

Independent Review Group

Jadotville

2021



*To*  
*The 156 Irishmen who fought in the Battle of Jadotville in September 1961*  
*and to*  
*Their wives, children and families, who supported them throughout*





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**Insert** (inside back cover): Lt Noel Carey’s map of ‘A’ Company Area of Operations, Jadotville



## ABBREVIATIONS - UNIT STRENGTHS - CODE WORDS

<b>Ranks</b>			
Lt Gen	Lieutenant-General	BSM	Battalion Sergeant-Major
Maj Gen	Major-General	BQMS	Battalion Quartermaster-Sergeant
Brig Gen	Brigadier-General	CS	Company Sergeant
Brig	Brigadier	CQMS	Company Quartermaster-Sergeant
Col	Colonel	Sgt	Sergeant
Lt Col	Lieutenant-Colonel	Cpl	Corporal
Comdt	Commandant	Pte	Private
Maj	Major	Gnr	Gunner
Capt	Captain	Tpr	Trooper
Lt	Lieutenant		

<b>Appointments</b>			
FC	Force Commander	CO	Commanding Officer
COS	Chief of Staff	Coy Comdr	Company Commander
AG	Adjutant-General	Adjt	Adjutant
QMG	Quartermaster-General	Ops Offr	Operations Officer
DAG	Deputy Adjutant-General	Int Offr	Intelligence Officer
OIC	Officer-in-Charge	QM	Quartermaster

<b>Units</b>			
AHQ	Army Headquarters	Inf Bn	Infantry Battalion
DFHQ	Defence Forces Headquarters	Inf Gp	Infantry Group
HQ	Headquarters	Coy	Company
Bde	Brigade	Armd Car Gp	Armoured Car Group
		Pl	Platoon
		Sp Pl	Support Platoon

<b>Medals</b>			
MMG	Military Medal for Gallantry	[MCM]	[Meritorious Conduct Medal]
DSM	Distinguished Service Medal	[DCM]	[Distinguished Conduct Medal]

<b>General</b>	
ANC	Armée Nationale Congolaise
Conakat	Confederation des Associations Tribales au Katanga
DFR	Defence Forces Regulations
E'ville	Elisabethville
GMT	Greenwich Mean Time
KAF	Katangese Air Force
Leo	Leopoldville
MA	Military Archives, Cathal Brugha Barracks, Dublin
NAI	National Archives of Ireland
NCO	Non-Commissioned Officer
No	Number (No 1 Platoon)
OC	Officer Commanding
ONUC	Opération des Nations Unies au Congo
ONUC	l'Organisation des Nations Unies au Congo
UMHK	Union Minière du Haut Katanga

General	
UN	United Nations
UNFICYP	United Nations Force in Cyprus
UNO	United Nations Organisation

Unit	Strength 1 September 1961 <sup>1</sup>	Example
Command	6,596	Katanga Command (Elisabethville)
Sector	2,389	Sector B (Elisabethville)
Infantry Battalion	623	35 Inf Bn, HQ, A, B, C Coys, Armd Car Gp
Infantry Group	333	1 Inf Gp (Kamina)
Company Group	154	[A Coy Gp in Jadotville 156]
Armoured Car Group	54	
Armoured Car Section	8	
Rifle Platoon	28	
Rifle Section	8	
Support Platoon	38	
MMG Section	10	
84mm Anti-Tank Section	12	
60mm Mortar Section	12	

35 Inf Bn Ad-hoc Code Words <sup>2</sup>			
People		Places	
Gendarmerie	FCÁ	Katanga	Sasanach
Police	Garda	Elisabethville	Bláth Cliath
Officer	Taoiseach	Jadotville	Luimneach
Civilian	Duine	Leopoldville	Londún
Belgian	Ultach	Kamina	Cill Cionnaigh
Blackman	Fear Gorm	Kasenga	Cill Dara
Whiteman	Fear Geal	Mokambo	Muileann Gearr
Indian	Fear Dearg		
ONU Person	Cara (Cairde)	Albertville	Árd Macha
Vehicles		Goma	Gaillimh
Heavy Truck	Capall	Bukavu	Bailebeg
Truck, Jeep Landrover	Asal	Manono	Maghalla
		Nyunzu	Nás
Saloon	Madra	Kolwezi	Cill Coca
Aircraft	Préacán	Kabalo	Corcaigh
		Dilolo	Dúnmor
		Luluaburg	Lismór

<sup>1</sup> UNA, S/787/4/7, 'Location Statements', 30 August 1961, pp39-40, and MA, Unit History, 35 Inf Bn.

<sup>2</sup> UNA S/593/4/3, 2 August 1961.

## **Acknowledgements**

The Independent Review Group is grateful for the information, advice and assistance it readily received from many sources during the course of its seven months' work.

In particular, the significant contribution made by both veterans and veterans' families had a far-reaching influence on our reflections, conclusions and recommendations.

### ***Veterans***

We are indebted to the veterans of 'A' Company, 35 Infantry Battalion who, through the medium of MS Teams, invited us into their homes, introduced us to members of their families, and recounted their experiences, memories, pain and concerns, with remarkable sincerity, honesty and authenticity:

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The same applies to those veterans of both the 35 Infantry Battalion and the 1 Infantry Group who also kindly accepted our invitation to engage with us: CQMS Muiris de Barra, Brig Gen James J. Farrell, Lt Col Seán Hennessy, Sqn Sgt Dessie Keegan and Brig Gen Patrick Purcell.

To all veterans, it was an honour and privilege to share your company, and to listen and record your remarkable experiences and principled expectations.

We remain conscious of those veterans who for many reasons were unable to participate in our consultation process. We genuinely appreciate your support for our work:

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To all veterans of 'A' Company, 35 Infantry Battalion and 1 Infantry Group, we salute your outstanding service as peacekeepers with the United Nations mission in the Congo in 1961.

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### ***Contributors***

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7. Lt Col Hugh McNamee OC 35 Inf Bn, Col Jonas Waern OC Sector B and Lt Col S.S. Maitra, Elisabethville 1961. (Comdt Art Magennis DSM personal collection.)
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30. Presentation of Unit Citation, Custume Barracks Athlone, 17 September 2016. Left to Right: Vice-Admiral Mark Mellett DSM, Minister Paul Kehoe TD, Brig Gen Howard Berney, Sgt Henry Dixon and Cpl John Gorman. (Defence Forces Public Relations Section.)
31. Presentation on behalf of personnel of 'A' Company by Capt Noel Carey (Retd) assisted by CQMS Seán Foley (Retd) to Mrs Judy Kearney, wife of Charlie Kearney who came to 'A' Company's assistance in Jadotville and was later with the company in captivity.

- Custume Barracks, Athlone, 17 September 2016. (Defence Forces Public Relations Section.)
32. Sgt Henry Dixon and Cpl John Gorman, Unit Citation, Custume Barracks, Athlone, 17 September 2016, (Defence Forces Public Relations Section.)
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  41. Capt Noel Carey with his family Left to Right: Ronan, Paul and Angela, and Vice-Admiral Mark Mellett DSM, having received his Bonn Jadotville. (Defence Forces Public Relations Section.)
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  44. Presentation ceremony An Bonn Jadotville, 28 February 2019. Left to Right: Michael Thompson IUNVA National Welfare Officer, Colonel George Kerton (Retd), Sergeant Brendan Healy, His Excellency Adrian O'Neill, the Irish Ambassador, Corporal Seán Tiernan, Vice-Admiral Mark Mellett, DSM and Colonel Richard Heaslip (Retd). (Michael Thompson's private collection.)
  45. The Irish Ambassador to Australia His Excellency Breandán Ó Caollaí presented Sgt Thomas O'Connor's An Bonn Jadotville to his son Martin O'Connor on 13 April 2020. Left to Right: Martin O'Connor, Ambassador Ó Caollaí and Detective Alexander Montgomery. (Martin O'Connor's private collection.)

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1. Comdt Pat Quinlan with 'A' Company personnel, 35 Inf Bn, Swedish SKP APC, Operation Rumpunch, Elisabethville, August 1961. (Comdt Art Magennis DSM, personal collection.)

## Chapter 1

### Introduction

#### *UN Mission in the Congo*

On 14 December 1955, Ireland took its place as the 63rd member of the United Nations General Assembly. Defence Forces officers deployed to the United Nations Observer Group in Lebanon in 1958. The first occasion that an armed Defence Forces contingent served on a peacekeeping mission was in July 1960, with the deployment of the 32 Infantry Battalion to the Republic of Congo, serving with Opération des Nations Unies au Congo (ONUC).

From 28 July 1960 to 11 May 1964 twelve Defence Forces units were deployed to ONUC, with a total of 6,191 individual tours of duty. Twenty-six personnel of the Defence Forces died while serving with ONUC, sixteen as a result of hostile action, seven in accidents, and three from natural causes.

One Military Medal for Gallantry and sixty-five Distinguished Service Medals were awarded to Óglaigh na hÉireann personnel who served with ONUC. Trooper Anthony Browne, 33 Infantry Battalion was posthumously awarded the Military Medal for Gallantry. Lt Thomas Quinlan, Sgt Walter Hegarty and Pte James Feery were awarded Distinguished Service Medals while serving with 'A' Company 35 Infantry Battalion. Cpl William Allen, also of 'A' Company, was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal for action with the 38 Infantry Battalion.

On 7 January 1961 the Defence Forces Chief of Staff, Lt Gen Seán MacEoin was appointed Force Commander of ONUC, a force of 19,828 personnel. On 21 February 1961, the Security Council adopted resolution 161(1961) authorising ONUC to use force as a last resort, to prevent civil war in the Congo.<sup>1</sup> The 35 Infantry Battalion was deployed to Elisabethville from 16 June 1961 to 23 December 1961. In parallel, the 1 Infantry Group was deployed to Kamina from May 1961 to November 1961. During this time, Defence Forces personnel also served in HQ ONUC (Leopoldville), HQ Katanga Command (Elisabethville), and HQ Sector B (Elisabethville).

On 24 November 1961, the Security Council adopted resolution 169(1961) which authorised the Secretary-General to take vigorous action, including the use of force, to complete the removal of all foreign military and paramilitary personnel from Katanga.<sup>2</sup>

#### *Jadotville*

The Independent Review Group has developed a comprehensive, evidence-based and authoritative account of 'A' Company's activities from September to December 1961. For the purpose of this Report, the designation 'A' Company refers to the personnel of 'A' Company

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<sup>1</sup> S/RES/161(1961), adopted by the Security Council at its 942nd meeting, of 21 February 1961.

<sup>2</sup> S/RES/169(1961), adopted by the Security Council at its 982nd meeting, of 24 November 1961.

Group and in the case of Jadotville also includes personnel attached to the company, such as the Armoured Car Section.

From the beginning of its work, the Independent Review Group realised that the narrative it was investigating was much more than just an account of five days of intensive fighting in a small town in Southern Katanga.

‘A’ Company, 35 Infantry Battalion was based in Elisabethville since its deployment to Katanga in June 1961. On 3 September 1961, between Operation Rumpunch and Operation Morthor, it was deployed to the mining town of Jadotville, 80 miles northwest of Elisabethville.

Under the command of its company commander, Comdt Pat Quinlan, ‘A’ Company, with support from a section of the battalion’s Armoured Car Group, fought valiantly at Jadotville from 13 September 1961 to 17 September 1961. Concurrently, ‘B’ Company and ‘C’ Company, 35 Infantry Battalion, and personnel of the 1 Infantry Group, were actively engaged in combat operations during Operation Morthor in Elisabethville and in Kamina respectively.<sup>3</sup>

The events in Jadotville in September 1961 form part of a complex multilayered local, regional, national and international narrative. ‘A’ Company, 35 Infantry Battalion was isolated in Jadotville, but its position cannot be seen in isolation in the military, political, diplomatic and geostrategic environments.

The linear narrative of ‘A’ Company’s arrival, preparing defensive positions, engagement in battle, ceasefire, surrender and captivity, must be seen in the context of the constantly changing operational environment in Jadotville, Elisabethville and Kamina. The narrative must also be seen in the context of the parallel decision-making process facing Comdt Pat Quinlan and Lt Col Hugh McNamee OC 35 Infantry Battalion, coupled with the military and diplomatic echelons in Katanga, including the UN Secretary-General’s Representative in Katanga Dr Conor Cruise O’Brien, ONUC’s Force Commander Lt Gen Seán MacEoin, and the Officer Commanding Katanga Command Brig K.A.S. Raja.

The performance and endurance under fire by personnel of ‘A’ Company, along with their weapons handling and tactical ability, confirms that ‘A’ Company was a well led, mature and cohesive fighting force, born out of service, training and experience, under the leadership of Comdt Pat Quinlan, supported by CS Jack Prendergast, CQMS Patrick Neville, the platoon commanders, platoon sergeants and the chaplain Fr Joseph Fagan CF.

Concerns have been expressed about the age profile of ‘A’ Company. Thirty-six privates were in the eighteen to nineteen age bracket. The incidence of under-age soldiers is not significant. Fourteen of ‘A’ Company’s personnel were over the age of forty, at least one of whom was in his fifties. Many personnel of ‘A’ Company were at, or were approaching, an age where active service in an overseas operational unit would no longer be a career option.

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<sup>3</sup> MA, Unit Histories 35 Inf Bn and 1 Inf Gp.

In September 1961, Jadotville was only one of a number of priorities for the 35 Infantry Battalion, within an operational environment of dwindling military resources, limited offensive and defensive capacities, and mounting Irish casualties. The casualties in Elisabethville included Tpr Edward Gaffney killed in action on 13 September, Cpl Michael Nolan and Tpr Patrick Mullins both killed in action on 15 September, coupled with five wounded in action at Jadotville and four at Lufira Bridge.

### ***Aftermath of Jadotville***

The Battle of Jadotville had a deeply unsettling aftermath. Jadotville was seldom, if ever discussed within the Defence Forces and especially in Army Headquarters. The Jadotville experience was willfully ignored, and knowingly silenced, initially in the 1960s, and then in subsequent years.

In a highly hierarchical and disciplined Defence Forces, the deference to authority and conformity, which was a mark of the post-war decades in Ireland, ensured that Jadotville became forgotten, except as an ongoing personal battle for the officers and enlisted personnel of 'A' Company, their comrades in the Armoured Car Group, and for many of their nearest and dearest.

Service with ONUC, including combat operations in Katanga, had a real and lasting effect not only on Defence Forces personnel, but also on their families. Many Congo veterans, including those who fought in Jadotville, Elisabethville and Kamina, returned to Ireland with memories of experiences that would haunt them forever and shape their lives. Defence Forces deployments in Lebanon and in the Balkans have resulted in similar experiences.

Unfortunately, recent events have shown that evidence-based historical accuracy has become a casualty in the evolving narrative for the memory and ownership of the Battle of Jadotville. The same applies to the medal process associated with personnel of 'A' Company. Both of these issues provided the catalyst for an independent review of Jadotville. Through this report, the Independent Review Group has redressed this situation.

### ***Seanad Éireann – 11 November 2020***

On 11 November 2020 the Minister for Defence, Simon Coveney TD advised Seanad Éireann that an institutional process exists in the Defence Forces which assesses within a prescribed timeframe, the contemporaneous facts and recommendations regarding the award of medals. Minister Coveney stated that personnel from 'A' Company, 35 Infantry Battalion (ONUC), who were recommended to be considered for the award of the Military Medal for Gallantry, or the Distinguished Service Medal, underwent due process by properly constituted Medals Boards in 1962 and 1965. The Minister noted that in recent times, the issue of awarding Military Medals for Gallantry, and Distinguished Service Medals, to some, or all, of 'A' Company personnel has been raised in a number of forums.

The Minister informed the Seanad that the Chief of Staff had proposed the establishment of an independent group of external experts to consider the entire case and evidence, including new evidence, if any, that was available.

Minister Coveney stated that this group would report its findings and recommendations to the Chief of Staff. The Chief of Staff would then make recommendations as appropriate to the Minister on the basis of that work and the recommendations that come from it.

### ***Independent Review Group***

The Independent Review Group on Jadotville was formally convened by the Chief of Staff, Vice-Admiral Mark Mellett DSM on 18 December 2020. The Chief of Staff appointed the following experts as members of the Independent Review Group:

- Comdt William Campbell (Retd),
- RSM Michael Dillon (Retd),
- Ms Linda Hickey, Archivist, Military Archives,
- Dr Michael Kennedy, Royal Irish Academy, and
- Brig Gen Paul Pakenham (Retd), Chair.

Col John Spierin (Retd) provided independent legal advice throughout.

From the outset, the Independent Review Group established its independent posture, reinforced its freedom of action, formed appropriate safety measures against external influences, and instituted an organised methodology to arrive at sound decisions.

In normal circumstances, the Independent Review Group would have immediately availed of office and meeting accommodation in Military Archives, Cathal Brugha Barracks, Dublin. However, due to Covid-19 restrictions, the Independent Review Group worked remotely. Meeting two to three days a week by means of a secure MS Teams platform provided by the Defence Forces, and working independently from home, the Independent Review Group conducted its work, including interviews. The Independent Review Group availed of secure accommodation in Cathal Brugha Barracks, Rathmines from 24 May 2021.

Having controlled access to Military Archives throughout, this particular Defence Forces resource played a significant role in the Independent Review Group's endeavours. On completion of its work the Independent Review Group will deposit its documents, submissions, and audio and video recordings of interviews in Military Archives during the month of July 2021. General Data Protection Regulations will apply in respect of all personal data.

Lt Col Daragh McKeivitt, OIC 'A' Administration Section, was the Independent Review Group's Liaison Officer with Defence Forces Headquarters and the Department of Defence. The Independent Review Group did not avail of any secretarial support.

### ***Terms of Reference***

Whereas preparatory work, including research and consultations, commenced when the Terms of Reference were promulgated on 18 December 2020, the Independent Review Group formally convened by virtual means on 7 January 2021.

The Independent Review Group successfully addressed all of the tasks outlined in its Terms of Reference. Maintaining its independence throughout, the Independent Review Group reached its



conclusions and recommendations, based on a rigorous and objective examination, and a thorough analysis of all available material and evidence, including oral and written submissions from ‘A’ Company veterans and families.

The Independent Review Group’s Terms of Reference can be seen in Annex A.

### ***Time and Space***

The Independent Review Group required sufficient time and space for consultation, research and analysis and to arrive at credible conclusions. From this process it made structured recommendations which were in keeping with its Terms of Reference.

The Independent Review Group was initially required to complete its work by 31 March 2021. Because of the absolute need to meet veterans and families, to consult with national and international experts and academics, coupled with the immense volume of source material, including documents, maps and photographs, and the sheer amount of interest and enthusiastic involvement from the veterans’ community, it was not possible to complete the work within the allocated timeframe. On 29 March 2021, an interim report was submitted to the Chief of Staff. The Independent Review Group sought and was granted an extension to June 2021.

### ***Format***

As outlined in the Table of Contents, the Independent Review Group’s Report contains thirteen chapters, including an executive summary and recommendations.

- Chapter 1 is this introduction.
- Chapter 2 contains the executive summary.
- Chapter 3 summarises the review’s methodology.
- Chapter 4 provides an historical overview of the regulations and procedures for Defence Forces medals and awards.
- Chapter 5 records the format and outputs of consultations with veterans, families, military experts, academics, authors and historians.
- Chapter 6 re-examines the operational environment in Katanga during 1961, including the Battle of Jadotville.
- Chapter 7 records ‘A’ Company’s return to Ireland, 1961–1962.
- Chapters 8, 9 and 10 outline and evaluate the process associated with the 1961 Medals Board, the 1962 Medals Board and the 1965 Medals Board.
- Chapter 11 examines the efforts of those seeking recognition for ‘A’ Company during the period 1968 to 2020.
- Chapter 12 records the Independent Review Group’s methodology, deliberations, analysis, conclusions and recommendations pursuant to its Terms of Reference.
- Chapter 13 advances the Independent Review Group’s recommendations.

Availing of its skills, expertise and experience, the Independent Review Group's recommendations derive from the evaluation and analysis of a considerable body of material, including documents, submissions and interviews.

Bearing in mind the sheer abundance of material in its report, the Independent Review Group cautions against a hasty rush to judgment, with an overreliance on the executive summary. Before arriving at any informed conclusions, this Report must be read in its entirety.

Any repetition of content within this Report is intentional. Although some overlap occurs between chapters, each chapter is presented on a stand-alone basis. The content of particular chapters does not always reflect the prevailing narrative within the public domain.

The ranks of individuals recorded throughout the report are those held in 1961, except where those individuals are providing contemporary information to the Independent Review Group, in which case their current ranks are used. For ease of understanding, the term 'Medals Board' is used rather than the Defence Forces Regulation's prescribed term 'Military Board', e.g. the '1961 Medals Board', the '1962 Medals Board' and the '1965 Medals Board'.

### ***Independent Review Process***

Navigating the Terms of Reference, the review process consisted of four modules, all of which were addressed in tandem: Consultation Module, Operational Module, Medals and Awards Module, and an Analysis Module.

The Independent Review Group's initial objective was establishing an effective communications interface with the veteran community, including families, drawn primarily from the 35 Infantry Battalion, but also from the 1 Infantry Group. Interviews, a key element of the Independent Review Group's work, commenced on 12 January 2021 and concluded on 14 June 2021.

The Independent Review Group engaged with 125 individuals, of whom ninety-three were formally interviewed. These interviews were central to the Group's work. All testimonies, advice and recommendations were fully considered, and are duly reflected in the Report as appropriate.

The Independent Review Group received and considered thirty-five written submissions associated with its Terms of Reference.

In order to implement its assigned tasks, the Independent Review Group identified and sourced material worldwide including: Defence Forces Headquarters; Department of Defence; Military Archives; Dublin Diocesan Archives; National Archives of Ireland; University College Dublin Archives; National Library of Sweden, Stockholm; National Archives, Kew, London; United Nations Archives, New York; and primary online sources including; the Dag Hammarskjöld Library, New York; the Central Intelligence Agency and the Historical Archives of the European Union, Florence.

The review process was informed by consultations with key national and international stakeholders, technical and tactical military experts, authors, academics, and historians.

