in UNFICYP





### OUTLINE

Both myself and my family have been involved with the **CHERNOBYL CHILDREN'S PROJECT** for the last five years. The following is a brief outline of what the project is about.

As a result of the disaster on 26 April 1986, Ukraine and Belarus were the most affected areas. It took almost 70% of the fallout with over one million people having to be moved off their land. Belarus has lost 25% of prime farm land, hundreds of villages and towns cease to exist, and only 1% of land remains uncontaminated. The entire country has become a zone of ecological disaster. Thyroid cancer has increased 2,500%. The people of Chernobyl were exposed to radioactivity 300 times greater than the Hiroshima Bomb. There was a 30 km "exclusion contaminated zone" that has already increased to a 70 km exclusion zone; this is the area that local people call "Death Valley". Children, and especially newborn babies, were the worst affected, and many are born with some form of cancer or deformity.

The project's aim is twofold:

- (1) **To bring children, all suffering from some form of cancer, to Ireland for rest and recuperation.** The experts tell us that a month in the good, clean air of Ireland adds two years to their lives. "What a gift to give a child." In 1996, we brought 1,000 children to Ireland.
- (2) **To deliver aid to the region.** I had the privilege to be leader for the last two convoys. The convoy in April 1996 was by far the largest, taking 40 ambulances, five 38 x ton trucks and three Lada cars, all full of medical supplies. The aid consisted of medical equipment, medicine and food. (All our aid goes to hospitals and orphanages). We also maintain all the ambulances with necessary equipment, including engine parts.

The conditions in the hospitals, and especially the orphanages, are the worst I have ever seen. There are little or no supplies in the hospitals, and most of the orphanages are in a terrible state. Some of the deformities are unbelievable and most of these kids are abandoned. I personally have adopted two orphanages.

One is a run-down shed that houses about 40 kids. They all have cancer and other sicknesses, and are either abandoned or their parents are in prison.

The second orphanage is the one that affected me most. It is the home for abandoned children in Gomel. All the kids are very badly deformed and abandoned. No one goes to visit them, and if they are not claimed by four years of age, they are sent to adult mental homes. They will never be allowed outside, even for fresh air. All money raised from this walk will go to those two orphanages.

Every penny raised goes to the people worst affected, because we deliver all the aid ourselves. To date, I have raised over £25,000 and I am delighted to say it has made a huge difference to the people who need it most.

This is just a brief outline of what the Chernobyl Children's Project is about.

On 12 July 1996, I arrived in Cyprus to start my 12-month tour. It was a mission I have always wanted. As a very young soldier I served in Cyprus with 20 Inf Gp in a small fishing village called Zygi. It was a great experience for a young soldier and I always wanted to return. This trip is extra special because I have my family with me. The first few weeks were spent getting used to the job and as soon as I had that in hand, all my thoughts went into ways of making money for the children of Chernobyl. I have been involved with the charity for the last four years, and I must say it has taken over a large part of my life.

I have carried out successful walks in Lebanon before, so I thought I would try the same here in Cyprus. I know from past experience that if the walk is going to be a success, it has to be organised properly. I had all my homework done and I approached the Senior Irish Officer, Lt Col O'Callaghan, with my plan. He assured me of his backing and told me that he would do all he could to help. We were on our way.

Next stop was to obtain authority from the Force Commander. Not only did he give permission, but he put his name down for the walk. I couldn't go wrong. My plan was to get as many people as possible, both military and civilian, to take part.

I decided to give a talk on my experiences in the Belarus area. I have in my possession some videos and also a photographic display, and I was absolutely delighted with the turnout, since 60 people of all nationalities arrived. As a result, I received an invitation to give the same talk in the school at the base in Dhekelia.

## WALK IN AID OF CHERNOBYL CHILDREN'S PROJECT FROM KYRENIA TO NICOSIA

by BS P. Kelleher

Looking back, I must say that those talks really put across the message of how bad things were in the Chernobyl area. People came up to me later and said how shocked they were. All I heard was "*we didn't know*".

Once the date for the walk had been set and all the preparations had been made, my main concern was how many would actually turn up for the walk. I needn't have worried because to my amazement, 72 people arrived at the start point. One full family, Joe and Mandy Royle and their two children, completed the walk and we had three members of the Thompson family.

The plan was that each person doing the walk would take a sponsorship card and they were encouraged to send it home to their own country. When the big day arrived I must admit I was a little nervous. I knew all the ground work was done but my heart lifted when I saw the crowd outside Camp Command. Onto the buses and we were heading for Kyrenia. Thanks to the powers of persuasion from the COO, we had no trouble crossing the respective checkpoints.

We arrived at the start point and it was a great sight to see. We all got into our little groups and who else but the Force Commander led the way. The first part of the walk is by far the hardest. We had four miles of a very steep climb, and I did hear a couple of choice words. The COO and his wife took off like racehorses (thoroughbred, of course), and Wendy teamed up with who else but the Force Commander.

I thought I was doing very well going along my merry way when to my amazement, Mandy Royle passed me. Somebody shouted "POPS, you must be stopped if Mandy passed you!". Everything was going perfectly, when suddenly, the rain started coming down in buckets. It continued nonstop for most of the walk, but the rain couldn't dampen the spirit of this crowd. The crack was just mighty and the slugging was brilliant. There were a few remarks about a wet T-shirt competition for the women. Everyone helped one another, and I must say it was a pleasure to be part of this event.

We started out with 72 walkers and to my amazement, everyone finished inside four hours. We were like drowned rats when we arrived at the finish point at the Ledra Palace, but I know people were so happy that they had made a small bit of history. There was a great sense of achievement and comradeship at the end of the walk.

The logistics went like clockwork. Sgt Frank Prendergast did an excellent job en route. Water was available at very regular intervals, and the Military Police carried out their duties in a very professional manner. At the end of the walk, we were treated by Sector Two to the most welcomed cup of hot tea or coffee I have ever tasted.

The walkers all went their separate ways, some feeling the effects, but all united in one thought. We had done something for a very worthwhile cause. We finished off the evening at the Hib Club with a beautiful meal and the COO presented the certificates. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the walkers most sincerely for their time and effort and also for taking sponsorship cards. I would ask all personnel who have sponsorship cards to return them as soon as they have collected their money.

A notice of the money collected is currently displayed on all notice boards, and will be updated on a weekly basis until we have a final count. It was truly an international walk because the following contingents took part - Argentina, Austria, Britain, Finland, Hungary and Ireland.

On behalf of myself and the Chernobyl Children's Project, I would once again like to express my gratitude to the Force Commander, the COs of Sectors One, Two and Four, COO, SIO, OC Camp Comd, WO2 Pete LeQuelenec, Sgt Prendergast and a special word of thanks to all the walkers and sponsors. I have been asked to do another sponsored walk some time in April in the southern part of the island. If the interest and commitment is there, I am all for it. We could be doing this all over again.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO TO AID THE PROJECT

Organise a fund raising event in your Mess, club, work place or neighbourhood.

For further information, please contact BS Pat Kelleher, Ops Branch, Ext 518.

*Sponsorship money received to date is just over  
£22,000*





# UNFICYP WALK IN AID OF CHERNOBYL CHILDREN'S PROJECT

Photo by Sgt B Lipsett

