

BRITONS SET TO LEAVE 'Prison' row sparks off hijackings

THOUSANDS of Britons including groups of holidaymakers from Limerick, may be evacuated from the crisis-ridden island of Cyprus as the threat of a full-scale conflict looms larger.

British warships and aircraft were standing by to take 9,000 servicemen and women, 500 Ministry of Defence civilian staff, 16,000 family dependants and 4,000 tourists and residents from the island.

But with Turkish jets reported to be streaming

over the island the hopes of an air evacuation faded. All British service personnel and their families were meanwhile instructed to go to Britain's two sovereign bases, and tourists and residents were instructed to stay indoors.

The Foreign Office said that the need for evacuation was being kept under close review but a spokesman added: "Our prime objective is to ensure the safety of British subjects. No need for any evacuation from the sovereign base has arisen."

He added that Britons on the island were being given instruction broadcast by the British High Commission in Nicosia. Flights from Cyprus were again cancelled today and there was no indication when they would be resumed.

In Northern Ireland relatives of holidaymakers still in the island were listening to the radio for the latest developments on the island.

But information about individuals is almost impossible to obtain and travel operators were uncertain about whether flights were still getting away.

Mr. Stanley Patterson, of Cook's in Belfast, said: "Very little news is coming out and we cannot get in contact with the island."

"We know that flights started out on Thursday but with the Turkish invasion it is highly unlikely that any more planes will take off."

The total number of Ulster people there isn't being placed at any higher than 25.

Travel operators who have people booked for holidays later in the summer were today trying to re-arrange breaks for their clients.

A spokesman for one firm said: "At the start people were holding off cancelling until they saw what would happen, but now as the situation gets worse they are pulling out and we are offering either a refund or a new destination."

A Belfast widow was today sitting beside her radio and telephone hoping for news of relatives and friends holidaying in Cyprus.

Mrs. Annabel Hamilton, of Almsworth Pass,

has been in constant touch with travel firms for news of her cousin, Mr. George McKinley, and his wife Irene, who live at Ballysilly Road, and her friends, Mr. and Mrs. David McMeekin, who come from Glencarrig Street.

Mrs. Hamilton (56) has not heard anything from either couple who are holidaying separately on opposite ends of the island.

Ulster woman who got away—Page 2

BUSES WERE hijacked in Belfast's East End this afternoon after news reached the area that trouble had flared at the base of the conflict between Loyalists and security forces.

The trouble flared last night's clashes between Protestant prisoners and soldiers in which 28 people were hurt.

In this morning's flare up stones were thrown at prison staff and buildings, but this afternoon the prison was said to be quiet.

All visiting to the prison was suspended after this morning's trouble but at luncheon time it was resumed to all compounds except to the three loyalist compounds, prisoners in which 28 people were hurt.

In Belfast hijacked buses blocked the eastwards Rd. and Templemore Avenue while Loyalists held a protest meeting about the alleged harassment of prisoners by security forces last night.

Battles raging in war-torn Cyprus

HEAVY FIGHTING was raging on Cyprus today after a dawn invasion from the north by Turkish troops.

The swoop by troops was heralded by bomb attacks on Nicosia Airport, Kyrenia harbour and National Guard camps. Turkish ships shelled National Guard units along the northern coast.

And as clashes between Turkish and Greek Cypriots and retaliation by National Guard soldiers were reported, it was learned from Athens that Greece had declared general mobilisation, heightening fears of war between the two neighbours.

A Greek Government statement said Turkey had set in violation of existing treaties and obligations and added:

"Greece, denouncing these illegal acts by Turkey, states that it will defend with all its forces the legal rights and national interests wherever she deems they are endangered from the illegal and expansionist Turkish acts."

In view of the created situation general mobilisation has been ordered.

The statement came as Greece moved armour and troops to the Turkish border. All traffic was banned on the highway from Serris to the border to allow the powerful 10th division to move to the frontier.

The commander of the 1st Field Army corps, which comprises the bulk of the Greek army, including an armoured division, General Ioannis Davos, moved his head-

quarters near the frontier.

Some of the fiercest fighting on the island was in the heart of Nicosia, the capital. Volleyers of heavy machine gun fire and the thump of mortar bombs shook houses all along the "Green Line." The UN police division between the Greek and Turkish communities.

As fighting on the ground with Greek and Turkish forces using heavy guns, mortars, machine-guns and automatic weapons continued, thick clouds of grey smoke drifted across the city.

"Thousands of tourists, many of them Britons, are still stranded on the island, although others left after last Monday's coup which ousted Archbishop Makarios as President and led to today's intervention."

More than 30 women and children, mostly British and German, huddled in the basement of the Ledra Palace Hotel in Nicosia as the clashes grew more intense.

Nicosia Radio claimed Greek Cypriots had shot down four Turkish planes and that the invasion was being met with courage and enthusiasm.

Turkey's Prime Minister, Mr. Bulent Ecevit, said in Ankara that the invasion forces would do their best to spare the civilian population. He said it was not a "waging of war but a waging of peace," and the decision had only been taken after diplomatic moves failed.

"This is an operation to end the oppression and to save the people of Cyprus — Turkish and Greek alike — from despotism."

Britain's Foreign Secretary Mr. James Callaghan, has registered "strong disapproval" of the invasion.

The invasion set

later today with a ceasefire call expected to be the first item of business.

As the Turks landed, scattered shooting broke out in Nicosia between Greek and Turkish Cypriots—the first clashes of their kind reported since the coup. A Turkish-language radio appealed to Greek Cypriots to stay indoors, saying "This is a police action."

Four warships appeared off Kyrenia at first light.

Then shooting broke out between Greek and Turkish Cypriots along the ceasefire "green line" in Nicosia. It died out after about an hour.