### ***Sensitivity – Disclosure of Information***

For obvious reasons, it is considered necessary to highlight the sensitivity of the Independent Review Group's consultations, interviews, research, deliberations and report. As the Independent Review Group was addressing complex, contentious and delicate issues, this sensitivity must be respected by all.

The Independent Review Group had access to closed material of a sensitive nature. In the case of medal recommendations the Independent Review Group felt after considerable reflection that it was not appropriate to quote from award recommendations which are held on personal service records.

The Report contains reflections from virtual meetings with veterans and families. The Report discloses information and documents associated with recommendations advanced through the 1960s for the consideration of the award of promotions or medals in respect of ONUC and UNFICYP units, including 'A' Company personnel who served with the 35 Infantry Battalion.

The Report records issues that some might find distressing. If you are affected by issues contained in the Report, please contact your doctor as the first point of contact.

### ***Optimum Outputs***

The Independent Review Group has developed a factually based history of events associated with the Battle of Jadotville. In parallel, the Independent Review Group has developed a factually based record of the associated medal processes. These processes commenced in 1961, and continued through 1962 and 1965, to 1967 with the announcement of the names of sixty-five recipients of the Distinguished Service Medal from a list of 360 recommended individuals. The Independent Review Group's evidence-based outputs derive from sources available in national and international archives, including a wide range of both previously discovered and new material, sourced in Military Archives, the Department of Defence and Defence Forces Headquarters.

The absence of available written records on the Katangese side, and the lack of testimony from members of the Katangese Gendarmerie is a notable absence in the historical sources for Jadotville. To redress this situation, and to obtain further data on key players in Katanga, the Independent Review Group had contacts with international experts in Congo, Belgium, Singapore, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

The Independent Review Group has sought to demonstrate, rather than assume, the events in Katanga, encompassing Elisabethville, Jadotville and Kamina, and the subsequent activities in Ireland from 1961 through to 2020. In seeking to demonstrate the narrative, the Independent Review Group has relied on archival sources in Irish and United Nations archives, and interviews with veterans of the 35 Infantry Battalion and the 1 Infantry Group, supported with expert opinion from a range of international and national military experts, academics and historians.

Of primary importance to the Independent Review Group's work has been and remains the voices of the veterans of Jadotville, and their families. Their valued, credible, oral and written testimonies, while varied by the nature of human experience and memory, brought to the Independent Review Group's archivally based research, a living and evolving military and social history.

Prior to 1961, medals awarded to the Defence Forces were all service based. The award of the first Military Medal for Gallantry in 1961, and sixty-five Distinguished Service Medals in 1967 for overseas service with ONUC was an entirely new departure for the Defence Forces.

The Independent Review Group followed a rigid methodology, tracing the initiation of recommendations for the consideration of awards for 'A' Company personnel in Elisabethville in 1961. The methodology followed the chain of command from 'A' Company to HQ 35 Infantry Battalion, to Army Headquarters, to the 1962 Medals Board and the 1965 Medals Board, to the ultimate award of sixty-five Distinguished Service Medals by the Minister for Defence in 1967, and their subsequent presentation to the recipients on 4 June 1968.

Having significant expertise and experience in this area, the Independent Review Group examined the 1961, 1962 and 1965 Medals Boards, with an appreciation and understanding of the standards, procedures and practices of the time. By broadening its search, piecing together fragmentary evidence, and by collating material within Military Archives collections, the Independent Review Group has established the existence of a clear archival paper trail for the award processes associated with 'A' Company, 35 Infantry Battalion.

### ***Veterans and Relatives***

From the beginning of this process, the Independent Review Group's main effort focussed on the Jadotville veterans, and their respective families. Veterans and their families were provided the opportunity of telling their stories and placing these on record. The Independent Review Group was always mindful, and it was pointed out by the veterans, of the fact that this was the first time in sixty years they were asked to tell their stories to an officially established and recognised body.

The Independent Review Group was humbled by the dignity, courtesy, and honesty with which the veterans engaged with the members of the group, and related their memories, and often harrowing experiences. A tale was told that is often upsetting, sometimes angry, but strongly consistent, and which cannot be ignored by the State or by its Defence Forces. The veterans and families who spoke to the Independent Review Group created a new chapter in Irish military and social history, and placed on record many hitherto untold actions and episodes.

The experiences recounted by veterans and their families were sometimes so emotional that moments were taken during the interviews to afford everyone, particularly the interviewees, the opportunity to collect their thoughts.

The Independent Review Group acknowledges the critical support given to 'A' Company veterans by their wives, partners, children, wider family circle, friends, comrade soldiers, and the Veterans' Associations namely the Irish United Nations Veterans Association (IUNVA)

and the Organisation of National ex-Service Personnel (ONE). Without this support, openly acknowledged by the veterans themselves, many would not have survived the trauma they experienced in Jadotville, in captivity, and in other military engagements with the 35 Infantry Battalion. The same applies to veterans of the 1 Infantry Group.

Many of the memories recounted by the wives, sons and daughters, nephews and nieces, and grandchildren of the veterans, spoke of the sacrifices made, and the love their husbands, fathers and mothers had for their children, and, in particular, their love for each other. Despite pain and suffering, and the passage of time, these happy memories survive. These are memories they cherish. The members of the Independent Review Group were privileged to meet veterans and families during the consultation module of its work, and to hear these stories recounted.

### ***Society***

Ireland at the beginning of the 1960s was patriarchal and almost unquestioning of authority. It was a society where dissenting voices were only beginning to be heard and where the openness and transparency that we sometimes take for granted today had yet to establish itself. Another significant difference was the high level of religious belief and observance of many Irish people.

### ***Language***

Some of the language of sixty years ago, expressed in reports and other documents, is not appropriate today. The Independent Review Group has tried to ensure the language used and the layout of its report is accessible to all readers.

### ***Realistic Expectations***

As the Independent Review Group did not adhere to a preferred narrative, it is possible that the report will not be to everyone's liking, and may even be dismissed in some quarters. Likewise, the Report may cause disappointment to those who may have expected more from its recommendations. The Independent Review Group at all times was led in its deliberations by the oral and written historical source material available to the Group.

### ***Interventions***

In recent times some views were expressed on Jadotville which were the product of incorrect information and grandstanding for effect. These trails of inaccuracies, none most likely spread for malicious reasons, but through simple lack of knowledge, awareness and empathy, gave rise to false public perceptions, and undue expectations on the part of some veterans and their families.

Recent well-intentioned but ill-considered interventions have added to, rather than help resolve, the issues surrounding Jadotville. Advocating bravery awards for some, has left other Jadotville veterans feeling their contribution during the Battle of Jadotville was less than adequate. For many veterans of 'A' Company and their families, the integrity and status of An Bonn Jadotville has been diminished by such interventions.

While holding strong personal opinions and expressing them in an open and reasonable manner is a cornerstone of our democracy, some of the personalised and direct threats made against individual members of the Independent Review Group were both sinister and vicious.

Those who questioned the integrity of the Independent Review Group, and who made such disturbing threats should know they did not deter the Independent Review Group from its challenging and intriguing task.

***Final Word on Jadotville***

Is this the final word on Jadotville? There is rarely a final word, but we hope we have answered many of the questions that have emerged over the years about Jadotville. Historical narratives are by their nature incomplete. Some documentation could not be traced, and in certain instances perhaps never existed. Where these gaps occur, rather than indulging in unsupported speculation, we have pointed them out.

For some veterans, the unresolved trauma caused by Jadotville will always remain with them and with their families.

The veil of silence cast over the Battle of Jadotville for decades, and the stigmatising at all levels of those who fought bravely and survived Jadotville, does the Defence Forces no credit whatsoever. This must never happen again.

***Submitted to Vice-Admiral Mark Mellett DSM, Chief of Staff on 30 June, 2021***



**Commandant William Campbell (Retd)**

**Member**



**Regimental Sergeant-Major Michael Dillon (Retd)**

**Member**



**Ms Linda Hickey**

**Archivist, Military Archives**

**Member**



**Dr Michael Kennedy**

**Royal Irish Academy**

**Member**



**Colonel John Spierin (Retd)**

**Legal Adviser**



**Brigadier-General Paul Pakenham (Retd) Chair**

## Chapter 2

### Executive Summary

This chapter provides an executive summary of the contents of the Independent Review Group's Report. It is by its nature an overview of the Report.

This summary should not be read in isolation as the examination, analysis and findings of the Independent Review Group are contained in the actual chapters of the Report.

#### Implementing the Terms of Reference

1. ***Operational Environment: Paragraph 4a***

In chapter 6 of this Report, the Independent Review Group outlines its re-examination of the operational environment, in Katanga during 1961 addressing the political, diplomatic and military environment and operations conducted by 35 Infantry Battalion, 1 Infantry Group, the Battle of Jadotville and events encompassing Jadotville.

2. ***Historical Evidence and Processes: Paragraph 4b***

Chapters 8, 9 and 10 of this Report outline the Independent Review Group's examination of the recommendations, initiated by 'A' Company in 1961 and submitted by OC 35 Infantry Battalion on 9 and 28 February 1962, for the consideration of an award for 'A' Company personnel in relation to Jadotville or encompassing Jadotville. These three chapters record the Independent Review Group's extensive research and comprehensive analysis of the historical evidence and processes associated with the 1961 Medals Board, the 1962 Medals Board and the 1965 Medals Board.

3. ***Consultations and Submissions: Paragraph 4c***

In implementing para 4c of the Terms of Reference, through the medium of interviews and submissions, the Independent Review Group engaged with veterans of 'A' Company and veterans' families in order to uncover any additional, or new primary source evidence, regarding the award of medals for 'A' Company, 35 Infantry Battalion.<sup>1</sup> In parallel, the Independent Review Group engaged with national and international academic and military experts on the subject of the Battle of Jadotville, on ONUC's organisation, deployment, and command and control, and the Defence Forces medals and awards processes.<sup>2</sup> In addition,

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<sup>1</sup> For Nominal Roll, see Annex F of IRG's Report.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

the Independent Review Group received submissions, some of which were focused on medals, and others which referred to medals within a particular submission.<sup>3</sup>

4. ***Individuals not Recommended for an Award in 1961: Paragraph 4d***

Addressing para 4d of the Terms of Reference, the Independent Review Group took full cognisance of the events associated with Jadotville, or encompassing Jadotville, as contained in Chapter 6 of its Report, and was also informed by the material in Chapter 4, Chapter 8, Chapter 9, Chapter 10, and Chapter 11.

The Independent Review Group reflected on the provisions of DFR A19 (1948), DFR A19 (1965),<sup>4</sup> and DFR A9 (New Series) (2001), and examined written and verbal submissions received, especially those provided by veterans and families, and documents made available by the Defence Forces and the Department of Defence.

5. ***Submission and Recommendations for possible awards: Paragraph 4e***

The medal analysis conducted by the Independent Review Group, leading to its recommendations on this issue is outlined in chapter 12 of this Report.

## **Chapter 3 Methodology**

6. ***Introduction***

The methodology employed by the Independent Review Group was informed by its Terms of Reference and mainly focused on research and analysis and interview consultations. The review process consisted of four module stages: Consultation Module; Operational Module; Medals and Awards Module; and Analysis Module.

7. ***Interviews***

The Independent Review Group engaged with 125 individuals, of whom ninety-three were formally interviewed including veterans, veterans' families, academics and military experts. Interviews were conducted using the secure platform Microsoft Teams (MS Teams) and were recorded with audio and video. They will be preserved in Military Archives. Interviewees were sent consent forms and had the right to decide if their recording will be for the Independent Review Group's use only (during their lifetime) or will be available for research.

8. ***Submissions***

The Independent Review Group received thirty-five submissions from veterans, relatives, and academic and military experts. Submissions came in the form of written statements, audio clips, reports, and primary source material including photographs, letters, maps and documents. These submissions, along with the interview recordings, will form part of a new

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<sup>3</sup> For List of Submissions, see Annex G of IRG's Report.

<sup>4</sup> The reprinted version of DFR A19 (Medals and Awards) promulgated in 1965, incorporated all amendments issued since 1948.



Independent Review Group collection which will be deposited in Military Archives following the review. This collection will be catalogued, preserved, and made available for research. GDPR will apply to all personal data.

9. ***Collections in Military Archives***

As well as online sources, secondary sources, and Irish and international archives, the Independent Review Group had controlled access to all collections in Military Archives. Numerous searches were carried out and any relevant material was then reviewed and distributed to all members of the Group. Collections consulted by the Independent Review Group in Military Archives include: 'A' Administration Section Files; Chief of Staff Collection; Assistant Chief of Staff Collection; Computer Generated Records; Departmental Files; Jadotville Medals Queries; Medals Boards Collection; Oral History Project Collection; United Nations Overseas Collection; Private Collections and Service Records. This review also created an opportunity for new private collections which some veterans and family members expressed an interest in donating to Military Archives. These types of collections are such an important part of an archive and will create new research opportunities for years to come.

Because of the nature of archives and historical research, it is impossible to say if all material in Military Archives concerning Jadotville has been located. As future collections are catalogued and made available, official documents are deposited, and as further private collections are donated to the archive, more relevant information may come to light. However, the Independent Review Group is satisfied that it has seen sufficient material to form the basis of its Report and findings.

10. ***Service Records***

The Independent Review Group set out to consult the service records of all 156 personnel present at Jadotville in order to determine who was recommended for an award. Recommendation files are held on personal service records which can be viewed by the individuals themselves or, if they have passed away, by their closest next of kin. This process involved numerous searches of Military Archives and working with Area Records Offices to locate these files. The majority of service records for 'A' Company personnel are held in Military Archives. At the end of its search the Independent Review Group had located and examined 147 out of 156 service records.

11. ***Award Recommendations***

The Independent Review Group identified thirty-three 'A' Company personnel who were recommended for the consideration for an award by Lt Col McNamee, OC 35 Infantry Battalion. During the analysis of service records, thirty-one award recommendation folders were identified on personal files. Several names out of those who were recommended for an award were already in the public domain. It was vital for the Independent Review Group to find as many of these recommendations as possible in order to verify the type of award these individuals were recommended for, and to analyse the witness statements which accompanied their recommendation.

Equally as important to the Independent Review Group was the examination of the remaining 123 'A' Company personnel who were not recommended for an award. The aim here was to assess if their service records had any reference to Jadotville or to a possible award. Two members of 'A' Company whose service records were not located during this review were identified as having been recommended for an award on Lt Col McNamee's list of submissions in February 1962.

12. ***Ethical Considerations***

Ethical concerns which emerged over the course of this review included the fact that for some veterans and family members, who took part in the consultation module, it may have been the first time that they told their story in an official capacity. It was important to the Independent Review Group that interviewees were aware of the process and that they had contact with a member of the Group who was available at all times to discuss any concerns.

The Independent Review Group also sincerely considered the fact that this Report would contain the names of personnel, not only from 'A' Company, who were nominated and considered for an award by the 1961, 1962 and 1965 Medals Boards. Some personnel may not know that they had been recommended or considered. However because these names have been released into the public domain previously, through FOI requests etc., the Independent Review Group saw no data protection issues with including these names in its Report.

13. ***Limitations***

Conducting this review during the Covid-19 pandemic resulted in a number of limitations which included not being able to meet interview participants face to face and having to conduct Group meetings virtually.

14. ***Staff Support***

The Independent Review Group was supported throughout by the Defence Forces.

15. ***Footnotes***

Footnotes are used throughout this Report to reference material that the Independent Review Group consulted, to attribute quotations, and to provide additional information and guidance about a certain topic.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Defence Forces Medals and Awards**

16. ***A View on Medals***

The Defence Forces, Óglaigh na hÉireann, has since its foundation taken a conservative approach to the award of medals. This reflects a strong view that medals must be awarded sparingly to maintain their status.

The Military Medal for Gallantry was instituted in 1944. It recognised the performance of an act of exceptional bravery or gallantry involving risk to life and limb. The Distinguished Service Medal instituted in February 1964 not only recognised acts of bravery or gallantry that might not merit the award of the Military Medal for Gallantry, but also rewarded meritorious service.

The 1961 Medals Board set an extremely high standard with its award of the Military Medal for Gallantry 2nd Class to Tpr Anthony Browne, killed in action at Niemba.

Confusion then marked the deliberations of the 1962 Medals Board which was obliged to make recommendations not only for the Military Medal for Gallantry, but also for a medal, The Meritorious Conduct Medal, that did not and would not exist.

In 1965 the Deputy Judge Advocate-General<sup>5</sup> was of the opinion that under Rules of Procedure and Courts of Inquiry the Chief of Staff was entitled to comment on a Medals Board findings when forwarding it to the Minister.<sup>6</sup> This allowed the Chief of Staff to recommend to the Minister for Defence that the recommendation of the 1962 Medals Board of the award of a Military Medal for Gallantry be rejected.<sup>7</sup>

#### 17. ***The Responsibility of a Medals Board***

The 1961 Medals Board confirmed the principle, already enshrined in regulations, that as well as recommending cases placed before it to the Minister for Defence for an award, a Medals Board also has a responsibility to reject those recommendations made to it that it does not consider merit an award.<sup>8</sup>

The announcement of the awards should be the first indication to these individuals that they were recommended. Conversely, those who were recommended but were not awarded a medal should not become aware they were nominated. This intent is confirmed in guidance provided to the 1962 Medals Board that ‘under NO circumstances was the fact that a recommendation has been made or considered, [to] be made known to the person recommended until the award has been approved.’<sup>9</sup>

While an appeals mechanism for those who were unsuccessful medal candidates might seem to be in the interests of justice and fair play, this would inevitably result in political representations and media attention. It could also result in officers becoming unwilling to make recommendations for awards as an appeal would inevitably become the default position. This would be damaging to the integrity and reputation of the medals award

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<sup>5</sup> MA, box, ‘Jadotville Medal Queries’, minute signed by Cft S ÓL, February 1965.

<sup>6</sup> Paragraph 128 of Rules of Procedure (Defence Forces) 1954. S.I. No 243 of 1954.

<sup>7</sup> MA, box, ‘Jadotville Medal Queries’, Ceann Foirne to An tAire, An Bonn Míleata Calmachta, 5 February 1965.

<sup>8</sup> Paragraph 17, DFR A19, Medals and Decorations, An Roinn Cosanta, 24 July 1948. ‘The Military Board shall, before recommending the award of the Medal, satisfy itself of the incontestable proof of the performance of the act and that such act is sufficiently meritorious to merit the award.’

<sup>9</sup> MA, Medals Board Box 1, ‘Guidance of Boards Considering Orders’, undated.

system. What is required is a medals award system that is seen to be independent, trusted and one that has built-in checks and balances.

18. ***Administrative Instructions***

Despite the passage of sixty years since Medals Boards have been established, Defence Force Regulations and their associated Administrative Instructions have yet to specify the number of members required to form a Medals Board, or the ranks or appointments they should hold. There is no standing Medals Board. Award criteria have yet to be formulated and published that provide accountable, comprehensive, clear, and unambiguous guidance when considering awards under the six grades of medals that make up the Military Medal for Gallantry and the Distinguished Service Medal.

There are inherent issues associated with an award such as the Distinguished Service Medal that sets out to cover such a wide spectrum of categories. The same medal, at the same grade, has been awarded to individuals who have been killed in action and to those who have been diligent administrators/hard workers in overseas appointments. Additionally, the route a recommendation takes would seem to preclude and even discourage its award for leadership at company and battalion level in an operational environment.

19. ***Unit Citation***

On 17 September 2016, a unit citation was presented to ‘A’ Company 35 Infantry Battalion for its actions in Jadotville during September 1961. On 2 December 2017, surviving veterans and members of veterans’ families were presented with An Bonn Jadotville. The Explanatory Note appended to the Defence Force Regulation authorising the Unit Citation and its associated insignia states: ‘These Regulations provide for the award of a unit citation to members of ‘A’ Company 35<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion who took part in the siege at Jadotville in September 1961.’ The regulation therefore limits the award to that unit for that specified single event.

However, on 19 September 2019 it was stated in Dáil Éireann by the Minister for State at the Department of Defence that: ‘This was the first time a Unit Citation was awarded within the Defence Forces’.<sup>10</sup> This statement clearly indicates that a new award has been established, the first occasion for its presentation being to ‘A’ Company. No provision appears to have been made to formalise this new award.

Placing Medals Boards in the same category as Boards, which deal with matters such as the purchase and disposal of equipment; and Courts of Inquiry, which deal with matters such as accidents, injuries, and disciplinary related matters, is not appropriate. The examination and recommendation for awards should perhaps more correctly be the function of a military committee, with its own regulations and procedures that would provide it with workable criteria and would copper-fasten its independence.

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<sup>10</sup> *Dáil Éireann Debates*, 19 September 2019, Military Medals, <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/question/2019-09-19/43/>.

## Chapter 5 Consultations

### 20. *Conversations in a time of Covid*

To be honest, the Independent Review Group thought the extended national lockdown brought about by the Covid-19 Pandemic might represent a serious restraining factor. How were we to overcome this problem? Welcome to the world of video conferencing. After a few bumpy starts the Group began to settle down with the Microsoft Teams version of this now popular and indeed essential communications tool. The real challenge would come when we started our interviews, particularly with veterans who might not be too familiar or comfortable with the technology. What we had not factored in of course is that Irish soldiers are renowned for their ability to adapt and adjust and to make the best of what little is available.

### 21. *A Revelation of Interviews*

The interviews were a revelation and the high point of an unforgettable six months for us all. The names of the 125 individuals who engaged with the Independent Review Group can be seen in Annex F of our Report.

Each and every interview with a veteran was a unique and moving experience for the Group. We were privileged to have met them and their relatives and were welcomed openly into their kitchens and sitting rooms. The intimacy of the interview setting made for a more relaxed and informal approach, which we hope provided a less stressful atmosphere for participants.

We acknowledge that many participants found it painful to recall and discuss events and occurrences from sixty years ago, and to do so within an unfamiliar group. It was not easy, and we appreciated and were always aware of that fact. To allay their fears Mick Dillon of our Group, who so ably led our efforts in contacting veterans and their families across the globe made ongoing and informal contact beforehand with them. Paul Pakenham, our chairperson, also engaged with veterans and family members beforehand to reassure and to encourage them. We also followed up interviews with a phone call.

The value of these interviews to the Independent Review Group can be seen throughout our Report and in particular in chapters 6 and 7 and later in chapter 11. They provided a dimension to the history we were investigating that no documentary source could provide. The interviews informed the Independent Review Group's recommendations including those on veterans' affairs.

Many told us harrowing stories and it is to the credit of all participants they were so open and honest in their interviews and interactions with the Independent Review Group in revealing memories and incidents which, in many cases they had never before discussed in such detail. Our conversations confirmed the debt we owe to such a remarkable generation of Irish soldiers. The sincerity and lack of exaggeration in the veterans recall of events, the

generosity of spirit towards their colleagues and companions, their complete revulsion at having to kill and wound the enemy, all shine through even sixty years after the events. Their greatest criticism was directed towards distant superiors, who sent them, unsupported, to Jadotville. Veterans and family members expressed their thanks to have been finally given the opportunity of telling their story to an official body. It was a long time in coming.

22. ***The Recordings***

The Independent Review Group was particularly careful to ensure those being interviewed were informed beforehand that the interviews would be recorded. The recorded interviews will become part of the collection cared for by the Military Archives of Ireland. It will be accessible, subject to the terms laid down by each person interviewed, through the Independent Review Group Collection. There are also memories of the serving and retired soldiers, historians, researchers, and authors who generously gave of their time to us. The ability to speak to them through the medium of video conferencing, particularly those residing outside of Ireland, widened and enhanced our research.

As a result of these interviews a resource and a dimension has been added to the collections in Military Archives. In years to come researchers and historians will be able to listen to the authentic voices of those who fought at Jadotville.

23. ***Giving their time***

The ability to speak to serving and retired personnel of the Defence Forces, historians, researchers and authors, through the medium of video conferencing, particularly those residing outside of Ireland, widened and enhanced our research.

For any group engaged in consultations in the manner of the Independent Review Group, it is essential that they draw on the available expertise and any similar body of knowledge in the conduct of their work.

It was a privilege for the members of the Independent Review Group to have participated in these interviews. They have created memories that will live with us long after our report has been delivered.

The soldier members of the Independent Review Group are proud to have worn the same uniform as those Irish men who fought in the Battle of Jadotville under the leadership of Comdt Pat Quinlan.

## **Chapter 6**

### **Katanga 1961: Re-examining the Operational Environment and the Battle of Jadotville**

24. ***Context***

The Battle of Jadotville, involving 'A' Company, 35 Infantry Battalion from 13 to 17 September 1961 is traditionally presented in a one-dimensional manner as five days of

combat after the initial encirclement of the Irish peacekeeping force by the Katangese Gendarmerie. This traditional position views the Battle of Jadotville in isolation from events occurring elsewhere in Katanga, especially in Elisabethville with ONUC's Sector B, including 35 Infantry Battalion, and with ONUC's Sector C in Kamina Base, including 1 Infantry Group.

The performance and endurance under fire by personnel of 'A' Company, along with their weapons handling and tactical ability, confirms this was a well led, mature and cohesive fighting force, born out of service, training and experience.

If there were any concerns in relation to the age profile of 'A' Company, it was not so much that it was young, but that many personnel of 'A' Company were at, or were approaching, an age where active service in an overseas operational unit would no longer be a career option.

The Battle of Jadotville and the events before and after the battle have in recent years been seen mainly through the perspective of Comdt Pat Quinlan. Since 2016, they are also represented largely through the perspective of *The Siege of Jadotville* film.

The Independent Review Group has re-examined the events of the Battle of Jadotville and placed them in their contemporary perspective of ONUC launching Operation Morthor in Elisabethville, and ONUC units, including 1 Infantry Group under attack at Kamina Base. Chapter 6 also outlines the international chain of events which led to 'A' Company's deployment in Jadotville, shows where responsibility for 'A' Company's deployment lies in the ONUC chain of command, and seeks to integrate the missing Katangese perspective.

The key point is that 'A' Company's deployment to Jadotville and the Battle of Jadotville did not take place in isolation.

25. ***Operation Rumpunch***

In late August 1961, ONUC attempted through Operation Rumpunch to round up the mercenaries who formed part of Katanga's Gendarmerie – its armed forces. This operation was partially successful. As part of Operation Rumpunch and because of reports of unrest in the town of Jadotville, Force Mide, a Swedish-Irish force of two companies, under Swedish command, was sent to institute an ONUC presence in the town on 29 August. Sensing the negative feeling towards ONUC in Jadotville, and conscious of the worsening security situation in the town, Force Mide withdrew before completing its mission on 1 and 2 September.

26. ***Deployment to Jadotville***

This withdrawal, which was agreed by Swedish commanders but not necessarily by Katanga Command, led to a complaint by the Belgian foreign minister to the UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld that ONUC troops were no longer in Jadotville. On Dag Hammarskjöld's orders, the civilian head of ONUC Sture Linner and the ONUC Force Commander Lt Gen Seán MacEoin sent 'A' Company to Jadotville on 3 September. These

instructions were accepted by Brig K.A.S. Raja OC Katanga Command, by Dag Hammarskjöld's Special Representative in Katanga Conor Cruise O'Brien, and implemented by OC 35 Infantry Battalion Lt Col Hugh McNamee. No written orders were issued. On orders from Dag Hammarskjöld, which were amplified by Lt Gen MacEoin, 'A' Company was not to be withdrawn from Jadotville without the Force Commander's orders.

'A' Company, of lesser strength than Force Mide, was sent to a known dangerous area, yet UN intelligence suggested the situation in the town was not a cause for concern. Dag Hammarskjöld seemed not to realise that 'A' Company was half the strength of Force Mide. Sture Linner and Lt Gen MacEoin in effect tried to cover up the withdrawal of Force Mide, with the deployment of 'A' Company, making it appear to the UN Secretary-General and Belgian interests that there was a continuing ONUC presence in Jadotville.

With 'A' Company in Jadotville, ONUC made a significant tactical mistake in not securing the bridge across the Lufira River some sixteen miles from Jadotville on the road to Elisabethville. Allowing Katangese forces to secure and control the Lufira Bridge from the outset, meant that from its arrival in Jadotville, 'A' Company were in effect hostages of the Katangese government.

'A' Company's initial days in Jadotville were quiet. However from 6 September, tension rose and it was made clear to Comdt Quinlan that he and 'A' Company were not wanted in the town. Katangese forces were now in greater evidence and staged mock attacks on 'A' Company. 'A' Company dug in. Their location, on the eastern approach to Jadotville in a semi-residential area, had been chosen for them by the UN. Previous ONUC units in the town had based themselves in this area.

'A' Company's digging in undoubtedly strengthened their position during the Battle of Jadotville. The action is, in the popular mind, credited to Comdt Quinlan's specific tactical outlook. But digging trenches was part of standard operating procedure, was taught as part of Defence Forces training, and similar defensive trenches were dug by 1 Infantry Group at Kamina Base, and by elements of 35 Infantry Battalion in Elisabethville. The action of digging in is not as unique to Comdt Quinlan as it might appear through popular narrative. In siting 'A' Company defensive positions, Comdt Quinlan followed his standard Defence Forces training, though to a very high degree of effectiveness in protecting his force.

ONUC HQ and the Force Commander did not realise the severity of the worsening situation in Jadotville. They were inclined to dismiss 'A' Company's position and expected the tension in Jadotville to blow over.

By 9 September, 'A' Company was surrounded and increasingly isolated as local food supplies were cut off. Comdt Quinlan made a number of efforts to explain the severity of his situation to Lt Col Hugh McNamee in Elisabethville. These included sending Capt Liam Donnelly to Elisabethville to personally meet Lt Col McNamee. During this trip, Capt Donnelly attempted to obtain supplies for 'A' Company, and perhaps look into obtaining the 81mm mortars which 'A' Company had sent into storage rather than take to Jadotville.



Due to Gendarmerie control of Lufira Bridge, it was impossible to take other than medical and food supplies back to Jadotville.

27. ***Operation Morthor***

With the agreement of Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld, ONUC initiated renewed military action against Katanga through Operation Morthor on 13 September 1961. Expected to be a short sharp action to topple Moïse Tshombe's government and end Katanga's secession from Congo, it failed to achieve its objectives. 'A' Company was unaware of the commencement of the operation, and was not included in the associated operation order.

28. ***Battle of Jadotville***

As part of the Gendarmerie counter-attack, 'A' Company came under mortar and automatic fire in Jadotville and their positions were assaulted by platoon or section sized Gendarmerie for sustained periods from the morning of 13 September to 16 September. The Katangese intent was to capture as many of 'A' Company as possible, and hold them hostages. Numbers of attacking Gendarmerie have been exaggerated in contemporary accounts of the Battle of Jadotville.

Much distasteful exaggeration of casualties inflicted on the Katangese has taken place. Media and social media commentators have focussed on a 'body count'. 'A' Company veterans speak of inflicting casualties, but do so with respect for the attacking Katangese, and in full knowledge that they did not see the Gendarmerie as their ultimate enemy. Many veterans spoke of an awareness that in killing Katangese soldiers, they were killing husbands, brothers and sons of many Katangese families.

Being under protracted hostile fire was a completely new experience for 'A' Company personnel. 'A' Company's defences held, but on the evening of 13 September Comdt Quinlan consolidated his position into a tighter defensive perimeter. Irish machine gun and mortar fire was effective in disrupting Katangese attacks, which were sometimes lacklustre and tactically poorly executed.

During the fighting, Comdt Quinlan kept in constant contact by radio and telephone with HQ 35 Infantry Battalion in Elisabethville. However, Jadotville was only one of a number of priorities for 35 Infantry Battalion, within an operational environment of dwindling military resources, limited offensive and defensive capacities, and mounting Irish casualties. At this time, the casualties in Elisabethville included Tpr Edward Gaffney killed in action on 13 September, Cpl Michael Nolan and Tpr Patrick Mullins both killed in action on 15 September.

35 Infantry Battalion and its higher headquarters Sector B and Katanga Command, attempted two reliefs of 'A' Company, on 13 September and 16 September. Both were poorly led and executed, and failed to break through Lufira Bridge to Jadotville.

From the afternoon of 14 September, 'A' Company came under air attack from an armed Fouga Magister jet trainer of the Katangese Air Force. The Fouga strafed and dropped bombs on 'A' Company positions. The Fouga's attacks were also psychologically significant in inducing fear into 'A' Company. The Irish soldiers were not trained to defend against air attack. 'A' Company engaged the Fouga with machine gun and automatic rifle fire. The indication is that the Fouga was hit at least once, as subsequent to the Irish response, the Fouga flew at a higher altitude and its attacks were thus more limited in effectiveness.

Belgian and Katangese psychological war tactics drip fed stories to the international media of heavy Irish casualties in Jadotville. The Irish military and civil authorities were ill-prepared to counter these stories.

Despite limited Defence Forces support, it was largely left to the wives of 'A' Company personnel to comfort families in giving aid and assistance in response to the news coming from Jadotville. There was little effective official support provided to families. Highly efficient support networks were established between and amongst families, and in many cases it was the wives, and Comdt Pat Quinlan's son Leo, who passed on information on the situation in Jadotville in order to keep everyone as up to date as possible.

'A' Company continued to mount an effective defence. As well as Comdt Quinlan and his platoon commanders, as informed during interviews with veterans, three members of 'A' Company of particular significance were Chaplain Fr Joseph Fagan, CS Jack Prendergast and cook Cpl Bobby Allen.

By the evening of 15 September, 'A' Company's supplies of water had dwindled to a dangerous level. Casualties were light, with five wounded and no one killed. Ammunition supplies were dwindling, but 'A' Company could still meet attackers with fire. On 16 September, a helicopter bringing supplies made it to Jadotville but the water it brought was tainted by being carried in unclean containers.

## 29. ***Ceasefire***

As Comdt Quinlan and local Gendarmerie commanders met, the possibility of a ceasefire grew on 16 September. In parallel ONUC and Katangese officials entered into talks. With a relief column attempting to fight through Lufira Bridge, a local ceasefire was negotiated in Jadotville on the evening of 16 September.

The relief column failed to cross Lufira Bridge, the Katangese exploited the opportunity, and on 17 September, the local ceasefire in Jadotville was undermined. Fresh Gendarmerie were deployed to Jadotville and surrounded 'A' Company's positions. Comdt Quinlan advised HQ 35 Infantry Battalion of the deteriorating tactical and logistical situation he faced, and that 'A' Company were now in effect hostages of the Katangese. Unable to fight, Comdt Quinlan requested intervention by the Force Commander Lt Gen MacEoin and the Irish Foreign Minister Frank Aiken TD, who was now in Elisabethville on a fact-finding mission. He received no response.

30. ***Surrender***

In the late afternoon of 17 September, Comdt Quinlan signed the surrender of 'A' Company, after being informed by Katanga's Interior Minister Godefroid Munongo that 'A' Company would be well treated in captivity and that their weapons would be held in their accommodation.

To review the context, 'A' Company was exhausted after five days' action under fire. They had five wounded casualties. Water was almost non-existent. Food and ammunition were low. A break-out would be suicidal without transport. Two abortive efforts had been made to relieve 'A' Company, and it would take a week or more for another attempt. 'A' Company could not hold on in Jadotville without suffering severe casualties. Surrender was the only option open to Comdt Quinlan at this point. He had no other viable course of action. He informed HQ 35 Inf Bn of 'A' Company's surrender on the evening of 17 September 1961.

31. ***Captivity***

'A' Company entered captivity in Jadotville on the morning of 18 September 1961. For many personnel, the experience of captivity, with its constant uncertainty as to what the future would bring and the unknown intentions of the Katangese was as bad, if not worse, than the experience of combat.

Comdt Quinlan's reaction to being in captivity with his men saw him responding to leadership challenges he had no prior experience of or training in. He ensured that his men maintained the best physical and mental well-being possible. He protected them on occasions from harm. Communications with families in Ireland were restored. Recorded and written messages were passed back and forth from Katanga. In this network, wives and families, as well as the Defence Forces, played a role in passing messages.

On 11 October, 'A' Company was moved to a prison camp in Kolwezi. En route they endured taunts from local people that suggested they might be killed. Many veterans came to the conclusion that they were being brought in front of people, in particular groups of women, whose loved ones they had killed during the fighting in Jadotville. Conditions were harder in the camp in Kolwezi, there were physically intimidating inspections, and veterans recounted instances of comrades being beaten by the Katangese soldiers guarding them.

32. ***Release from Captivity***

A general ceasefire in Katanga came into effect on 21 September 1961. Casualty figures on the Katangese side in Jadotville numbered between an estimated 15 and 150. A precise figure was and is impossible to establish. After a failed attempt to release 'A' Company on 16 October, they were finally released in Elisabethville on 25 October, and immediately returned to active duty with 35 Infantry Battalion.

33. ***Report on the Battle of Jadotville***

On 28 October, the Force Commander Lt Gen MacEoin summoned Lt Col McNamee and Comdt Quinlan to Leopoldville. En route to Leopoldville, Comdt Quinlan wrote from memory his account of 'A' Company's experiences in Jadotville, from their departure from

Elisabethville on 3 September 1961 to their release from captivity on 25 October 1961. This account, dated 31 October, which was submitted to the Force Commander, was subsequently sent to the Defence Forces Chief of Staff. Comdt Quinlan's report was included, with no changes in substance, as Annex B on the Battle of Jadotville in the 35 Infantry Battalion's Unit History.

34. ***Aftermath of Operation Morthor***

The UN sought scapegoats for the failure of Operation Morthor and 'A' Company's surrender. It was much easier to blame military and civilian personnel on the ground in Katanga than top ONUC and UN officials such as Force Commander Lt Gen MacEoin and the late UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld.

Some 35 Infantry Battalion officers were scathing about the handling of Operation Morthor by ONUC and about how their own battalion had carried out the two attempts to relieve 'A' Company.

35. ***Initiating Process for Awards***

Proposals for awards were initiated by officers and NCOs of 'A' Company. In 1961 there was no culture of medals and awards in the Defence Forces, and the process of drafting statements was undertaken with some cynicism and little real enthusiasm. Officers in 'A' Company disagreed with some of Comdt Quinlan's proposals for medals, in particular they felt he was aiming too high with his recommendations.

Brig Raja spoke highly of Lt Col McNamee and Comdt Quinlan. A letter dated 2 December 1961, praising both officers, which Brig Raja sent to Lt Gen MacEoin, was in reality a polite compliment and not the basis of an award for Comdt Quinlan as many have later argued.

36. ***Operation Unokat***

In early December, tension rose again in Elisabethville as the Gendarmerie established roadblocks around the city, and ONUC moved to remove them as the precursor to a larger operation aimed at locking down Elisabethville and bringing down Tshombe's government. The repatriation of 35 Infantry Battalion was deferred as a new round of UN operations began.

During the December fighting, 'A' Company personnel were in action clearing the route to the old airport in Elisabethville, and during the Battle of the Tunnel, for both of which men from 'A' Company were later decorated. Comdt Quinlan also led a successful 'commando-style' raid on the Socopetrol oil storage depot, his men destroying the facility with anti-tank weapons and leaving the storage tanks burning for days.

37. ***Jadotville Affair***

During its final weeks in Elisabethville, tensions rose between personnel of 'A' Company and others in 35 Infantry Battalion. Since its arrival in Katanga, 'A' Company had been singled out as a sub-unit alone from others in the battalion. After Jadotville, they were slagged and rebuked for surrendering, and this exacerbated existing divisions in 35 Infantry

Battalion. Thus began a pattern of insults about cowardice, surrender, gossip, fights and punch-ups. This poisonous atmosphere was not resolved in Katanga, and was brought back to Ireland, as 'A' Company returned from Katanga in the run-up to Christmas 1961.

The unresolved and difficult aftermath of the Battle of Jadotville and how 'A' Company was treated was left for over four decades before anyone in the Defence Forces faced up to the challenge of trying to understand what had happened in Jadotville from 13 to 17 September 1961, and its impact on each of the 156 personnel of 'A' Company.

## Chapter 7

### 'A' Company Returns to Ireland 1961 - 1962

#### 38. *Reception: December 1961*

All personnel of 35 Infantry Battalion, including 'A' Company, were repatriated from Katanga to Ireland by Christmas Day 1961. Lead elements were received on their arrival by the Minister for Defence Gerald Bartley TD and the Defence Forces Chief of Staff Maj Gen Seán Collins-Powell. Initially 'A' Company personnel received a positive welcome across Ireland as returned heroes who had held out bravely against superior forces. Local and national newspapers for December 1961 bear witness to this positive welcome home.

#### 39. *Environment in barracks*

Yet within Defence Forces barracks, 'A' Company personnel began to receive the same insults and slugging they received in Congo after their release in October 1961. They were called cowards by their fellow soldiers, were ostracised, shown 'white feathers' as symbols of cowardice, and fights and scraps broke out over Jadotville. No one in authority did anything to remedy this situation, and as with all returned Defence Forces ONUC personnel there was no debriefing or post-mission support available to 'A' Company personnel.

#### 40. *Reintegration*

'A' Company personnel found it difficult in many cases to reintegrate into military and civilian life. They were returning to a society where most of their military comrades had no overseas service experience, and their civilian friends had no idea what military service, let alone overseas service with ONUC was about. The insults found their way into wider society, particularly in Athlone, Mullingar and Galway, towns in which personnel from 'A' Company, who were mainly drawn from Western Command, lived and brought up their families. Some of the children of 'A' Company personnel found themselves taunted and teased that their fathers were cowards; some had white feathers left on their schoolbags; others were insulted in the streets of their hometowns.

Family members noticed how their sons, brothers, husbands or fathers were distant from them and the world around them on their return from Katanga. They saw men who had lost weight, had become introspective, had lost their joie de vivre and who in some cases over the following months and years became bitter, violent and abusive. They blamed overseas service and Jadotville. Other personnel were able to put Jadotville behind them

and got on with their lives. The Independent Review Group also picked up heart-warming tales of happy families and contented family life. Jadotville affected different men in different ways.

41. ***Family Support***

However, suffering at all levels and ranks in 'A' Company continued after their return from Jadotville, their experiences back in Ireland were not unique. Other ONUC veterans experienced dreams and flashbacks. Some woke in bed at night bathed in sweat emerging in terror from dreams that they were back in Katanga amid gunfire. There was no Defence Forces support available to help these personnel and it was again down to parents, wives and families to try to personally help their traumatised fathers, husbands, sons and brothers as best they could with what limited resources were available.

42. ***Declining interest in Jadotville***

Slowly interest in Jadotville across wider Irish society began to fade. By the end of 1962 'A' Company were no longer the heroes of the previous year. The publication of Conor Cruise O'Brien's *To Katanga and Back* in November 1962 saw reference to Jadotville, but little new information or interpretation. Cruise O'Brien argued that 'A' Company need never have surrendered and was forced to do so because of the UN's confusion implementing Operation Morthor. The impact of the book on Irish and UN minds was such as to increase the vilification of Cruise O'Brien as the scapegoat for the UN's failure during Operation Morthor and to further increase reasons why it was thought inappropriate to talk of events in Katanga, including Jadotville.

43. ***A sense of disquiet: Dáil Éireann***

Questions were asked in Dáil Éireann in 1962 and 1963 as to why 'A' Company seemed to feel a sense of disquiet over its actions, why there was increasingly a cloud over its personnel and why none had been awarded medals as Comdt Pat Quinlan had suggested they would be, for the Battle of Jadotville. It was pointed out that perhaps it was because 'A' Company had surrendered or because they had suffered no fatal casualties at Jadotville that they had not been honoured.

44. ***Vilification continues***

The whispering campaign of vilification of 'A' Company continued well into the late-1960s. Some former 'A' Company personnel returned to Congo with ONUC, or served in Cyprus with UNFICYP, to get away from it as best they could. Others, including personnel who had wanted to make a lifelong career out of Defence Forces service, left and headed for work in Britain and elsewhere across the globe. Some personnel returned to Africa and to civilian jobs. Others stayed on in Ireland and stuck it out in the Defence Forces as there was no alternative.