A helicopter landed in the Turkish quarter and was fired on by National Guard units.

At the United Nations security council, addressed yesterday in the Cyprus crisis by Archbishop Makarios, was a meeting in New York

UDA will go it alone

THE INTERNAL tension between the Protestant paramilitary groups was today the decision of the UDA to go it alone.

The UDA announced its decision to resign from the co-ordinating committee of Loyalist paramilitary organisations and from the Ulster Worker's Council.

The move comes after recent reports of internal tension between Loyalist paramilitary groups, and the UDA said in a statement they have no quarrel with the majority of the committee and do not desire to upset Loyalist workers' unity.

They also stated that during recent months a series of attacks had taken place against UDA property and premises frequented by UDA personnel.

Siamese twins die

DUBLIN'S Siamese twins born 15 days ago at the city's Mount Carmel Hospital, died today despite a battle by surgeons to keep them alive.

The baby girls, joined at the centre of the body, died from congenital heart disease.

They had been kept in a specially adapted incubator at Our Lady's Hospital for Sick Children in Crumlin, Dublin, in the hope that a successful separation.

The children were not identified by the hospital at any stage.

Under fire

At one point a UN jeep came under fire in the capital. Its two Israeli occupants took shelter in the hotel.

The wife of the invasion force was not known for certain but a report put it at 5,000.

In reply to the invasion the self-styled President Nicos Sampson ordered general mobilisation and said: "All Greeks will defend our country to the last drop of blood."

British troop reinforcements and a Government Minister are to be flown out to Cyprus.

News of the British military movements came in the wake of a morning of almost constant domestic shooting in London, accompanied by Foreign Secretary Callaghan's bid to cool the growing tension.

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Liverpool ferry is rocked by bomb

A BOMB exploded on board the Liverpool ferry in neighbouring parts of the dockland area this morning, only a short time after the 1,000 passengers had disembarked and the crew of the ship evacuated.

It seems almost certain that the explosives were smuggled on board the crowded Ulster Queen at Liverpool last night, and assembled about the time the vessel docked this morning.

The device exploded in the vicinity of a small first-class lounge on the port side of the ship at 8.45 and, although smoke poured through hatches, it is understood that damage is not severe.

Crew members and harbour police combed the boat for further bombs, but after eight coaches at their RUC and Liverpool police were in contact at the hunt got under way for the members. Troops were standing by at the berth.

First indication of the drama came at 8.10 a.m. when a man claiming to be from the Provisional I.R.A., telephoned the Irish News and said there were three 10lb. bombs on the ferry.

Disembarked

By this time most of the 1,000 passengers, most of them returning from holiday on the mainland, had disembarked, and all the cars had been driven from the ferry's hold.

The remaining passengers were quickly evacuated and stood with the crew of about 60.

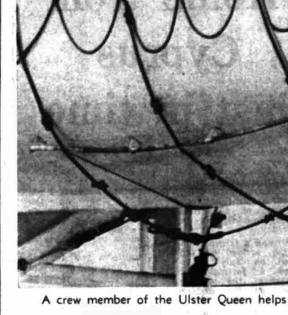
True to naval tradition Capt. Peter Lynch was the last man to leave the ferry.

Following the alert troops rushed to the area and fire engines stood by on the dockside.

A spokesman for the Staff in the Belfast Steamship terminal building the trip and the tables were complete with flowers — sweet pea in a GNR milk jug.

"There is a souvenir shop in one of the other coaches where people can buy the train to their friends," said Mr. Sullivan from Castlemaine Drive, Carrick. "This is the first time I have been on a steam train and I think it's great."

The eight-coach train included six of the Society's preserved coaches, one of them built in 1906. Included is a restored Great Northern dining carriage where snacks and refreshments were being served throughout



A crew member of the Ulster Queen helps Harbour Police search one of the lifeboats following the bomb explosion on board this morning.

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MAN TAKEN FROM BED AND KILLED

A 48-YEAR-OLD Strabane man was found dead in his own back garden early today one-and-a-half hours after being dragged from his bed by two masked men. Police are treating his death as murder.

The body was later taken to Altnagavney Hospital in Londonderry where it is understood a post mortem is to be held.

The RUC said the dead man's movements can be traced up to eight o'clock last night, and they appeal to anyone who may have seen him between that time and 1.15 this morning, or may have seen anything suspicious in the vicinity of his home, to get in touch with them.

Whee! the Portrush Flyer is on the line again

THE "Portrush Flyer" took off today — with a shrill blast on the whistle and the start of the 48-mile journey to the resort.

And promptly at 10 o'clock this morning No. 4, a shining preserved steam engine, hauled the train out of York Road station and stroded in a cloud of steam and smoke.

The Flyer is a vintage steam train which will be running four times this summer from Whitehead via Belfast to Portrush and back.

And promptly at 10 o'clock this morning No. 4, a shining preserved steam engine, hauled the train out of York Road station and stroded in a cloud of steam and smoke.

All three usually took after NIR's diesels but today they stepped back into the past and took charge of the steam locomotive.

"It's great to be back on a steam engine," said 24-year-old Mr. Graham. "We're used to No. 4 as we used to work with her on NIR before she became redundant."

The engine was bought by the Railway Preservation Society of Ireland, who have preserved seven locomotives and eight coaches at their Whitehead base. The Flyer is a joint venture between the RPSI and NIR and as such it is unique in Europe.

"This is the only case of a preserved train running regularly on a railway company's main line," said Mr. Tony Ragg, RPSI operations officer. "It's thanks to the co-operation of NIR that we are able to run the Flyer."

Included among today's passengers were a group from St. Nicholas Church

the trip and the tables were complete with flowers — sweet pea in a GNR milk jug.

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