45. ***Breakdown of trust and abandonment***

Within the Defence Forces the men of 'A' Company had nobody to talk to about Jadotville when they came home. What is worse is that many felt that they were not allowed to talk openly about Jadotville. The complete breakdown of trust and the abandonment which the

men of 'A' Company suffered, as a result of the destruction at Jadotville of their bond with the Defence Forces and the State which had sent them overseas in the cause of peace, meant that many of them had nowhere to turn in the years and decades after Jadotville.

## Chapter 8

### 1961 Medals Board Process

#### 46. *Introduction to Medal Boards*

When the Defence Forces deployed on overseas service with ONUC, the options available to recognise gallantry and service were limited. Only one medal was available, namely the Military Medal for Gallantry, instituted in 1944, and yet to be awarded in 1960.

The 1961, 1962 and 1965 Medals Boards were convened, conducted their work and submitted their findings and recommendations in accordance with the prevailing DFR A5 Courts of Inquiry, DFR A19 Medals and Decorations, and Rules of Procedure.

When examining the processes associated with the 1961, 1962 and 1965 Medals Boards, an understanding of the relevant legislation, regulations and procedures is required. During this period, DFR A19 provided for the Military Medal for Gallantry, DFR A10 for promotion for NCOs and privates, and DFR A15 for promotion for officers.

The provisions of DFRs A5, A10, A15 and A19, and the manner in which they were implemented during the period 1960 – 1971, are of significant relevance to the work of the Independent Review Group, and the contents of Chapters 8, 9 and 10 of its Report.

Arising from the institution of the Distinguished Service Medal in 1964, DFR A19 was amended on 12 March 1964. As the Distinguished Service Medal was not instituted in 1961, no member of 35 Infantry Battalion, including personnel of 'A' Company was recommended for this award at that time.

The recommendation, consideration, and awards process, generally followed the procedures associated with Military Courts of Inquiry. The Medals Boards of 1961, 1962 and 1965 were the first Medals Boards convened by the Defence Forces and show a rudimentary, if developing process, being undertaken by an institution that was somewhat reluctant to award decorations.

A recommendation for consideration for an award does not mean that an individual will receive the award. There is no entitlement to an award, such as the Military Medal for Gallantry, or the Distinguished Service Medal.

#### 47. *Deliberation of 1961 Medals Board*

The first Defence Forces Medals Board was convened by the Chief of Staff, Maj Gen Collins-Powell on 24 February 1961. The 1961 Medals Board considered five cases for the Military Medal for Gallantry and submitted its report on 10 March 1961. The deliberations

and recommendations of the 1961 Medals Board are significant in their illustration of the medals awarding process.

The 1961 Medals Board recommended Tpr A. Browne for the Military Medal for Gallantry, 2nd Class. Tpr A. Browne's award was approved by Minister for Defence Kevin Boland TD on 22 September 1961. The 1961 Medals Board shows an awards process in operation, and that both the Minister for Defence and the Chief of Staff had an active part in this process.

## **Chapter 9**

### **1962 Medals Board Process**

#### **48. *The 'Meritorious Conduct Medal'***

As a result of ONUC service, a new medal was planned and discussed between 1961 and 1962. The intention for the proposed medal was to cater for actions, which were not at the high level of bravery, gallantry or conduct, required for an award of the Military Medal for Gallantry. Provisionally called the Meritorious Conduct Medal, it was sometimes referred to as the Distinguished Conduct Medal. The Meritorious Conduct Medal was never instituted.

#### **49. *Lt Col McNamee's Recommendations***

On 9 February 1962, in accordance with the Adjutant-General's guidance, as OC 35 Infantry Battalion, Lt Col McNamee submitted recommendations for the consideration of an award, to the Adjutant-General in the following categories:

- Award of Military Medal for Gallantry: 6 Officers, 11 NCOs and 5 Privates: 22.
- Recognition of Meritorious Service: 8 Officers 15 NCOs and 16 Privates: 39.
- Promotions: 5 NCOs and 3 Privates: 8.

The initial figure of thirty-nine in respect of Recognition of Meritorious Service was later increased by five to forty-four on 28 February 1962.

Lt Col McNamee did not submit a recommendation for an award for any of his senior officers, including the company commander of 'A' Company, Comdt Pat Quinlan. Lt Col McNamee recommended all of the thirty-three cases for an award initiated in respect 'A' Company and attachments, and subsequently forwarded all of them to the Adjutant-General.

#### **50. *Medal Process – 'A' Company***

Whereas Comdt Quinlan initiated ten of the thirty-three witness statements, it is incorrect to state that Comdt Quinlan was directly involved in all recommendations for awards in 'A' Company, including three promotion recommendations. Comdt Quinlan's non-involvement is evident on a number of recommendations initiated by Officers and NCOs of the company. A list of names of those recommended for an award from 'A' Company, or a covering letter for recommendations signed by Comdt Quinlan, has yet to be located.



Some of the witness statements associated with 'A' Company's recommendations lacked detail, completeness, and focus. Statements would have benefitted from the inclusion of further evidence regarding the actions being described.

According to an Adjutant-General's instruction, personnel who were proposed for consideration of an award, were not to be advised that they were the subject of a recommendation.

51. ***Recommendations for Military Medal for Gallantry – 6 from 'A' Company***

Of the twenty-two recommended by Lt Col McNamee for the Military Medal for Gallantry, six came from 'A' Company: CS Jack Prendergast, Sgt Walter Hegarty, Sgt John Monaghan, Cpl Tadgh Quinn, Pte Michael Galvin and Pte Gerald Hennelly,

52. ***Recommendations for Recognition of Meritorious Service – 24 from 'A' Company*** Lt

Col McNamee submitted forty-four recommendations for 'Recognition of Meritorious Service', twenty-four of whom were from 'A' Company and the attached Armoured Car Group. The twenty-four were:

- Capt William Donnelly, Lt Kevin Knightly, Lt Noel Carey, Lt Thomas Quinlan,
- Sgt Tom Kelly, Cpl James Rea, Cpl James Lucey, Cpl John McDonagh, Cpl Tom McDonnell, Cpl John Foley, Cpl John McManus,
- Pte Robert Larkin, Pte Michael McCormack, Pte Tom Gunn, Pte Charles Cooley, Pte Michael Brennan, Pte Noel Stanley, Pte Thomas Flynn, Pte Michael Tighe, Pte Daniel Molloy, Pte John Nicell, Pte James Feery, Pte Joseph O'Kane and Pte Joseph O'Brien.

53. ***Recommendations for Promotion - 3 from 'A' Company***

Lt Col McNamee recommended eight enlisted personnel for promotion, three of whom were from 'A' Company, namely: Cpl William Allen, Cpl Francis Williams and Pte Matthew Quinlan. The inclusion of these individuals on the prescribed proforma, led to an opinion, reflected in Freedom of Information responses, that those recommended for promotion were recommended for the award of a medal. It is clear from their original recommendation forms that Cpl Allen, Cpl Williams and Private Quinlan were recommended for promotion, and were not recommended for medals.

54. ***The 1962 Medals Board***

Recommendations for awards from 32, 33, 34, and 35 Infantry Battalions and 1 Infantry Group were addressed by the 1962 Medals Board. At the outset, this board examined twenty-two recommendations for the award of the Military Medal for Gallantry, and ninety-nine recommendations for the proposed Meritorious Conduct Medal, a total of 121 recommendations.

In accordance with DFR A19, recommendations from 'A' Company, which in many cases were inadequately framed and less than complete, were considered by the Adjutant-General, who did not establish if a prima facie case for an award existed for each case.

The 1962 Medals Board found that DFR A19 was imprecise, its task was hampered by the lack of instruction from the Adjutant-General, and the direction to adjudicate provisionally for the award of the Meritorious Conduct Medal which, though agreed, had yet to be promulgated. This medal would become the Distinguished Service Medal, instituted on 18 February 1964, some two years later.

As the Chief of Staff was the convening authority for Medals Boards, the Board in effect reported to him, with the ultimate recommendations submitted to the Minister for Defence. This provided the Chief of Staff with some legitimate leeway in personally involving himself in the outcome of a Medals Board, in a manner not explicitly prescribed in Defence Forces Regulations.

55. ***Considering Recommendations for the Military Medal for Gallantry***

All of the twenty-two recommendations for the Military Medal for Gallantry were from 35 Infantry Battalion, including six from 'A' Company. The 1962 Medals Board proposed that the Military Medal for Gallantry, 2nd Class, be awarded to Capt Art Magennis, Armoured Car Group, 35 Infantry Battalion.

The remaining twenty-one individuals who were not selected for a Military Medal for Gallantry, were subsequently reconsidered by the 1962 Medals Board, for a recommendation for the award of the proposed Meritorious Conduct Medal. This led to a misconception that some individuals from 'A' Company recommended for the Military Medal for Gallantry were, in parallel, also formally recommended for a second medal.

56. ***Recommendations for the Meritorious Conduct Medal (Distinguished Conduct Medal)***

Following its work on the Military Medal for Gallantry, the 1962 Medals Board addressed recommendations for the proposed Meritorious Conduct Medal, which the board referred to as the 'Distinguished Conduct Medal'. For this process, they examined a total of 120 cases, ninety-nine original recommendations, augmented by twenty-one from those not selected by the board for the Military Medal for Gallantry.

The 1962 Medals Board agreed a provisional list of twenty-four individuals for the Meritorious Conduct Medal. Of the twenty-four on the provisional list, sixteen were from 35 Infantry Battalion, eight of whom came from 'A' Company.

A number of those 35 Infantry Battalion personnel on the provisional Meritorious Conduct Medal list had previous ONUC service. It is not explicitly identified in the Medals Board's provisional list for which ONUC tour or tours, and what specific action(s) the medal was to be awarded.

The 1962 Medal Board's provisional list for the Meritorious Conduct Medal, included eight personnel of 'A' Company, some of whom were initially recommended for the Military Medal for Gallantry: Lt Thomas Quinlan, CS Jack Prendergast, Sgt Walter Hegarty, Private Michael Tighe (also 32 Infantry Battalion), Private James Nicell (also 32 Infantry Battalion), Private Thomas Flynn, Private Daniel Molloy (also 32 Infantry Battalion) and Private Noel Stanley (also 32 Infantry Battalion).

There is nothing to suggest that the 1962 Medals Board went about its decision-making in a non-standard manner. The breakdown of recommendations and awards from the 1962 Medals Board shows a general balance between the subunits of 35 Infantry Battalion.

The 1962 Medal Board did not approve the award of the Meritorious Conduct Medal for ninety-seven individuals, including forty-seven who served with 35 Infantry Battalion, seventeen of whom were deployed in Jadotville.

57. ***Promotions***

No action was taken on promotions by the 1962 Medals Board. None of the three 'A' Company individuals proposed for promotion, Cpl William Allen, Cpl Frank Williams and Pte Matt Quinlan, were recommended for promotion by the 1962 Medals Board. Cpl William Allen was subsequently awarded a DSM 2nd Class for actions with 38 Infantry Battalion and was promoted to sergeant in 1971. Cpl Frank Williams was promoted to sergeant by an Interview Board unconnected to the 1962 Medals Board in May 1962. Pte Matt Quinlan left the Defence Forces without promotion.

The manner in which information about the conduct of the 1962 and 1965 Medals Boards became known publicly, meant that the exact nature of the award that Cpl Allen, Cpl Williams and Pte Quinlan had been proposed for recommendation for, was incorrect. Their names appeared on the April 1971 list of enlisted personnel who were 'recommended for the Distinguished Service Medal', but for whom no award was made. Because this list was used in an attempt to list who in 'A' Company had been recommended for medals, this retrospective analysis understandably, though erroneously, suggested that the three had been recommended for the Distinguished Service Medal, when they had in fact been recommended on Comdt Quinlan's and Capt Donnelly's recommendation for promotion.

In the past, attention to detail was not paid by those consulting awards-related material, to accurately convey to relatives the actual awards for which individuals were put forward by OC 35 Infantry Battalion, and to explain to family members that awards proposed by Lt Col McNamee in 1962 included medals, commendations, promotions and citations.

58. ***Reconsidering the Findings of the 1962 Medals Board***

With the institution of the Distinguished Service Medal on 8 February 1964, the recommendations of the 1962 Medals Board (one Military Medal for Gallantry award, and the provisional list of twenty-four individuals for the Meritorious Conduct Medal) were reviewed.

59. ***Addressing the Findings of the 1962 Medals Board***

By 30 May 1964, the proceedings of the 1962 Medals Board were provided to the Chief of Staff Lt Gen MacEoin. Following an analysis, initiated on the Chief of Staff's instructions, it was concluded that the recommendations of the 1962 Medals Board for the award of the proposed Meritorious Conduct Medal, an award not in existence when the board was convened, were invalid, and that a new Medals Board was necessary, pursuant to the amended DFR A19, and which would cover all ONUC units, (the 1962 Medals Board only dealt with units up to and including 36 Infantry Battalion).

The interim findings of the 1962 Medals Board for recommendations for consideration of the award of the Meritorious Conduct Medal were now considered void.

The 1962 Medals Board had recommended Capt Art Magennis for the award of the Military Medal for Gallantry, 2nd Class. An analysis, initiated on the instructions of the Chief of Staff, concluded that a lesser award was appropriate, as Capt Magennis' actions were not in the same way life-threatening as those of Tpr Anthony Browne MMG had been at Niamba. The analysis also considered the appropriateness of the involvement of the Chief of Staff in investigating the recommendations of the 1962 Medals Board. This included a response from the Deputy Judge Advocate-General that as the Chief of Staff had convened the Medals Board, he was entitled to comment on the findings, in the normal course of events, when forwarding the report to the Minister for Defence.

On 5 February 1965, Lt Gen MacEoin informed the Minister for Defence that he was satisfied that Capt Magennis' action, meritorious as it was, did not merit the award of the Military Medal for Gallantry as proposed by the 1962 Medals Board. He recommended that the medal not be awarded in this case, and proposed that as a new medals board was shortly to assemble in 1965 to consider recommendations for the award of the Distinguished Service Medal, Capt Magennis' case be submitted to this new board.

Lt Gen MacEoin's decisions negated all the findings from the 1962 Medals Board, not just those related to any unit or company. As recommendations for the Meritorious Conduct Medal were made by the 1962 Medals Board before the promulgation of the DFRs prescribing for the Distinguished Service Medal, it was now necessary to convene a new medals board. This was a regulations-based measure. Had the Meritorious Conduct Medal been approved by government, and regulations for it promulgated before the 1962 Medals Board finalised its recommendations, none of this would have happened.

All recommendations before the 1962 Medals Board for the proposed Meritorious Conduct Medal, and Capt Magennis' recommendation for a Military Medal for Gallantry, which was downgraded to a recommendation for a Distinguished Service Medal, were placed for consideration before the 1965 Medals Board. All medals' recommendations would be considered for the Distinguished Service Medal.

## Chapter 10

### *1965 Medals Board Process*

#### 60. *Convening Order – 27 May 1965*

Appointed by the Chief of Staff, Lt Gen MacEoin, the 1965 Medals Board was instructed to convene on 24 June 1965, and report within seven days of completing its work. The board submitted its report on 10 November 1966. The 1965 Medals Board faced four main challenges. They were:

- increasing numbers of submissions
- the inconsistent and often low standard of recommendations,
- a lack of systematic planning guidance, including criteria for the award of the Distinguished Service Medal, and
- an absence of an awards and decorations culture in the Defence Forces.

#### 61. *Unit Commanders' Recommendations – ONUC and UNFICYP*

The Independent Review Group is satisfied that all cases of personnel of 'A' Company 35 Infantry Battalion, recommended for consideration for either the Military Medal for Gallantry, or the Meritorious Conduct Medal, were evaluated by the 1962 Medals Board, and were subsequently included in the cases considered by the 1965 Medals Board.

Despite perceptions in some quarters, personnel of 'A' Company, 35 Infantry Battalion were not recommended for the Distinguished Service Medal, by either Comdt Quinlan or Lt Col McNamee as this award did not exist at the time, but were considered for its award by the 1965 Medals Board.

#### 62. *360 Cases for Consideration*

At the outset, the 1965 Medals Board had the following 142 individual cases to consider:

- Twenty-two cases for the Military Medal for Gallantry considered by the 1962 Medals Board, all of which originated from 35 Infantry Battalion.
- 120 cases from 32, 33, 34, 35 and 36 Infantry Battalions, and 1 Infantry Group,
- To this were added by late 1965, an estimated 218 cases, including additional submitted cases from 32 to 36 Infantry Battalions, and the full list of cases for ONUC units from 1962 to 1964.

These 218 additional cases, some from the first units in UNFICYP were included as the process advanced, bringing to a total of 360 cases which were eventually examined by the 1965 Medals Board.

#### 63. *Award Criteria*

The regulations prescribing the Distinguished Service Medal embodied many features of both acts and service. Comparisons between and across submitted recommendations were

problematic, particularly in relation to acts of courage versus acts of service. The 1965 Medals Board adopted a working guide for the three classes of the Distinguished Service Medal:

<b>Working Guide for Award of Three Classes Distinguished Service Medal</b>	
1st Class	For <b>Acts</b> (Bravery, Courage)
2nd Class	For <b>Leadership</b> and for acts or service meriting awards but not coming within the awards of 1 <sup>st</sup> or 3 <sup>rd</sup> Class
3rd Class	For <b>Service</b> (Resource, Devotion to Duty)

64. ***Unit Commanders' Conference – 15 October 1965***

In order to obtain uniformity on the criteria associated with the Distinguished Service Medal, on 15 October 1965 a conference was held in Army Headquarters, attended by unit commanders of ONUC and UNFICYP units. Lt Col McNamee, OC 35 Infantry Battalion, attended the conference. During the conference, reference was made to the difficulties facing the 1965 Medals Board, including the brevity and lack of detail in the witness statements supporting recommendations for consideration of an award.

When it came to specific details, many recommendations were too general or too vague. A note on the twenty-two additional recommendations received in 1965 from one of the ONUC units advised that there were no individual forms, skimpy reports in eleven cases and that it was impossible to make up individual files. In many cases, recommendations covered a routine action carried out with absolute devotion to duty, but which was perhaps not truly above the ordinary.

65. ***Additional Evidence***

There is no record on file of any additional evidence being provided to the 1965 Medals Board in respect of personnel from 35 Infantry Battalion, including 'A' Company personnel, though in some cases it was suggested that it should be provided. In setting criteria for the award of medals, the Adjutant-General had a responsibility to ensure that the recommendations which were presented to the 1965 Medals Board met the required standard. This could not be said to have been achieved in many of the cases for 'A' Company, 35 Infantry Battalion personnel seen by the Independent Review Group.

66. ***November 1965***

As no recommendations were submitted to the 1965 Medals Board for the Military Medal for Gallantry, and the twenty-two recommended for this medal in 1961 were converted by the 1962 Medals Board to the 'Meritorious Conduct Medal', the 1965 Medals Board was evaluating recommendations for only one medal, namely the Distinguished Service Medal.

67. In November 1965, the 1965 Medals Board prepared a draft report proposing thirty-three names for recommendation for the award of the Distinguished Service Medal. This draft report addressed the first cohort of 142 cases examined by the 1962 Medals Board, which

included those submitted by Lt Col McNamee. Of the thirty-three Distinguished Service Medals recommended by the draft November report, fourteen came from 35 Infantry Battalion, including five from 'A' Company, three of whom (an officer, an NCO and a private) had fought at Jadotville.

In the draft report of November 1965, five individuals from 'A' Company, 35 Infantry Battalion were recommended by the 1965 Medals Board for the award of Distinguished Service Medals, three of whom explicitly for acts in Jadotville: Lt Tom Quinlan (Jadotville, Elisabethville), Sgt Walter Hegarty (Jadotville, Elisabethville and for service with 32 Inf Bn), Cpl John McManus (Elisabethville), Pte James Feery (Elisabethville) and Pte Michael Tighe (Elisabethville, with reference also to Jadotville).

67. ***Additional Recommendations – November 1965***

Some ONUC battalions, such as 36 Infantry Battalion, reconvened their unit recommendations boards, and reconsidered their recommendations for awards. An additional 218 recommendations, all from ONUC service, were now submitted for consideration from August 1965. Eighty-two came from 36 Infantry Battalion. The 1965 Medals Board would not report until all the 360 cases were evaluated. The surviving documentation shows that the 1965 Medals Board had by November 1965 concluded its deliberations on the initial 360 cases submitted to it, which included those from 35 Infantry Battalion.

68. ***Conduct and Tours of Overseas Duty***

Once it was provisionally decided to award a Distinguished Service Medal, the individual's conduct assessment and military ability were considered, together with the number of his overseas service tours. This was important in making a final decision, although the number of tours of duty undertaken was never the sole reason an individual might receive an award. There are multiple copies of draft citations from the 1965 Medals Board on file in Military Archives. Some are for individuals who were not ultimately awarded medals. In one case, this was due to an individual from 'A' Company, 35 Infantry Battalion who had been declared an illegal absentee at the time the awards were made. In other cases, it is for individuals who were, apparently, at the last minute taken off the list for unknown reasons. None of these latter cases were from 'A' Company, 35 Infantry Battalion.

69. ***Submission of Report – 10 November 1966***

The 1965 Medals Board submitted its report to the Chief of Staff, Lt Gen MacEoin on 10 November 1966. An accompanying submission explained how cases were assessed. The 1965 Medals Board held the view that fighting bravely and with competent skill was to be expected of all personnel. Being under fire and returning fire was not enough in itself to secure an award. Officers were expected to show resourcefulness and devotion to duty. The 1965 Medals Board recommended that a standing Board of Officers be established on a permanent basis, that the range of medals should be examined, and that instructions should be issued regarding the criteria for the submitting of recommendations for medals.

70. ***Analysis of Personnel Recommended for the Distinguished Service Medal***

Having examined 360 cases, sixty-five personnel were recommended by the 1965 Medals Board to the Minister for Defence for the award of the Distinguished Service Medal for service with ONUC. The medal was to be awarded to eighteen officers, forty NCOs and seven privates.

The 1965 Medals Board did not recommend eighty-five officers for the Distinguished Service Medal: one colonel, five lieutenant-colonels, thirty-one commandants and forty-eight captains / lieutenants. These include Capt Liam Donnelly and Lt Noel Carey from 'A' Company, 35 Infantry Battalion. Notwithstanding the content of their recommendations, the range of ranks and the number of non-awards for officers reflects significant moral courage by the 1965 Medals Board, and is indicative of the independence, integrity and credibility expected from Medals Boards.

There is no evidence on paper that any undue influence from any external party was exerted on the 1965 Medals Board. Some speculated, but none of the stakeholders and interested parties interviewed by the Independent Review Group was able to provide specific proven evidence of malign external influence on the 1962 or 1965 Medals Boards. As Chief of Staff and as the convening authority, Lt Gen MacEoin had an influence on the medals processes in 1962 and 1965.

Seventeen personnel of 35 Infantry Battalion were awarded Distinguished Service Medals by the 1965 Medals Board. Cpl Allen and Cpl Nolan served with 35 Infantry Battalion, but were awarded medals for service with the 38 Infantry Battalion and 33 Infantry Battalion respectively. Fifteen Distinguished Service Medals were thus awarded to personnel of 35 Infantry Battalion for distinguished service with that particular battalion. Sgt Hegarty was also recommended for his service with both the 35 Infantry Battalion and 32 Infantry Battalion.

71. ***Jadotville Factor***

Whereas there is no explicit mention of Jadotville, Sgt Hegarty's draft 1965 citation includes the years 1960 and 1961. Lt Quinlan's draft citation mentions both Elisabethville and Jadotville. Jadotville is implicit in Sgt Hegarty's draft citation. Other draft citations, included reference to Elisabethville, and other towns in Katanga. Being at Jadotville did not disqualify an individual for an award, however available evidence shows that the name of the town was not going to appear in citations.

Defence Forces personnel were awarded Distinguished Service Medals where Jadotville was included in the recommendation. However, the climate of the time prevented Jadotville being explicitly mentioned in citations.

72. ***Lt Gen MacEoin's Distinguished Service Medal***

The 1965 Medals Board did not include the name of the Chief of Staff, who was a former ONUC Force Commander, in its report, but submitted Lt Gen MacEoin's recommendation



for a Distinguished Service Medal directly to the Minister for Defence, through the Adjutant-General.

73. ***Submission from Comdt Pat Quinlan***

In a submission to the Chief of Staff dated 14 March 1967, Comdt Pat Quinlan requested a review of A' Company's recommendations arising from Jadotville. Comdt Quinlan did not mention the fact that Lt Thomas Quinlan and Sgt Walter Hegarty were awarded Distinguished Service Medals for actions which included Jadotville. Lt Quinlan's platoon was specifically mentioned in his citation. Lt Quinlan's platoon, with Sgt Hegarty as the platoon sergeant, took the brunt of the Gendarmerie infantry attack at Jadotville in September 1961.

Comdt Quinlan also stated that he anticipated that some personnel from 'A' Company would be awarded, an indication that he did not expect all 'A' Company recommendations to be successful, and that awards to some would be acceptable as recognition of the actions of all. Following a review by the members of the 1965 Medals Board, Lt Gen MacEoin responded to Comdt Quinlan advising him that the issue was fully considered by the 1965 Medals Board.

The history of the 1965 Medals Board, building on that of the 1962 Board, shows a restrictive posture towards medals and the methods of award, and the failure by the Adjutant-General to establish *prima facie* cases for the consideration of the award of medals existed in the first stages of the process, in all cases.

The temptation is to focus in on 'A' Company, 35 Infantry Battalion in isolation, and to wrongly conclude that as Jadotville was regarded by many senior officers as regrettable, then actions at Jadotville were not going to result in awards for those put forward for consideration for recommendation under any circumstances.

To suggest that the awards process was interfered with in order to impede the award of medals to personnel from 'A' Company in Jadotville, is to lose sight of the fact that many of the initial recommendations for the consideration of awards for these personnel lacked substance, and that the wider dimension of the award process was evolving from the very moment recommendations for consideration for awards were initiated.

Without any doubt as Chief of Staff, Lt Gen MacEoin had an influence on the medals processes in 1962 and 1965. As the convening authority, as the officer to whom Medals Boards reported and, as shown in the case of Capt Magennis, in bestowing upon himself the authority to overturn the findings of a Medals Board, the Chief of Staff, Lt Gen MacEoin managed every aspect of the award of medals from ONUC.

74. ***Presentations of Distinguished Service Medals***

The Minister for Defence announced in Dáil Éireann, on 28 March 1967, that arising from the 1965 Medals Board, the Distinguished Service Medal was to be awarded to sixty-five Defence Forces personnel for 'acts of bravery or gallantry, or distinguished service in the

Congo. Negative media reaction nationally and locally to the awards centred around the lack of medals rewarded to personnel involved in the Niemba Ambush. Jadotville was mentioned only in an article in *The Kerryman*. On 4 June 1968, the Minister for Defence presented Distinguished Service Medals at the Curragh Camp, County Kildare.

## **Chapter 11**

### **Seeking Recognition for 'A' Company 1968 - 2020**

#### **75. *Jadotville, regrettably happened***

From 1968 to 2020 the history of the Battle of Jadotville and its aftermath has become a contested topic.

Soon after their return to Ireland the hero's welcome many 'A' Company veterans were given changed to insult and slugging. Jadotville was swept under the carpet by the higher echelons in the Defence Forces. It was anathema to speak of Jadotville, 'A' Company's surrender was seen as regrettable and former officers and men of 'A' Company were ostracised by their fellow soldiers.

The Battle of Jadotville was ignored by the Defence Forces for over thirty years before being (re)discovered and assessed by Defence Forces veterans and Irish academics in the mid-1990s.

From the 1960s to the 1990s there were few references made to Jadotville in the Defence Forces or in wider Irish life. Personnel of 'A' Company felt they had been purposely forgotten to protect the integrity of the United Nations and the reputations of those high-ranking Irish military and civilian figures within the United Nations system who took the decisions which sent 'A' Company to Jadotville. Senior officers and political figures connected with Jadotville - in particular Lt Gen Seán MacEoin - were still either serving or in retirement. Considering the close-knit nature of the Defence Forces, and also family ties between military families, it was felt better to make as little reference as possible to Jadotville publicly.

#### **76. *Trauma***

Privately the officers and enlisted personnel of 'A' Company suffered the trauma of being sidelined by their peers. They had few options to talk openly about their experiences before and after Jadotville. They covered up as best they could. Some turned to alcohol, some died by suicide, many suffered relationship problems while some were able to get on with life and put Jadotville behind them. What had happened in Jadotville and the experiences of the men of 'A' Company did not matter. No one wanted to hear or listen to them. They kept their heads down.

#### **77. *Inadequate Support Services***

Support from their wives was vital for so many personnel from 'A' Company in coming to terms with Jadotville. There were no Defence Forces support services available other than

the chaplaincy service and nothing to help them normalise what they went through in Jadotville. The result was that many of their own friends and colleagues in the Defence Forces had no idea of what they experienced in combat with 'A' Company. The impact of combat at Jadotville was ongoing for personnel of 'A' Company and their families.

78. ***Combat experience - UNIFIL***

Jadotville blended into the narrative of the Defence Force's deployment to UNIFIL in Lebanon which began in 1978. There was continuity in overseas service. Where Jadotville blended in too was in the experience it gave personnel from 'A' Company who went on further overseas missions in Congo, Cyprus and particularly UNIFIL. Having experienced Jadotville gave 'A' Company personnel, particularly those who were now NCOs, that necessary operational experience when leading younger personnel who themselves were in difficult and dangerous situations. There may have been an enforced silence in the Defence Forces on Jadotville, but there was also an awareness amongst personnel of the experience having been at Jadotville brought with it and that when it mattered this experience was vital.

79. ***Career advancement***

While Jadotville and its aftermath was a reason why many personnel from 'A' Company left the Defence Forces, it proved no impediment to officers and NCOs who remained in the Defence Forces. Pat Quinlan retired as a colonel on 2 March 1979, having commanded 2 Infantry Battalion, the Observer Corps and been Commandant of the Infantry School. While Noel Carey and Liam Donnelly retired from the Defence Forces for civilian careers, Dermot Byrne retired as Quartermaster-General in the rank of major-general, Tom Quinlan retired as GOC Southern Command in the rank of brigadier-general, while Joe Leech, Joe Clune and Kevin Knightly retired as colonels. 'A' Company's CS Jack Prendergast and CQMS Patrick Neville attained senior NCO ranks respectively as battalion sergeant-major and battalion quartermaster-sergeant.

80. ***50th Command and Staff Course***

The first comprehensive study of the Battle of Jadotville was carried out in 1993 by a group of officers attending the Defence Forces' 50th Command and Staff Course at the Military College. The syndicate emphasised that the Battle of Jadotville was then over thirty years ago in a very different environment and that the concept of the 'duty of care' of commanders and military authorities towards their personnel had not been established. They explored the range of military, political, communications, intelligence, and logistics problems facing the UN in the Congo; they emphasised flaws, tactical and strategic, in ONUC's understanding of the military and political situation in Katanga in August and September 1961. These flaws led to ONUC being duped and 'A' Company being led into a carefully planned trap in Jadotville. How could an unsupported company be stationed in hostile terrain over 80 miles from its HQ? The UN created a hostage opportunity for Katanga by allowing 'A' Company to be stationed in Jadotville. The syndicate felt that the surrender of 'A' Company was brought about by the possible duping of Comdt Quinlan into entering into an agreement for joint patrols and for food and water supplies. The syndicate concluded that given the fatigue of the personnel and the tactical situation it must have looked like an attractive and reasonable option to Comdt Quinlan.

81. ***Seeking Answers***

In the mid-1990s Comdt Liam Donnelly (Retd), Support Platoon Commander with 'A' Company, was amongst the first to seek answers to how and why 'A' Company had been treated as they had been for Jadotville. Independently, Col Pat Quinlan (Retd) had been working on a detailed history of 'A' Company and it was completed by 1993. Col Pat Quinlan died on 2 April 1997, aged 77.

82. ***Seeking Recognition***

The 40th anniversary of Jadotville saw renewed criticism in the local and national press of the failure of the Department of Defence and the Defence Forces to recognise 'A' Company, 35 Infantry Battalion for their actions in Katanga. Cpl John Gorman began to campaign on behalf of 'A' Company veterans for recognition.

The process of seeking to reassess Jadotville was moving from the view that official silence was to protect the reputations of senior figures, to criticising the official silence and that the military authorities and the State had never sought to recognise the Battle of Jadotville, how 'A' Company had fought, and how many from 'A' Company had suffered afterwards as a result of accusations of cowardice or as a result of trauma.

83. ***Documentaries and written accounts***

The overall climate within the Defence Forces was still overwhelmingly negative towards Jadotville. A series of radio and television documentaries and books that appeared in the mid-2000s began the change in mindset towards Jadotville. Col Terry O'Neill (Retd) published the first academic treatment of Jadotville in 2002. From these endeavours, from the early 2000s to the mid-2010s a number of written accounts of the battle of Jadotville were published, veterans and relatives of deceased veterans received collective and individual forms of official recognition of the actions of 'A' Company and, any lingering doubts over the actions of 'A' Company in combat were eradicated.

84. ***Defence Forces internal reviews***

Within the Defence Forces two internal reviews adopted a more opened minded and positive approach towards what had happened to 'A' Company. In 2004 and 2005, Chief of Staff Lt Gen Jim Sreenan's meetings with Comdt Liam Donnelly led to 'A' Company being officially recognised for their actions at Jadotville. Their bravery had been demeaned by a whispering campaign against them since 1961, and this step taken in 2005 was the first in the rehabilitation of 'A' Company and the remembrance and commemoration of their achievements at Jadotville.

85. ***Portraits: Lt Col McNamee & Comdt Quinlan***

Speaking in Dáil Éireann on 26 January 2005, Minister for Defence Willie O'Dea TD fully exonerated 'A' Company and Comdt Pat Quinlan, and explained that the Government were considering commemorating their bravery and heroism. In early March 2005, Minister O'Dea announced in the Dáil the decision to commission portraits of Lt Col McNamee and

Comdt Pat Quinlan, and a commemorative plaque to be situated in Athlone. On 23 February 2007, the portraits were unveiled at the UNTSI at the Curragh Camp, Co. Kildare.

86. ***Athlone Memorial Plaque***

The memorial plaque was unveiled on 19 November 2005 by Minister O’Dea TD. It acknowledged the courageous action of ‘A’ Company at Jadotville and their determination to come safely through their ordeal. The memorial plaque would commemorate their courage and forbearance, suffering and heroism and would be a lasting reminder of their achievement. On 21 December 2009, the nominal roll of ‘A’ Company and the soldier’s prayer inscribed on brass plates, were placed on the side of the memorial.

87. ***Campaign for Medals***

From the mid-2000s discussion of Jadotville amongst ‘A’ Company veterans turned frequently to the question of medals. Having been ignored and airbrushed out of Irish military history by the Defence Forces and the Department of Defence since 1961, Jadotville veterans saw their lack of medals as another example of their achievements being disregarded. An unfortunate misunderstanding emerged that being recommended for consideration for a medal by a unit commander was in effect a recommendation for a medal. It was not, as this was only the first part of a two part process. Being recommended for a medal fell under the remit of a Medals Board.

88. ***Presentation of Scrolls***

Further official tribute to ‘A’ Company came on 24 November 2006 when at a reunion at Custume Barracks, Athlone, wreaths were laid and veterans and the families of deceased members of ‘A’ Company were presented with scrolls by Minister of State Noel Treacy TD which gave recognition to their service and bravery in Jadotville.

89. ***Television Documentaries and Publications***

In the late-2000s a number of television documentaries were made on the Battle of Jadotville. The prospects of the Jadotville story being turned into a feature film took a major step forward in 2010. Irish film director Richie Smyth indicated that preparatory work for a film was underway after he secured film rights to Declan Power’s 2005 book *The Siege at Jadotville*.

By the 50th anniversary of the battle of Jadotville in 2011, the battle had been the subject of three books, at least two memoirs and a peer-reviewed internationally published academic article as well as an award-winning radio documentary, a TV series and a cinema documentary; filming a major motion picture on the Battle of Jadotville was underway. The men of ‘A’ Company had been exonerated for their actions, their bravery had been acknowledged and their heroism memorialised in the monument in Custume Barracks in Athlone.

The siege and battle of Jadotville had by 2011 become one of the most written and talked about chapters in post-war Irish military history, if not in post-1922 Irish military history.

90. ***Groupthink***

There now developed a groupthink, an echo chamber, on Jadotville that centred increasingly around reverence of Comdt Pat Quinlan. A head of steam was building up, continuing to heap praise upon 'A' Company and Comdt Quinlan, and doing so with growing expectation of forthcoming medals.

The recommendations for medals were initiated from a number of 'A' Company personnel not just Comdt Pat Quinlan, they were acted upon by the 1962 Medals Board and 1965 Medals Board, and those who were recommended for consideration for medals were never meant to be told they had been recommended. There is also no evidence that Brig Raja's positive appraisal of Comdt Quinlan was ever meant by Brig Raja to be linked to an award or medal. There was no evidence as to what award, if any, Brig Raja might have had in mind and he simply wanted his views conveyed to the appropriate authority.

91. ***Concurrent Activity in Elisabethville and Kamina***

There also developed a set and unquestioning narrative history of Jadotville which placed 'A' Company at the centre of events and lacked an understanding of the wider Katangese and Congolese context and in particular that 35 Infantry Battalion was in combat in Elisabethville while 'A' Company was fighting in Jadotville, and no mention of concurrent offensive and defensive operations involving 1 Infantry Group in Kamina.

There were problems with the analysis underpinning this approach. Statements about awards to 'A' Company, doubtless made in good faith, but without examination as to the facts, were misleading and contributed further to the mythification of the history of the Battle of Jadotville and the creation of a fog of inexactitude that was often accepted as correct fact.

92. ***Film: The Siege of Jadotville***

The 2016 film *The Siege of Jadotville* was the most important event in ensuring widespread popular awareness of the Battle of Jadotville. Unfortunately, the fictionalised nature of the events covered in the film meant that many who saw the film took fiction to be fact and this has coloured the subsequent understanding at public and official level of the Battle of Jadotville. In recent years understanding of the Battle of Jadotville has reached a point where historical fact and fiction have merged to create the unsatisfactory hybrid view of the battle that now dominates popular discourse where the Battle of Jadotville is concerned.

After the Battle of Jadotville became widely known via the 2016 film, fact and fiction merged at a time where it was in vogue to spread unverified individual opinions by social media in the 'fake news' climate of the second half of the 2010s. This was increasingly done without checking the material to hand and so a growing array of inaccurate figures and facts was put forward about the Battle of Jadotville without regard to historical accuracy.

93. ***Military Colleges***

The suggestion that the Battle of Jadotville had become a text-book study for officers around the world was made with no supporting evidence and with no input from those who were

said to be teaching Comdt Quinlan's tactics for perimeter defence across the globe. After communications with British and German military attachés, academics at Australian and United States military colleges, and utilising contacts via the Defence Attachés Liaison Office, the Independent Review Group found no evidence that the Battle of Jadotville or Comdt Quinlan's tactics are currently, in summer 2021, on the syllabus of such courses, or that they have been taught in the past.

94. ***Unit Citation***

On 17 September 2016, the fifty-fifth anniversary of the end of the Battle of Jadotville, a Unit Citation was formally presented to the veterans and the next of kin of deceased members of 'A' Company, at a special ceremony held at Custume Barracks, Athlone. The citation recognised the leadership, courage, bravery and professional performance of 'A' Company 35 Infantry Battalion from 13 September to 17 September 1961.

Opinions on the Unit Citation started positive, but became very mixed, with some veterans and relatives dismissing it as a token piece of paper. The Department of Defence and the Defence Forces were unable to fathom what it would take for once and for all to recognise 'A' Company's personnel and their actions. Parsimony, lack of real thought over detail, division of opinion amongst veterans, a failure to put veterans first and perhaps the meanness of mind that can pervade the Irish civil service could all be cited as reasons.

95. ***Jadotville Day***

A further commemoration of the Battle of Jadotville took place on 22 October 2016 with the holding of the inaugural 'Jadotville Day' at Collins Barracks in Dublin. The commemoration was organised by Sgt Paul Clarke (Retd) who felt that despite the commemorations of Jadotville by the Defence Forces since 2005, the authorities had not gone far enough in their praise, reward, or recognition of 'A' Company.

96. ***Galway Community College***

A pivotal event in positioning opinions on the question of awards and decorations for 'A' Company was an evening on Jadotville held on 22 November 2016 at Galway Community College. After the event, at which a number of Jadotville veterans were present, 5th Year students at the college petitioned the Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment Denis Naughten TD (FG) and Minister with responsibility for Defence Paul Kehoe TD (FG) to award medals to the officers and enlisted personnel of 'A' Company as recommended by Comdt Pat Quinlan.

97. ***Regulatory Provisions***

The Defence Forces and Department of Defence line in early 2017 remained that there was no provision in Defence Forces Regulations to roll back, re-examine or revisit the decision of the 1962 and 1965 Medals Boards. This line was technically correct, but in relying on precedent and regulations, it created a vortex within which those calling for the award of medals could make increasingly vigorous calls for medals to be awarded. Stonewalling was not a pro-active response in the climate of mounting interest in the Battle of Jadotville and rising public and political pressure for the award of medals to Jadotville veterans.

The developing narrative was based on a perception that Comdt Pat Quinlan recommended eight personnel for medals and that a Medals Board had overturned what would otherwise have been a definite award due to the machinations of senior officers at Army Headquarters.

The examination of the Independent Review Group into the 1962 and 1965 Medals Boards shows that this was not the case. It also shows that it was not just recommendations in respect of 'A' Company personnel that did not get recommended for an award, but personnel from across Defence Forces ONUC battalions. However, knowledge in the public domain of who had been put forward for recommendation for a medal was very scant in 2017.

98. ***Defence Forces Studies***

On the Taoiseach's instructions, the Chief of Staff Vice-Admiral Mark Mellett initiated, via the Deputy Chief of Staff (Support), an extensive study of the framework governing awards and a new archival investigation to try to pin down with a high level of certainty whether there was indeed sufficient archival evidence to make retrospective awards to personnel of 'A' Company.

The most important search carried out in 2017 was into the service records of the 156 members of 'A' Company. One hundred and forty-one were located and of these twenty-three were identified as having recommendations for awards ranging from promotion and commendation to medals. However, the search was unable to find material on the outcomes of these recommendations for award or their consideration. It was also unable to give a figure on the totality of awards recommendations made for 'A' Company. The 2017 Review missed the list of names for consideration for awards signed off by Lt Col McNamee in 1962, so the 2017 review concluded that there was no archival certainty available to determine who of the 156 personnel of 'A' Company were recommended for an award.

The 2017 review examined in detail the documentary footprint, however incomplete, left by the 1962 and 1965 Medals Boards, yet the review did not record an analysis of the material found on service records. The 2017 review concluded that there was no evidence to indicate that Comdt Pat Quinlan was considered for an award. This final conclusion the Independent Review Group concurs with.

99. ***An Bonn Jadotville***

In early 2017, a proposal emerged for a specific medal to be awarded only to veterans of 'A' Company and families of deceased veterans of 'A' Company to honour their achievements and courage.

On 13 June 2017, Taoiseach Enda Kenny TD and Minister with responsibility for Defence Paul Kehoe TD issued a joint statement that they had decided to award a medal to personnel of 'A' Company, 35 Infantry Battalion and the next of kin of deceased members, to give full and due recognition in honour of their courageous actions at the Battle of Jadotville in September 1961.



Following the government's decision, a special working group was established within the Department of Defence to oversee the production and award of the new medal. A new regulation in Defence Forces Regulations yearly series was drafted to ensure the award of an insignia consistent with the Unit Citation of 2016, and a medal and ribbon design process was initiated.

An Bonn Jadotville was presented by Minister Paul Kehoe TD to the members of 'A' Company and family members of deceased members of 'A' Company at a ceremony in Custume Barracks, Athlone, on 2 December 2017. The presentation ceremony was an emotional event for the veterans and relatives present; pride, happiness, sadness and a lot of memories both of the Battle of Jadotville itself and the treatment of 'A' Company by their fellow comrades at all levels in the Defence Forces in the following years. For many it brought closure to the Battle of Jadotville.

100. **2017 List**

The discovery in late 2017 of a list incorrectly purporting to be Comdt Pat Quinlan's 'medals recommendations' set in train the most recent round of interest in the Battle of Jadotville. The list was drawn up from a misreading of a 1971 list of all enlisted personnel who did not receive medals as a result of medals boards from 1961 to 1971 and a list of the successful and unsuccessful awardees of the 1962 Medals Board, the results of which were never implemented. The list was checked-off against a list of 35 Infantry Battalion personnel to come up with what was in fact an incorrect list of unsuccessful medal recommendations.

A systematic public pressure campaign now began, making use of this new material in a synopsis and, unfortunately incorrectly analysed, manner to engage elected representatives at local and national level to call for the awarding of medals. What was being circulated was not, as the Independent Review Group later discovered, Comdt Pat Quinlan's recommendations, although some were contained in the document.

The list gained traction, though the details it put forward were incorrect in a number of cases, and a political pressure campaign grew to award 'Pat Quinlan's medals' to the chosen men of 'A' Company. In an age where fake news was prevalent and fact checking was more necessary it is surprising that no elected representatives or media questioned the list for authenticity or accuracy.

The names being circulated were taken from a list of names of personnel from across several ONUC battalions who had been either finally recommended for awards, or passed over by the 1962 Medals Board, and a 1971 list of the names of personnel considered for a Distinguished Service Medal by the 1965 Medals Board and not awarded a medal. There was not in fact a 'Comdt Pat Quinlan's list'. Comdt Pat Quinlan had not created this list; they were not all his recommendations, a proportion came from subordinate officers and NCOs in 'A' Company, though as company commander he should have been aware that all of them were submitted to HQ 35 Infantry Battalion for action by Lt Col McNamee.

Yet it would seem all who later saw the new list took it at face value. They did not realise it included the errors and omissions outlined above. These inaccuracies were not introduced for any malicious reasons, but simply by misinterpretation and oversight in error due to a lack of corroborating material and further information. Nevertheless, their incorporation into the Jadotville medals debate introduced a considerable new level of inaccuracy which continues to ripple outwards in the public record and public debate. They also caused hurt by reopening a series of events many veterans and their families felt had been closed by the award of An Bonn Jadotville.

101. ***Lobbying Local and National Politicians***

A campaign to lobby local and national politicians to award Jadotville medals began in earnest in February 2019 using the information outlined above. Through 2019, many elected representatives willingly accepted at face value the new information they had recently received on Jadotville medals and raised it seeking the award of medals without interrogating the accuracy of the documentation now available to them. The list found in 2017 was not an original list of recommendations made by Comdt Pat Quinlan. Yet still no one had checked or noticed this. There is, in fact, no evidence of a list of 'A' Company recommendations signed off on or put forward by Comdt Pat Quinlan.

102. ***Misunderstandings***

The point seemed to be lost continuously that recommendations for medals in themselves did not automatically entitle a soldier to a medal. Yet underlying this phase of the Jadotville story were serious misunderstandings which were continuing to gain ground as well as outright errors and mistakes based on a lack of understanding of the sources and list of names in circulation:

- an automatic assumption that medals were never awarded, even in part, for action at Jadotville;
- an assumption that the medals were there to be presented and were being denied by malign influence;
- a misunderstanding as to what recommendations for awards were proposed (medals, citations and promotions);
- an assumption that all initial recommendations for consideration for an award had a prima facie case for award;
- little or limited understanding of the recommendation and award process;
- a mistaken assumption that members of 'A' Company had been recommended for consideration for both the Military Medal for Gallantry and the Distinguished Service Medal when in fact no individual was simultaneously recommended for these two medals;
- a failure to recognise that awards was a broader question than just the Battle of Jadotville, and that it was not just certain members of 'A' Company who had been

recommended for medals and not awarded them by the 1962 and 1965 Medals Boards, that personnel from other units had similarly not been awarded medals;

- an assumption that the decisions of a Medals Board convened under Defence Forces Regulations could be overturned by political pressure or by the Minister for Defence;
- no attempt to check the veracity of the list of names sent to County Councillors and members of the Oireachtas;
- no awareness that the Distinguished Service Medal did not exist in 1961 when recommendations for consideration for award were made, and was only instituted in February 1964;
- downplaying, purposeful or in ignorance, that 'A' Company had been honoured already;
- lack of understanding of the age-profile of 'A' Company, the average age being much higher than suggested by public debate;
- a denigration of An Bonn Jadotville by elected representatives;
- a lack of understanding that 'A' Company, 35 Infantry Battalion is the only Defence Forces unit to be awarded a Unit Citation and An Bonn Jadotville;
- confusion over what Taoiseach Enda Kenny TD had said regarding the award of medals in July 2017;
- a strong reliance on the account of the Battle of Jadotville as told in the fictionalised *The Siege of Jadotville* film of 2016 in preference to historical accounts or the undertaking of new archival research;
- a tendency to inflate the numbers of the attacking Gendarmerie into many thousands;
- Katangese casualty figures that were put forward without a verifiable source;
- exaggerated claims about international interest in Jadotville;
- unsupported claims of the teaching of the Battle of Jadotville at a range of international military colleges. It was verified by the Independent Review Group that those military colleges most regularly mentioned do not have Jadotville on their syllabus and do not teach Jadotville or Comdt Quinlan's tactics as part of doctrine;
- and most of all, a lack of interrogation of the facts in favour of easy comments uttered without a thought for the consequences for veterans and their families, or the basis upon which their points were made or the documentation from which they came.

103. ***Political Pressure***

Political pressure to award medals for Jadotville had risen further by autumn 2020. Over eighteen County Councils had passed motions in favour of awarding medals to Jadotville veterans. This series of moves amounted to political pressure being put on the Defence Forces in a manner which paid little heed to the structures or the authority of the institution, and the significance of medals to the military establishment.

In the 2019 to 2020 round of the Jadotville debate, most public representatives demonstrated a lack of an informed understanding on the question of the award of medals through their poor critical analysis of the information before them on the Battle of Jadotville and its aftermath. In November 2020, the Seanad debated the award of medals to ‘A’ Company. The debate was characterised by groupthink, incorrect information, misleading statements and the denigration by those present of An Bonn Jadotville. The debate was a striking example of an assembled group of public representatives putting forward a common agenda which contained errors of fact and interpretation which they uncritically accepted without verification.

The climate of 2020 on Jadotville led to Chief of Staff of the Defence Forces, Vice Admiral Mark Mellett, convening an Independent Review Group into Jadotville in December 2020. The Independent Review Group first met in January 2021 and completed its report on 30 June 2021.

Many elected representatives publicly prejudged the findings of the Independent Review Group at the time of its foundation. In its initial weeks, the Independent Review Group was the subject of a particularly nasty and insidious campaign against its personnel, in particular its chairman, and against its independence of action.

It is unfortunate that in 2021 the history and memory of the Battle of Jadotville and of the bravery of ‘A’ Company 35 Infantry Battalion is clouded by fictionalised accounts, a populist groupthink and political agendas. This is not the way to honour this most unique group of Defence Forces veterans and their families.

## **Chapter 12**

### **Medal Analysis 2021**

#### ***Part I: Individuals recommended for an award in 1962***

104. ***Methodology: Para 4b of Terms of Reference***

When considering the historical evidence and processes in relation to all recommendations for military medals received with respect to the events at Jadotville or encompassing Jadotville, and in respect of those who were not recommended for a medal, the Independent Review Group adopted a methodical approach, breaking its task down into distinct modules covering research, consultation and analysis. This included an analysis of a substantial

amount of data and information, and the systematic and objective examination of all factors.

105. ***Research***

The Independent Review Group examined all available service records of the 156 personnel who participated in the Battle of Jadotville, and the available documentation for the thirty-three personnel whose recommendations for the consideration of an award were initiated in 'A' Company in 1961, three of whom related to promotion recommendations.

Available documentation associated with the recommendations for awards was tracked, following initiation by 'A' Company in 1961 and through the processes undertaken by 1962 and 1965 Medal Boards, and finally to their lodgement on the respective personal files in Army Headquarters in April 1971. The content of all documents, material, submissions and interviews including those with veterans and veterans' families was reviewed.

The Independent Review Group examined the adverse effects that the well-intentioned but ill-considered interventions by politicians and others in relation to the award of medals have had on veterans of 'A' Company. Advocating bravery awards for some has left other veterans feeling their contribution was less than adequate. The integrity and status of An Bonn Jadotville has been diminished for many veterans by these interventions.

106. ***Examination of Service Records***

The Independent Review Group was unable to examine two awards folders of the thirty-three 'A' Company personnel who were recommended for an award as the two associated service records could not be located.<sup>11</sup> Nevertheless, the Independent Review Group was able to track these two recommendations within the 1962 and 1965 Medals Board process.

107. ***Comparison between the 1962 and 1965 Medals Boards***

Ten of the 1962 Medals Board's twenty-three 'Meritorious Conduct Medal' recommendations were not recommended for the Distinguished Service Medal by the 1965 Medals Board, five of whom were from 'A' Company.

The Independent Review Group examined the case of these five individuals, revisited their award recommendation files containing witness statements, the recommendation of OC 35 Infantry Battalion, and their service records. Despite extensive research by the Independent Review Group, no new primary source evidence was identified which, along with their 1961 witness statements, would amount to a robust prima facie case for the consideration of an award and accordingly to the reopening of their cases.

108. ***Re-examining 1965 Medals Board's findings***

Having examined the 1965 Medals Board in detail, the Independent Review Group concluded that the Board's findings followed due process, and were consistent with the procedures and standards of the time. Any re-examination of the 1965 Medals Board's findings on particular cases would require the reopening of all 360 cases that were addressed

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<sup>11</sup> 809650 Pte Gerald Hennelly, and 810219 Pte Charles Cooley.

by the Board, including the sixty-five cases where a Distinguished Service Medal was awarded. This is a course of action the Independent Review Group does not recommend.

109. ***Conclusions: Para 4b of Terms of Reference***

Regarding the thirty-three personnel of 'A' Company whose cases for consideration of awards were examined by the 1962 Medals Board and the 1965 Medals Board, the Independent Review Group identified no new primary source evidence which, along with their 1961 witness statements, would amount to a robust prima facie case for the consideration of an award.

The Independent Review Group is aware from interviews with veterans that the reopening of the thirty-three recommendations for awards, as proposed since 2018, would cause grave concern to many veterans. The Independent Review Group endorses the view from some veterans that the reopening of cases would undermine the integrity and status of An Bonn Jadotville, and diminish the actions of other personnel of 'A' Company in Jadotville who were not recommended for an award in 1961.

Reopening the thirty-three cases no matter how it may be undertaken would result in the emergence of four categories of named individuals in 'A' Company:

- Those who were awarded a medal by the 1965 Medals Board, and who would either forfeit or retain their award.
- Those for whom no recommendation for an award was made at company level.
- Those who were initially put forward for an award at company level but may not be recommended by a reconstituted Medals Board.
- Those who may be awarded a medal as the result of a reconstituted Medals Board.

Based on its analysis of the Battle of Jadotville and events encompassing Jadotville, its examination of all cases initiated by 'A' Company in 1961, its analysis of the material in Military Archives from the 1961, 1962 and 1965 Medals Boards, and the information conveyed by veterans during interviews, the Independent Review Group is strongly of the view that there is no merit in reopening the recommendations of the 1961, 1962 and 1965 Medals Boards.

***Part II: Individuals not recommended for an award in 1962***

110. ***Methodology: Para 4d of Terms of Reference***

The Independent Review Group adopted a methodical approach when considering the actions of individuals not already the subject of a recommendation in relation to possible awards in respect of Jadotville. This included an analysis of a substantial amount of data and information, and the systematic and objective examination of all factors.

111. ***Procedures for the Recommendations for an Award***

If an act, arising from service with 'A' Company, 35 Infantry Battalion, were to be considered in 2021, specific regulatory provisions will be required providing for the submission of a

recommendation, its consideration by the Deputy Chief of Staff (Support), and the appointment of a military board by the Chief of Staff.

112. ***Medals Awarded to 'A' Company Personnel***

In 1962, OC 35 Infantry Battalion Lt Col McNamee recommended and submitted the names of thirty-three of the 156 'A' Company personnel for consideration of an award arising from service with ONUC.<sup>12</sup>

Accordingly, a total of 123 personnel of 'A' Company were not the subject of a recommendation for the consideration of an award.

113. ***Submissions to the Independent Review Group***

The Independent Review Group fully considered each of the oral and written representations provided by veterans and family members during the Group's Consultation Module.

114. ***Analysis of Data***

On a continuous basis, the Independent Review Group endeavoured to identify individuals whose actions were 'not already the subject of a medal in respect of Jadotville'.<sup>13</sup> This process included analysing and evaluating archival documentation, including service records, written submissions and oral testimony presented during the consultation module, leading to the assessment of individual actions during the Battle of Jadotville.

The Independent Review Group endeavoured to acquire primary source, evidence-based facts on the actions of individuals identified either by the Group, or during the course of the consultation module.

Whereas a number of individuals came to the notice of the Independent Review Group, based on the provisions of DFR A9 (New Series) Dress and Medals, the Group ultimately identified only one of the 123 individuals of 'A' Company, 35 Infantry Battalion, who was not previously the subject of a recommendation for a medal in respect of Jadotville or encompassing Jadotville, and who merited further investigation, namely Comdt Pat Quinlan, company commander, 'A' Company.

115. ***Case Study – Comdt Pat Quinlan***

Following its agreed methodology, the Independent Review Group developed a case study for Comdt Pat Quinlan. The Independent Review Group's case study in respect of Comdt Pat Quinlan is attached as appendix 1 of chapter 12.

Having evaluated its contents, the Independent Review Group concluded that the case study provides appropriate material from which to create a prima facie case for the

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<sup>12</sup> See Chapter 9: 1962 Medals Board Process and Chapter 10: Medals Board Process of this report.

<sup>13</sup> IRG Terms of Reference, 18 December 2020, paragraph 4d.

recommendation of the posthumous award of a medal for Comdt Pat Quinlan.

116. ***Comparable Cases – Military Medal for Gallantry***

Since the institution of the Military Medal for Gallantry in 1944, of the eight actions which merited this medal, ‘in recognition of the performance of any act of exceptional bravery or gallantry (other than that performed on war service) arising out of, or associated with, military service and involving risk to life and limb’,<sup>14</sup> there are no comparable cases to the case now being considered by the Independent Review Group.

117. ***Comparable Cases – Distinguished Service Medal***

Two company commanders and one troop commander were awarded the Distinguished Service Medal for the leadership of their sub-units in UN peacekeeping operations. The Independent Review Group has identified these three awards as comparable cases for the award of a medal in the context of Comdt Quinlan.

The Independent Review Group has also identified two Naval Service awards as comparable cases for the award of a medal in the context of Comdt Quinlan.

118. ***An Bonn Jadotville***

Having due regard to the integrity and status of An Bonn Jadotville, and having examined the case study, the Independent Review Group concluded that this particular insignia is not sufficient, nor is it the sole award necessary, in order to provide appropriate recognition to Comdt Pat Quinlan for his actions as company commander ‘A’ Company, 35 Infantry Battalion.

119. ***Defence Forces Medal Process***

*Integrity of Process.* Since Comdt Pat Quinlan was not previously recommended for an award, the integrity of the medal process will remain, provided the issue of retrospection is correctly addressed.

*Collective Award.* Comdt Pat Quinlan’s case could be linked to his actions as a company commander, reflecting the comparable cases of Distinguished Service Medals awarded to company or troop commanders who served in ONUC and their associated citations. This approach should be seen as an award honouring all personnel of ‘A’ Company. The Independent Review Group hopes that this approach will be well received by veterans and veterans’ families.

*Retrospective Awards.* The Independent Review Group contends that the retrospective awarding of a medal should only occur in the most extreme circumstances. The Independent Review Group’s view in this particular case, is that the unique political, diplomatic and military environment in 1961 associated with the Battle of Jadotville, and events encompassing Jadotville in 1961, amounts to such an extreme circumstance. This is an

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<sup>14</sup> DFR A 9 (New Series) Dress and Medals.



exceptional case. The Independent Review Group contends that this case should not be seen as a precedent for initiating retrospective awards in the Defence Forces.

*Regulatory Framework.* The Independent Review Group is of the opinion that an appropriate Defence Forces Regulation in the yearly series could provide the necessary provisions not alone to initiate an award process, but also to ensure that this particular case is seen as a unique, exceptional, and once-off case.

*Previous Decisions.* The proposal under consideration does not amount to reversing decisions made by previous Medals Boards or, to the Independent Review Group's knowledge, decisions by former Chiefs of Staff.

120. ***Medal Criteria***

In the context of the 1961, 1962 and 1965 Medals Board, the Independent Review Group recalls:

- The 1961 Medals Board recommended one of the five cases for the Military Medal for Gallantry submitted for consideration,
- Twenty-two cases for the Military Medal for Gallantry were before the 1962 Medals Board, all from 35 Infantry Battalion. Whereas the 1962 Medals Board recommended one officer for the Military Medal for Gallantry, the medal was not awarded by the Minister for Defence on the recommendation of the Chief of Staff. The officer in question was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal 1st Class following the deliberations of the 1965 Medals Board,
- Of the 360 cases before the 1965 Medals Board, none was in respect of the Military Medal for Gallantry,
- The 1965 Medals Board adopted a working guide for the three classes of the Distinguished Service Medal.

121. ***Conclusion: Para 4d of Terms of Reference***

There is a prima facie case for the recommendation of the posthumous award of a Distinguished Service Medal to Comdt Pat Quinlan.

In respect of Comdt Pat Quinlan, the Independent Review Group has not discovered any primary source evidence that falls under the provisions of the Military Medal for Gallantry: 'the performance of any act of exceptional bravery or gallantry (other than that performed on war service) arising out of, or associated with, military service and involving risk to life and limb'.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> DFR A 9 (New Series) Dress and Medals.





2. 'A' Company personnel, Elisabethville. (Comdt Leo Quinlan personal collection)



## Chapter 3

# Methodology: Looking and Listening

### *Overview of Chapter 3*

This chapter covers the following issues:

- Introduction,
- Extent of Research,
- Interviews,
- Submissions,
- Independent Review Group collection,
- Collections in Military Archives,
- International Archives,
- Service Records,
- Award recommendations,
- Ethical considerations,
- Limitations,
- Staff support,
- Footnotes.

### *Introduction*

This chapter outlines the methodology used in the review on Jadotville. The review process consisted of four module stages: Consultation Module; Operational Module; Medals and Awards Module and Analysis Module. The Report was initially due to be completed by 31 March 2021. Due to the amount of material identified by the Independent Review Group, which needed to be analysed and researched thoroughly, and due to the number of individuals who participated in the consultation process, the decision was made to request an extension. The extension was granted and this provided sufficient time for the Independent Review Group to complete its work. The date for the Report to be submitted was 30 June 2021. The methodology applied mainly focused on academic research and analysis, and interview consultations.

The methodology used in this Report is based around the Independent Review Group's terms of reference set out and signed by the Chief of Staff on 18 December 2020.<sup>1</sup> The terms of reference are as follows:

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<sup>1</sup> See Annex A, Terms of Reference.

- a. The Review Group will consider ONUC's operational environment in Katanga, and in particular Elisabethville and Jadotville;
- b. The Review Group will consider the historical evidence and processes in relation to all recommendations for military medals received with respect to the events at Jadotville or encompassing Jadotville;
- c. The Review Group will engage with national and international stakeholders (including Jadotville veterans) as appropriate, with a view to uncovering any additional or new evidence in this case;
- d. The Review Group may consider the actions of individuals not already the subject of a recommendation for a medal in respect of Jadotville;
- e. The Review Group will report its findings to the Chief of Staff. The Review Group may make recommendations in relation to possible awards in respect of Jadotville.

### ***Extent of Research***

The Independent Review Group spent significant time in the consultation and operational modules, researching and analysing all relevant documents, submissions, and information arising out of interviews with veterans, their families, academics and military experts. The medals and awards module was ongoing as the Independent Review Group researched relevant Medals Boards as well as locating the award recommendation files for members of 'A' Company. The analysis module too was ongoing throughout. In the later stages of the review, the Independent Review Group met several times a week to discuss findings and analyse the report in order to produce recommendations.

### ***Interviews***

One of the most important parts of this review was the Independent Review Group's engagement with veterans and their families. Paragraph 4c of the Terms of Reference was to 'engage with national and international stakeholders (including Jadotville veterans) with a view to uncovering any additional new evidence'. The Independent Review Group was honoured and privileged to partake in interviews with veterans of 'A' Company, with veterans' family members, and with academics and military experts over the course of its consultation module.

In-depth interviews are considered to be the most appropriate method for exploratory research.<sup>2</sup> They produce 'rich and detailed data'.<sup>3</sup> During the interviews, the Independent Review Group was able to delve into detail about key aspects of Jadotville. Using open ended questions and adopting a semi-structured interview style allowed the conversation to develop naturally. Many questions emerged as the interviews occurred, with new subject matters and new lines of questioning arising. Interviews gave the Independent Review Group the opportunity to gain an understanding of an individual's experience and their thoughts around those experiences.

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<sup>2</sup> John W Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (California, 2009), p.4.

<sup>3</sup> Alison Jane Pickard, *Research Methods in Information*, (London, 2013), p.205.

Ideally, the Independent Review Group would have been able to speak to the veterans, their families, and the experts in person. Due to Covid-19 restrictions and in the interest of health and safety, interviews were conducted virtually. The Independent Review Group used Microsoft Teams (MS Teams) for these interviews, a secure platform provided by Ógláigh na hÉireann. Interviews were recorded through MS Teams and as a precaution, simultaneously recorded on a Dictaphone. Both versions of the interview recordings will be held and preserved in Military Archives.

For most of the ‘A’ Company veterans who participated in this consultation module, this was the first time that they had been asked to tell their story in an official capacity. The Independent Review Group was able to hear direct testimonies from those who were present at Jadotville, from relatives of those veterans, and from key experts. The consultation module also provided the relatives of veterans the opportunity to tell the story of their experiences. Many family members were also discussing this for the first time. This part of the consultation module was influential to the work of the Independent Review Group.

### ***Submissions***

Thirty-five submissions<sup>4</sup> were received by the Independent Review Group from veterans, relatives, academics and military experts. Submissions came in the form of written statements, audio clips, reports, and primary source material including photographs, letters and documents. These reports, statements and documents were an invaluable resource to the Group and were used to inform its Report throughout. This material will form part of a new collection arising from this review and will be deposited and preserved in Military Archives.

### ***Independent Review Group Collection***

This Review has produced and amassed a collection of highly valuable sources concerning Jadotville. On completion of the Report, the Independent Review Group will deposit the material received, produced and collected in Military Archives. GDPR will apply to all personal data. The Independent Review Group received written submissions as well as primary records, photographs and audio clips. Most importantly, this review engaged with 125 individuals, of whom ninety-three were formally interviewed including veterans, veterans' families, academics and military experts. These were recorded with audio and video, and will be preserved and made available for research. Interview participants have the option to make their recording available for public research or else for it to be for the Independent Review Group's use only, during their lifetime. This collection, the submissions and interview recordings, will be catalogued and preserved as a stand-alone collection in Military Archives.

### ***Collections in Military Archives***

An extensive analysis of the material relating to Jadotville held in Military Archives was carried out for this review. Numerous searches of several databases were conducted at the outset by using key-word searches (Jadotville, Katanga, Kamina, Congo, Quinlan, McNamee, MacEoin, McKeown, Overseas, Medal, 1961, ‘A’ Company, ONUC, United Nations, Award, DSM, MMG

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<sup>4</sup> See Annex G, ‘Submissions’, for full list of submissions received.

etc.) to find any relevant material. These records were then consulted and distributed to all members of the Independent Review Group.

Collections reviewed in Military Archives were:

- 'A' Administration Section Files
- Assistant Chief of Staff Collection
- Chief of Staff Collection
- Computer Generated Records (Jadotville relatives digital recording – 1961)
- Departmental Files (3/Series)
- Jadotville Medals Queries
- Medals Boards Collection (1961, 1962 & 1965 Medals Boards)
- Oral History Project Collection
- United Nations Overseas Collection (ONUC)
- Private Collections (see below)
- Service Records (see below)

In addition to the material in the Overseas Congo collection, thirteen boxes of material were identified relating to the Congo, which had not yet been catalogued. These boxes were reviewed and one file relating to the vehicles handed over from 34 Inf Bn to 35 Inf Bn was identified. This file included references to vehicles that were captured by Gendarmerie at Jadotville and vehicles destroyed by the Fouga jet. These records will be catalogued and amalgamated into the Overseas Collection catalogue in a future project.

Because of the nature of archives and historical research, it is impossible to say if all material in Military Archives concerning Jadotville has been located. As future collections are catalogued and made available, official documents are deposited, and as further private collections are donated to the archive, more relevant information may come to light. However, the Independent Review Group is satisfied that it has seen sufficient material to form the basis of its Report and findings.

### ***Private Collections***

Private collections were a vital resource in the Independent Review Group's research analysis. The private collections that had been handed in by retired personnel concerning Jadotville were essential to this review. These collections contained private diaries, log books, photos, records etc. which formed an integral part of this Report on Jadotville. The review also created an opportunity to establish new private collections. Some veterans and veterans' families expressed an interest in donating the records they held as a private collection to Military Archives. These types of collections are such an important part of an archive and will create new research opportunities for years to come.

### ***International Archives***

As well as Irish archives, the Independent Review Group carried out a broad search of collections from international archives, from a number of online sources and from secondary sources.<sup>5</sup> From contacts in the Congo the Independent Review Group discovered that relevant Congolese and Katangese archives do not exist, that oral histories are very limited and that what histories there are of the 'secession' period in Katanga are also limited. There was, it seemed, a reluctance on the part of the Belgian academics approached to engage with the work of the Independent Review Group. It was discovered from French, Indian and Swedish academics and journalists familiar with ONUC and Jadotville that one should not necessarily expect to find detailed accounts of the Battle of Jadotville in their relevant national and institutional archives, but one might expect to find it mentioned in passing.

### ***Service Records***

In order to determine which members of 'A' Company were recommended for an award for service in Jadotville, the Independent Review Group needed to view their recommendation file. These files are held on an individual's personal service record. The Independent Review Group set out to consult the service records of all 156 personnel present at Jadotville.<sup>6</sup> Using the 'A' Company nominal roll, which both Comdt Pat Quinlan and Interior Minister Godefroid Munongo signed on 18 September 1961<sup>7</sup> the aim was to examine as many of the 156 service records as possible. This process involved numerous searches of Military Archives and working with Area Records Offices to locate these files.

The majority of 'A' Company service records are held in Military Archives. The Independent Review Group was aware that a number of these records had been consulted for the 2017 review on Jadotville. During the 2017 search, 141 service records of 'A' Company personnel were consulted out of the 156 who served at Jadotville.<sup>8</sup>

In 2021 personal service records databases in Military Archives were initially searched. For any 'A' Company personnel found on these databases, the corresponding location and box were then checked. The search was originally carried out using the individual's service number, then name, including any variations of their name, and then any other service number they held.<sup>9</sup> Staff in Military Archives then conducted numerous physical searches in the repository to see if there were any other 'A' Company service records in boxes known to have come from former 4 Western Brigade and in the boxes that held other 'A' Company service records. After these initial searches, the Independent Review Group had consulted 129 out of 156 service records.

Twenty-seven individual service records still needed to be reviewed. Military Archives staff discovered what the last brigade and unit served in was for each individual. There were eight personnel from 2 Brigade in Athlone units, four from 1 Brigade – Cork, four from DFTC – Curragh Camp, one Chaplain, six with no unit information but who had an AF 43A,<sup>10</sup> two with

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<sup>5</sup> See Annex B, Bibliography for the full list of sources.

<sup>6</sup> For full list of 'A' Company personnel and the status of their service record, see Appendix B.

<sup>7</sup> See Appendix A, 'Nominal Roll 'A' Company, 35 Irish Bn, Irish Contingent, ONUC, Jadotville'.

<sup>8</sup> 2017 Jadotville Review.

<sup>9</sup> Many members of 'A' Company 35 Inf Bn had more than one service number.

<sup>10</sup> AF 43A is the Army Form identification code assigned to the Record Sheet of enlisted personnel.

no unit information and no AF 43A (that could be found), and two that were found during this search. This brought the number of records still to be located at that time to twenty-five. The next step was to contact Area Records in Athlone, Cork and the Curragh to see if any files could be located there. All eight 'A' Company service records whose last brigade was identified as Cork and the Curragh were found by their Area Records office and were sent to Military Archives for consultation. This brought the number of missing records to seventeen. No records were found in Area Records Athlone. The Area Records Office in Cathal Brugha Barracks was also contacted but no records were found there. Fr Fagan's service record was located in the Head Chaplain's office in McKee Barracks and this was subsequently reviewed.

In chapter six there is an age analysis of 'A' Company which was done using the soldier's dates of birth. Military Archives staff used the dates of birth of the now sixteen records still to be located and found seven further service records. They were not found initially as these sixteen personnel had other service numbers not known to the Independent Review Group. The final number of service records located for 'A' Company during this review was 147 out of 156.

Service records are available to view in Military Archives by appointment by the individual themselves, or if they have passed away, by their closest living next of kin.<sup>11</sup>

### ***Award Recommendations***

The Independent Review Group identified thirty-three 'A' Company personnel who were recommended for the consideration for an award by Lt Col McNamee, OC 35 Inf Bn. During the analysis of service records, thirty-one award recommendation folders were identified on personal files.<sup>12</sup> One of the recommendations reviewed by the Independent Review Group was not found on a service record, but was sent in as a submission from a veteran of 'A' Company. As the main goal of examining service records was to consult any award recommendations, this particular record is considered as one of the 147 files found.

Several names out of those who were recommended for an award were already in the public domain.

It was vital for the Independent Review Group's research to find as many of these recommendations as possible in order to verify the type of award these individuals were recommended for, and to analyse the witness statements which accompanied their recommendation. Equally as important to the Independent Review Group was the examination of the remaining 123 'A' Company personnel who were not recommended for an award following Jadotville. The aim here was to assess if the service record had any reference to Jadotville or to a possible award. Two members of 'A' Company whose service records were not located during this review were identified as having been recommended for an award on Lt Col McNamee's list of submissions in February 1962.

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<sup>11</sup> For more information on viewing service records, please contact Military Archives.

<sup>12</sup> For a breakdown of extant award recommendations, see Appendix C.



As part of his submission to the Independent Review Group, Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd) provided a list of thirty-four members of 'A' Company who were thought to have been recommended for the Military Medal for Gallantry and/or the Distinguished Service Medal.<sup>13</sup> Thirty-two out of the thirty-four recommendations on this list were located by the Independent Review Group. One who was listed was in fact recommended for service in the Congo with the 39 Inf Bn. One who was recorded as being recommended for the Distinguished Service Medal, whose service record was found and examined, held no award recommendation folder on their file. One additional award recommendation was discovered over the course of the Independent Review Group's inspection of service records that was not originally on this list. Other names listed for a Military Medal for Gallantry or Distinguished Service Medal were found to have been recommended for a promotion but not for the award of a medal.

During the 2017 Review on Jadotville, 141 service records were consulted out of 156 personnel. Out of these 141 files, twenty-three individuals were identified by that review as having being recommended for an award as a result of their action at Jadotville.<sup>14</sup> The Independent Review Group did not find any reference to Lt Col McNamee's actual list of recommendations in the 2017 Review.

### ***Ethical Considerations***

It is important to acknowledge the ethical considerations that emerged during this review. Conscious of the fact that this may be the first time that some of the veterans or veterans' families spoke about their experiences, the Independent Review Group wanted to ensure that the interviewees were fully comfortable and were aware of the interview process. Interviewees were sent a copy of the Independent Review Group's Terms of Reference in advance of the meeting and they were in contact with a member of the Group who was available at all times to discuss any questions they had beforehand.

Interviews were recorded for record keeping and to maintain the integrity of all participants. The Independent Review Group made sure to inform all interviewees of this before each meeting. These recordings will be a key part of the Independent Review Group collection. All interviewees have the right to decide whether they want their interview to be preserved as a permanent public reference and be available for public and academic research, or whether they want their interview to be for the use of the Independent Review Group only and not made public during their lifetime. Consent forms were sent to interview participants asking them to decide between these two options. Interviewees were advised that elements of their interviews could be quoted in the Report.

Another concern for the Independent Review Group was the fact that this Report would contain the names of personnel, not only from 'A' Company, who were nominated and considered for an award by the 1961, 1962 and 1965 Medals Boards. Some personnel may not know that they had been recommended or considered. However because these names have been released into the public domain previously, through FOI requests etc., the Independent Review Group saw no data protection issues with including these names in its Report. The consideration of both the thirty-three members of 'A' Company recommended for an award, and the other members of ONUC

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<sup>13</sup> Submission by Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd) to IRG, 21 December 2020.

<sup>14</sup> 2017 Jadotville Review.

who were also recommended at this time, informed the Independent Review Group about the 1961, 1962 and 1965 medals process, and provided a wider context in which to place the consideration of awards and medals.

### ***Limitations***

Conducting this Review during the Covid-19 pandemic resulted in a number of limitations. The most important one being that the Independent Review Group could not meet veterans and their families in person. Ideally, the Independent Review Group would have been able to conduct its interviews face to face. Due to the restrictions and in the interest of health and safety, interviews were conducted virtually using MS Teams.

These restrictions also meant that the Independent Review Group had to hold their meetings virtually. Once restrictions lifted and it was safe to do so, the Independent Review Group was able to meet in person using the Military Archives Lecture Hall in Cathal Brugha Barracks.

Travel restrictions also reduced the Independent Review Group's options while conducting research. UNARMS in New York is the main international archival source on Jadotville. The Independent Review Group has used a considerable amount of previously sourced material from its ONUC collection to inform its Report, but there is probably relevant material held in this archive that the Group could not access because of Covid-19 travel restrictions. Despite these limitations, for the purpose of its Report the Independent Review Group is confident it had access to the main sources and the critical sources for examining the aftermath of 'A' Company's deployment to Jadotville which are mainly held in Military Archives at Cathal Brugha Barracks, Rathmines, Dublin, where it had controlled access to records throughout.

### ***Staff Support***

The Independent Review Group was supported throughout by the Defence Forces. CIS Branch facilitated the use of MS Teams as a secure platform to conduct interviews for the key consultation phase. This platform also served as a function for the Independent Review Group to meet each other safely during Covid-19 restrictions. DFHQ Liaison Officer Lt Col Daragh McKeivitt supported the work of the Group throughout its review and facilitated access to Defence Forces Headquarters records. The Principal Officer in the Executive Branch, Aileen Nolan provided access to Department of Defence records. Military Archives staff retrieved files, facilitated research appointments, and carried out searches for service records that could not be located during the first phase of searches. The Independent Review Group also had access to the Lecture Hall in Military Archives, Cathal Brugha Barracks for in person meetings, supported by Barrack staff and Military Archives staff. Staff in the Curragh Library, the Head Chaplain's Office and Area Records Offices also supported the Independent Review Group by carrying out searches of crucial records and providing access to material.

### ***Footnotes***

Footnotes are used throughout this Report to reference material that the Independent Review Group consulted, to attribute quotations, and to provide additional information and guidance about a certain topic. They can be found at the end of a page in smaller font.

Appendix A: Nominal Roll 'A' Company, 35 Irish Bn, Irish Contingent, ONUC, Jadotville

Please note that the totals given in this document are incorrect. There are 102 Privates listed, not 101 as indicated on page 5. The total is 159, minus the two helicopter pilots and the interpreter, giving 156 in total for 'A' Company Group and attachments.

NOMINAL ROLL OF 'A' COMPANY, 35 IRISH Bn,  
IRISH CONTINGENT, ONUC, JADOTVILLE.

18 SEPTEMBER, 1961.

NO	RK	NAME	
0.5176	Cpmdt	Quinlan,	P.
0.7102	Capt	Byrne,	D.
0.4874	Capt	McGuinn,	T.
0.7440	Capt	Do nelly,	W.
0.7529	Comdt	Clune,	J.
0.7639	Lieut	Leech,	J.
0.7767	Lieut	Carey,	W.
0.7668	Lieut	Quinlan,	T.
	Fr	Fagan,	J Chaplain
0.7645	Lieut	Knightly	K.
81154	Cpl	Allen,	W
8309853	Pte	Battles,	G.
808554	Pte	Boland,	F.
810792	"	Bracken,	J.
809947	"	Bradley,	R.
807525	Cpl	Branigan,	C.
<del>809983</del>			
8098 83	Pte	Brennan,	M
807964	"	Broderick,	J.
810944	"	Broderick,	M.
810589	Cpl	Burke,	P.
800000	Pte	Byrne,	J.
803881	Pte	Conlon,	P.
94301	Pte	Connolly,	D.
808910	Pte	Conway,	J.
810219	Pte	Cooley,	J.
806778	Sgt	Cuffe,	G.
808073	Pte	Cunningham,	T.
809905	Pte	Delaney,	P.
435951	Pte	Dell,	A.
97855	Cpl	Dempey,	J.
804192	Cpl	Devine,	J.

COMPANY, 35 IRISH Bn.

'A' Coy, 35 Irish Bn  
17 Sept 1961

408227	Sgt	Dinan,	H.
808100	Cpl	Donnally,	T.
810006	Pte	Donnally,	P.
808174	Pte	Dezlar,	J.
85058	Pte	Duff	J.
206726	Cpl	Duffy,	P.
807893	Pte	Duffy,	W.
808510	Pte	Doyle,	M.
810090	Pte	Dunleavy,	P.
809015	Pte	Dykes,	A.
809084	Pte	Feary,	J.
810794	Pte	Finlase,	S.
210199	Pte	Flaherty,	D.
809977	Pte	Flynn,	J.
807345	Pte	Flynn,	J.
810143	Pte	Flynn,	T.
810428	Cpl	Foley,	J.
92122	Cpl	Foster,	J.
809639	Pte	Galvin,	M.
206011	Pte	Gildea,	P.
87211	Sgt	Gilmanan,	F.
809362	Pte	Gorman,	J.
808114	Pte	Gornley,	E.
810576	Pte	Graham,	M.
809385	Pte	Greene,	M.
83068	Pte	Gunn,	T.
809337	Pte	Hannigan,	W.
810793	Pte	Harkin,	D.
808424	Pte	Harper,	J.
95011	Pte	Heffernan,	W.
809338	Pte	Hegarty,	D.
810215	Pte	Hegarty,	H.
809692	Pte	Hegarty,	J.
801545	Sgt	Hegarty,	W.
809650	Pte	Hennelly,	G.
807860	Pte	Hogan,	P.
810140	Pte	Hogan,	P.

(Contd)

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Nominal Roll 'A' Coy, 35 Irish Bn - Irish Contingent ONUC.  
 JADOTVILLE - 18 Sep 1961.

NO	RK	NAME		
808556	Pte	Hughes,	W	P
74802	Sgt	Joyce,	P.	
808552	Pte	Keane,	W	
425402	Sgt	Kelly,	T.	
99003	Cpl	Kerr,	J.	
805589	Cpl	Laffere,	B.	
809016	Pte	Larkin,	R.	
808976	Pte	Larkin,	D.	
808049	Pte	Lynch,	K.	
425332	Cpl	Lynch,	M.	
810091	Pte	Maher,	E	
810865	Pte	Malone,	F.	
810946	Pte	Maloney,	J.	
809849	Pte	Manly,	D.	
811072	Pte	Manning,	J.	
808092	Pte	Meyler,	J.	
809854	Pte	Molloy,	J.	
94808	Sgt	Monaghan,	J.	
808743	Pte	Monaghan,	T.	
421445	Pte	Murray,	J.	
84197	Cpl	McAnaney,	J.	
90926	Cpl	McArdle,	J.	
200366	Sgt	McCabe,	M.	
803925	Pte	McCourt,	J.	
88511	Pte	McCormack,	M.	
810000	Pte	McDermott,	M	6
98807	Cpl	McDonagh,	J.	
810559	Pte	McDonagh,	T.	
94809	Cpl	McDonnell,	T.	
88618	Cpl	McEntee,	J.	
806370	Pte	McGrath,	M	

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Contd

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Nominal Roll - 'A' Company, 35 Irish Bn, Irish Contingent  
 JADOTVILLE - 18 Sept 1961.

NO	RK	NAME	
809893	Pte	McGuinness,	J.
87230	Sgt	McLoughlin,	K.
810223	Pte	McMahon,	T.
808261	Pte	McManus,	F.
96739	Cpl	McManus,	J.
87480	Pte	McMerney,	F.
113181	Cqms	Neville,	P.
810214	Pte	Nicell,	J.
89748	Cpl	O'Brien,	J.
94823	Cpl	O'Callaghan,	P.
91440	Cpl	O'Connor,	M.
810656	Pte	O'Farrell,	M.
808749	Pte	O'Kane,	J.
808117	Pte	O'Kane,	J.
810511	Pte	Orr,	R.
806704	Pte	O'Sullivan,	M.
808012	Pte	Peppard,	J.
810163	Pte	Powell,	C.
73505	C/S	Prendergast,	J.
809976	Pte	Purtill,	J.
810997	Pte	Quinlan,	M.
810264	C.1	Quinn,	T.
805649	Sgt	Rea,	J.
809777	Pte	Redmond,	J.
808282	Cpl	Rhatigan,	P.
810945	Pte	Regan,	D.
87715	C.1	Relighan,	J.
803473	Pte	Riggs,	W.
88569	Cpl	Roche,	C.
809530	Pte	Roper,	A.
809771	Pte	Scally,	J.
90925	Pte	Seery,	M.
809174	Pte	Shanagher,	J.
810244	Cpl	Smith,	M.
808563	Pte	Stanford	J.



(Contd) Nominal Roll 'A' Company, 35 Irish Bn Irish Contingent  
JADOTVILLE - 18 Sept 1961.

TOTAL STRENGTH 'A' COY GP  
 COMBAT. UNITS. PERS. TOTALS  
 12 45 101 158

NO	PK	NAME	
809693	Pte	Stanley,	N.
807790	Pte	Sulli van	T.
82710	Pte	Sweeney,	B.
807892	Pte	Sweeney,	P.
810567	Pte	Tahaney,	J.
90244	Sgt	Tiernan,	G.
810383	Cpl	Tiernan,	S.
809014	Pte	Tighe,	M.
70696	Pte	Tomkins,	C.
95241	Pte	Williams,	P.
77210	Cpl	Williams,	.
807961	Pte	Kavanagh,	S.
804685	Pte	Dunne,	W - HQ Coy

ATTACHMENTS TO 'A' COMPANY

207465	Pte	O'Brien,	J - 'B' Coy 35 Bn.
96145	Sgt	Geary,	G - Armd Car Gp
807146	Cpl	O'Connor,	M - -do-
804723	Cpl	Lucey,	J - -do-
807159	Tpr	McCarton,	P - do-
808772	Tpr	Nolan,	M - -do-
90089	Tpr	Shanaghan,	J - -d -
805954	Pte	Ready,	W - HQ Coy 35 Bn
810300	Pte	Dreelin,	J - 'A' Coy Formerly HQ
11885	Lieut	Hovden,	B - Norwegian Heli Pilot
3169	2/Lieut	Proberg,	L - Swedish
91158	W/O	Thors	E - Swedish.

At 0800hrs on this date 18 September 1961 at JADOTVILLE all the personnel on this Nominal Roll are in good health, except for the following ~~four~~ personnel who received injuries: (Five) x

811272 Pte Manning - Injury to ~~left~~ Shoulder. - Bullet Wound.  
 805954 Pte Ready - Bullet Wound left leg.  
 801945 Sgt Hegarty - Shrapnel wounds in posterior & right leg.  
 810567 Pte Tahaney - Slightly shell shocked.  
 808114 Pte Gormley - Contusion to right shoulder.

SIGNED [Signature] MUNRO 90      SIGNED [Signature] COMDT.  
 (P.J. QUINLAN)  
 OFFICER COMMANDING 'A' COY GP  
 JADOTVILLE. DATE 18 Sept 1961

**Appendix B: 'A' Company Service Records**

	<b>Army No.</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Forename</b>	<b>Surname</b>	<b>Service Record Status</b>	<b>Recommendation Status</b>
1.	5176	Comdt	Patrick	Quinlan	✓	No recommendation found
2.	7529	Comdt	Joseph	Clune	✓	No recommendation found
3.	7102	Capt	Dermot	Byrne	✓	No recommendation found
4.	4874	Capt	Thomas	McGuinn	✓	No recommendation found
5.	7440	Capt	Liam	Donnelly	✓	Recommended for commendation
6.	7639	Lt	Joseph	Leech	✓	No recommendation found
7.	7767	Lt	Noel	Carey	✓	Recommended for commendation
8.	7668	Lt	Thomas	Quinlan	✓	Recommended for commendation (awarded DSM)
9.		Fr	Joseph	Fagan	✓	No recommendation found
10.	7645	Lt	Kevin	Knightly	✓	Recommended for commendation
11.	81154	Cpl	Bobby	Allen	✓	Recommended for promotion, (awarded DSM for later Congo Service)
12.	809853	Pte	Gerald	Battles	✓	No recommendation found
13.	808554	Pte	Leo	Boland	✓	No recommendation found
14.	810792	Pte	Joseph	Bracken	✓	No recommendation found
15.	809947	Pte	Robert	Bradley	✓	No recommendation found
16.	807525	Cpl	Colm	Brannigan	✓	No recommendation found
17.	809683	Pte	Michael	Brennan	✓	Recommended for commendation
18.	807964	Pte	John	Broderick	✓	No recommendation found
19.	810944	Pte	Michael	Broderick	✓	No recommendation found
20.	810589	Cpl	Patrick	Burke	X	Service record not located
21.	800000	Pte	James	Byrne	✓	No recommendation found
22.	803881	Pte	Patrick	Conlon	✓	No recommendation found
23.	94301	Pte	Desmond	Connolly	✓	No recommendation found
24.	808910	Pte	John	Conway	✓	No recommendation found
25.	810219	Pte	Charles	Cooley	X	Service record not located
26.	806778	Sgt	Geoffrey	Cuffe	✓	No recommendation found
27.	808073	Pte	Thomas	Cunningham	✓	No recommendation found
28.	809805	Pte	Patrick	Delaney	✓	No recommendation found
29.	435951	Pte	Albert	Dell	✓	No recommendation found
30.	97855	Cpl	James	Dempsey	✓	No recommendation found
31.	804192	Cpl	John	Devine	✓	No recommendation found
32.	408827	Sgt	Henry	Dixon	✓	No recommendation found
33.	805100	Cpl	John	Donnelly	✓	No recommendation found
34.	810006	Pte	Patrick	Donnelly	✓	No recommendation found
35.	808174	Pte	John	Dowler	✓	No recommendation found
36.	85058	Pte	Joseph	Duff	✓	No recommendation found
37.	206726	Cpl	Patrick	Duffy	✓	No recommendation found
38.	807893	Pte	William	Duffy	X	Service record not located
39.	808510	Pte	Maurice	Doyle	✓	No recommendation found
40.	811090	Pte	Patrick	Dunleavy	✓	No recommendation found



	Army No.	Rank	Forename	Surname	Service Record Status	Recommendation Status
41.	809015	Pte	Anthony	Dykes	✓	No recommendation found
42.	809084	Pte	James	Feery	✓	Recommended for service in Elisabethville. Awarded DSM
43.	810794	Pte	Simon	Finlass	✓	No recommendation found
44.	210199	Pte	Dominick	Flaherty	✓	No recommendation found
45.	809977	Pte	John	Flynn	✓	No recommendation found
46.	807245	Pte	John	Flynn	✓	No recommendation found
47.	810143	Pte	Thomas	Flynn	✓	Recommended for commendation
48.	810428	Cpl	John	Foley	✓	Recommended for award
49.	92122	Cpl	John	Foster	✓	No recommendation found
50.	809687	Pte	Michael	Galvin	✓	Recommended for medal
51.	206011	Pte	Patrick	Gildea	✓	No recommendation found
52.	87211	Sgt	Francis	Gilsenan	✓	No recommendation found
53.	809362	Pte	John	Gorman	✓	No recommendation found
54.	808114	Pte	Edward	Gormley	✓	No recommendation found
55.	810576	Pte	Noel	Graham	✓	No recommendation found
56.	809385	Pte	Michael	Greene	✓	No recommendation found
57.	815209, 800068	Pte	Thomas	Gunn	✓	Recommended for commendation
58.	809337	Pte	William	Hannigan	✓	No recommendation found
59.	810793	Pte	Dominick	Harkin	✓	No recommendation found
60.	808424	Pte	James	Harper	X	Service record not located
61.	95011	Pte	William	Heffernan	✓	No recommendation found
62.	809388	Pte	Daniel	Hegarty	✓	No recommendation found
63.	810213	Pte	Henry	Hegarty	✓	No recommendation found
64.	809692	Pte	Joseph	Hegarty	✓	No recommendation found
65.	801545	Sgt	Walter	Hegarty	✓	Recommended for medal (awarded DSM)
66.	809650	Pte	Gerald	Hennelly	X	Service record not located
67.	807860	Pte	Patrick	Hogan	✓	No recommendation found
68..	810140	Pte	Thomas	Hogan	✓	No recommendation found
69.	808556	Pte	William	Hughes	✓	No recommendation found
70.	74802	Sgt	Patrick	Joyce	✓	No recommendation found
71.	808552	Pte	William	Keane	✓	No recommendation found
72.	425402	Sgt	Thomas	Kelly	✓	Recommended for commendation
73.	99003	Cpl	John	Kerr	✓	No recommendation found
74.	805589	Cpl	Brendan	Laffere	✓	No recommendation found
75.	809016	Pte	Robert	Larkin	✓	Recommended for commendation
76.	808976	Pte	Thomas	Larkin	✓	Recommended for service with 32 Bn
77.	808049	Pte	Kieran	Lynch	✓	No recommendation found
78.	425332	Cpl	Michael	Lynch	✓	Recommended for DSM for service with 39 Bn
79.	810291	Pte	Edward	Maher	✓	No recommendation found
80.	810865	Pte	Francis	Malone	✓	No recommendation found
81.	810946	Pte	Joseph	Maloney	✓	No recommendation found
82.	809849	Pte	Donal	Manley	✓	No recommendation found
83.	811272	Pte	John	Manning	✓	No recommendation found

*Independent Review Group - Jadotville*

	<b>Army No.</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Forename</b>	<b>Surname</b>	<b>Service Record Status</b>	<b>Recommendation Status</b>
84.	808092	Pte	James	Meyler	✓	No recommendation found
85.	809854	Pte	Daniel	Molloy	✓	Recommended for meritorious service in Elisabethville
86.	94808	Sgt	John	Monaghan	✓	Recommended for Medal
87.	808743	Pte	Patrick	Monaghan	X	Service record not located
88.	421445	Pte	James	Murray	✓	No recommendation found
89.	84197	Cpl	John	McAnaney	✓	No recommendation found
90.	90926	Cpl	James	McArdle	✓	No recommendation found
91.	200386	Sgt	Martin	McCabe	✓	No recommendation found
92.	803923	Pte	James	McCourt	✓	No recommendation found
93.	88511	Pte	Michael	McCormack	✓	Recommended for commendation
94.	810000	Pte	Michael	McDermott	✓	No recommendation found
95.	98807	Cpl	John	McDonagh	✓	Recommended for commendation
96.	810559	Pte	Thomas	McDonagh	✓	No recommendation found
97.	94809	Cpl	Thomas	McDonnell	✓	Recommended for commendation
98.	88618	Cpl	John	McEntee	X	Service record not located
99.	806370	Pte	Matthew	McGrath	✓	No recommendation found
100.	809893	Pte	Joseph	McGuinness	✓	No recommendation found
101.	87230	Sgt	Kevin	McLoughlin	✓	No recommendation found
102.	810223	Pte	Terence	McMahon	✓	No recommendation found
103.	808261	Pte	Francis	McManus	✓	No recommendation found
104.	96739	Cpl	John	McManus	✓	Recommended for meritorious service in Elisabethville
105.	87480	Pte	Anthony	McNerney	✓	No recommendation found
106.	113181	CQMS	Patrick	Neville	✓	No recommendation found
107.	810214	Pte	John	Nicell	✓	Recommended for meritorious service in Elisabethville
108.	89748	Cpl	John	O'Brien	✓	No recommendation found
109.	94823	Cpl	Peter	O'Callaghan	✓	No recommendation found
110.	91440	Cpl	Michael	O'Connor	✓	No recommendation found
111.	810656	Pte	Michael	O'Farrell	✓	No recommendation found
112.	808749	Pte	James	O'Kane	✓	No recommendation found
113.	808117	Pte	Joseph	O'Kane	✓	Recommended for commendation
114.	810511	Pte	Robert	Orr	✓	No recommendation found
115.	806704	Pte	Michael	O'Sullivan	✓	No recommendation found
116.	808012	Pte	John	Peppard	✓	No recommendation found
117.	810163	Pte	Christopher	Powell	✓	No recommendation found
118.	73505	CS	John (Jack)	Prendergast	✓	Recommended for medal
119.	809976	Pte	John	Purtill	X	Service record not located
120.	810997	Pte	Matt	Quinlan	✓	Recommended for promotion
121.	810264	Cpl	Timothy	Quinn	✓	Recommended for medal
122.	805649	Sgt	James	Rea	✓	Recommended for commendation
123.	809777	Pte	James	Redmond	✓	No recommendation found
124.	808262	Cpl	Patrick	Rhatigan	✓	No recommendation found
125.	810945	Pte	Daniel	Regan	✓	No recommendation found
126.	87715	Cpl	Joseph	Relihan	✓	No recommendation found

	<b>Army No.</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Forename</b>	<b>Surname</b>	<b>Service Record Status</b>	<b>Recommendation Status</b>
127.	803473	Pte	William	Riggs	✓	No recommendation found
128.	88569	Cpl	Christopher	Roche	✓	No recommendation found
129.	809530	Pte	Anthony	Roper	✓	No recommendation found
130.	809771	Pte	James	Scally	✓	No recommendation found
131.	90925	Pte	Michael	Seery	✓	No recommendation found
132.	809174	Pte	John	Shanagher	✓	No recommendation found
133.	810244	Cpl	Michael	Smith	✓	No recommendation found
134.	808563	Pte	John	Stanford	✓	No recommendation found
135.	809693	Pte	Noel	Stanley	✓	Recommended for commendation
136.	807790	Pte	Timothy	Sullivan	✓	No recommendation found
137.	92710	Pte	Bernard	Sweeney	✓	No recommendation found
138.	807892	Pte	Philip	Sweeney	✓	No recommendation found
139.	810567	Pte	James	Tahaney	✓	No recommendation found
140.	90244	Sgt	George	Tiernan	✓	No recommendation found
141.	810383	Cpl	Sean	Tiernan	✓	No recommendation found
142.	809014	Pte	Michael	Tighe	✓	Recommended for meritorious service
143.	70696	Pte	Charles	Tomkins	✓	No recommendation found
144.	95241	Pte	Patrick	Williams	✓	No recommendation found
145.	77210	Cpl	Francis	Williams	✓	Recommended for promotion
146.	807961	Pte	Seamus	Kavanagh	✓	No recommendation found
147.	804685	Pte	Michael	Dunne	✓	No recommendation found
148.	207463	Pte	Joseph	O'Brien	✓	Recommended for commendation
149.	96145	Sgt	Colman	Geary	✓	No recommendation found
150.	807146	Cpl	Thomas	O'Connor	✓	No recommendation found
151.	804723	Cpl	James	Lucey	✓	Recommended for commendation
152.	807159	Tpr	Patrick	McCarton	✓	No recommendation found
153.	808772	Tpr	Michael	Nolan	✓	No recommendation found
154.	90089	Tpr	John	Shanaghan	✓	No recommendation found
155.	805954	Pte	William	Ready	✓	No recommendation found
156.	810800	Pte	John	Dreelan	X	Service record not located

## **Appendix C: Extant Award Recommendations<sup>1</sup>**

### *Award Recommendations - 'A' Company – for actions at Jadotville (27)*

- 7440 Capt Liam Donnelly - Recommended for commendation
- 7767 Lt Noel Carey - Recommended for commendation
- 7668 Lt Thomas Quinlan - Recommended for commendation (awarded DSM)
- 7645 Lt Kevin Knightly - Recommended for commendation
- 81154 Cpl Bobby Allen - Recommended for promotion (awarded DSM for later Congo Service)
- 809683 Pte Michael Brennan - Recommended for commendation
- 810143 Pte Thomas Flynn - Recommended for commendation
- 810428 Cpl John Foley - Recommended for an award
- 815209, 800068 Pte Thomas Gunn - Recommended for commendation
- 801545 Sgt Walter Hegarty - Recommended for medal (awarded DSM)
- 425402 Sgt Thomas Kelly - Recommended for commendation
- 809016 Pte Robert Larkin - Recommended for commendation
- 94808 Sgt John Monaghan - Recommended for medal
- 88511 Pte Michael McCormack - Recommended for commendation
- 98807 Cpl John McDonagh - Recommended for commendation
- 94809 Cpl Thomas McDonnell - Recommended for commendation
- 808117 Pte Joseph O'Kane - Recommended for commendation
- 73505 CS John (Jack) Prendergast - Recommended for medal
- 810997 Pte Matt Quinlan - Recommended for promotion
- 810264 Cpl Timothy Quinn - Recommended for medal
- 805649 Sgt James Rea - Recommended for commendation
- 809693 Pte Noel Stanley - Recommended for commendation
- 809014 Pte Michael Tighe - Recommended for meritorious service
- 77210 Cpl Francis Williams - Recommended for promotion
- 207463 Pte Joseph O'Brien - Recommended for commendation
- 804723 Cpl James Lucey - Recommended for commendation
- 809687, 818894 Pte Michael Galvin – Recommended for medal

### *Award Recommendations – 'A' Company – actions outside of Jadotville (4)*

- 809084 Pte James Feery - Recommended for meritorious service in Elisabethville (awarded DSM)
- 809854 Pte Daniel Molloy - Recommended for meritorious service in Elisabethville
- 96739 Cpl John McManus - Recommended for meritorious service in Elisabethville
- 810214 Pte John Nicell - Recommended for meritorious service in Elisabethville

<sup>1</sup> Does not include 810219 Pte Charles Cooley or 809650 Pte Gerald Hennelly whose service records have not yet been located

## Chapter 4

# Defence Forces' Medals and Awards

'It was my utter privilege to serve. A Medal, did I do it for a medal: no; for an award: no. Do I care whether I get a medal or not? After sixty years what will be will be, simple as that. But I am proud of my service, and I have a clear mind and a clear conscience.'<sup>1</sup>

Pte Michael Tighe, 'A' Company, 35 Inf Bn.

### *Overview of Chapter 4*

This chapter addresses the following issues:

- A view on Medals,
- The evolution of Defence Forces' Medals,
- A New Type of Medal – The Military Medal for Gallantry,
- A Second Medal is Required,
- The Distinguished Service Medal,
- Controlling the Awards Process,
- Promotion in the Context of the 1961 Medals Board,
- Promotion in the Context of the 1962 Medals Board,
- The Responsibility of a Medals Board,
- Multiple Medal Awards,
- Administrative Instructions,
- Issues with the Distinguished Service Medal,
- Unit Citation,
- An Issue with Title.

### *A view on Medals*

The Defence Forces, Óglaigh na hÉireann, has since its foundation taken a conservative approach to the award of medals. This reflects a strong view that medals must be awarded sparingly to maintain their status. Medals attract strong emotions, and it is not surprising they can become the subject of controversy, attracting media and political attention.

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<sup>1</sup> Pte Michael Tighe, interview with IRG, 19 February 2021.

Because they are valued by so many and represent so much to them, medals can be an emotive subject among veterans, serving members, and families, precisely for this reason. Medals are the tangible representation of bravery, of heroism, of gallantry, of service and, of course, of sacrifice. Members of the Defence Forces have died in the service of this country earning them and while their monetary value may not always be significant, to the veterans and to the serving members who wear them, and indeed to their families, they are beyond price. Medals carry memories, deeply embedded within the colour of their ribbons and the glitter of their metal. Memories of far-off places, of unfamiliar languages, of dangerous times spent in the service of peace, and of comrades who have passed on. To their holders, medals represent recognition for a job well done, for a mission achieved, for integrity, for loyalty and even for vindication.

We live in a world where change is constant and where certainty is an almost forgotten concept. However, when the presentation box for a medal is opened, or when a veteran stands in front of a hall mirror and pins on his or her medals with a special pride, memories awaken, and the passage of years fly away for a brief moment.

### ***The evolution of Defence Forces' Medals***

The Irish Defence Forces is perhaps unique among armed forces in that from its foundation through the Volunteers on 25 November 1913, to the approval of the issue of the 1916 Medal on 24 January 1941,<sup>2</sup> twenty-five years after the Easter Rising, no medal awards had been provided for its members.

The Civil War of 1922-3 had demonstrated that the dominant concerns of the period - republicanism, Gaelicism and national unity - had given way to the more mundane and practical things of life. By the end of the 1920s the number of battalions had dropped to five and total strength to just 5,300.<sup>3</sup> The Civil War army of over 48,000 was now a distant memory.<sup>4</sup> The period witnessed economic depression, drastic cutbacks in public expenditure, and an apathy common among governments towards their armies in peacetime. This not alone reduced its numbers, but also any lingering doubts about its ability to influence national events. The Defence Forces retreated behind the walls of the many barracks it was obliged to garrison and there it remained, hidden from view, and largely forgotten.

The twenties and thirties marked a period in the history of the State characterised by conservatism and austerity. Within this atmosphere little or no enthusiasm existed to celebrate the revolutionary period by awarding medals.

At the beginning of the Second World War a state of emergency was proclaimed by Dáil Éireann on 2 September 1939, allowing the passage of the Emergency Powers Act 1939 by the Oireachtas the following day.<sup>5</sup> The government made a call to arms and the strength of the Defence Forces reached a high point of almost 41,000. The 1916 Medal, and the public

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<sup>2</sup> MA, *The 1916 Medal*. [https://www.militaryarchives.ie/fileadmin/user\\_upload/MSPC/documents/Medals/Medal\\_1916.pdf](https://www.militaryarchives.ie/fileadmin/user_upload/MSPC/documents/Medals/Medal_1916.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> Peter Young, 'Defence and the new Irish state: 1919-1939', *The Irish Sword*, xix, nos. 75 and 76 (1993-1994), pp 1-10.

<sup>4</sup> J.P. Duggan, *A History of the Irish Army* (Dublin, 1991), p. 177.

<sup>5</sup> *Dáil Éireann Debates*, 2 September 1939, Table of contents Emergency Powers Bill, 1939. <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/1939-09-02/>.

presentation ceremonies associated with its award, provided a focus for this call to arms at a time when those who had taken opposing sides during the Civil War, now found common cause. The medal was presented to those with recognised military service during Easter Week 1916 which, at the time of its award, included serving members of the Defence Forces. Following the presentation of The 1916 Medal, and in keeping with the spirit of the time, the Government approved the award of The Service (1917-1921) Medal on 26 May 1942. This medal came in two classes. A medal with bar was issued to those who rendered active service during the War of Independence and a medal without bar to those whose service was not deemed to have been active military service, but who were members of Óglaigh na hÉireann, Na Fianna Éireann, Cumann na mBan or the Irish Citizen Army for the three months ended on the 11 July 1921.<sup>6</sup>

On 6 October 1944, a third service medal was approved by the government. This was The Emergency Service Medal for service during the period 3 September 1939 to 31 March 1946.<sup>7</sup> Eleven variants of this medal were awarded to The Permanent Defence Force, The Local Defence Force, The Army Nursing Service, The Chaplaincy Service, and to six other reserve and voluntary bodies.<sup>8</sup>

On 13 December 1944, The Service Medal was approved for issue. This medal is still awarded to enlisted personnel of the Permanent Defence Force with ten years' service, and to officers with fifteen years' service. These four service medals, awarded to those who satisfy the service conditions laid down for them, do not require a Military Board to adjudicate on a recommendation.

By the late 1950s only a handful of personnel who had been awarded The 1916 Medal or The Service (1917-1921) Medal were still serving in the Defence Forces. A significant number awarded The Emergency Service Medal were still in service and the award of The Service Medal was confined, at that time, to enlisted personnel. This meant that for those serving personnel who had been awarded a medal, the majority of officers wore just one medal ribbon and the majority of NCOs and Men just two.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> MA, *The Service (1917-1921) Medal*.  
[https://www.militaryarchives.ie/fileadmin/user\\_upload/MSPC/\\_documents/Medals/MSPC\\_MEDALSBOOKLET\\_APRIL2016\\_02\\_1917-1921\\_medal.pdf](https://www.militaryarchives.ie/fileadmin/user_upload/MSPC/_documents/Medals/MSPC_MEDALSBOOKLET_APRIL2016_02_1917-1921_medal.pdf).

<sup>7</sup> BQMS Ger O'Connor 54 Fd Arty Regt (RDF), *Medals of the Irish Defence Forces*, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition (October 2010), 'A' Administration.  
[https://www.military.ie/en/public-information/defence-forces-ceremonial/defence-forces-medals/df\\_medals\\_2010.pdf](https://www.military.ie/en/public-information/defence-forces-ceremonial/defence-forces-medals/df_medals_2010.pdf).

<sup>8</sup> These were: Second Line Reserve (Specialists), 26 Battalion (composed almost entirely from members of the Old IRA), Local Security Force, Volunteer Police Force, Irish Red Cross Society Volunteer Aid Section, Irish Red Cross Society First Aid Division, and Air Raid Precautions Organisation.

<sup>9</sup> Other Defence Forces' medal awards not referred to in this chapter include:

- The Good Conduct Medal awarded between 1988 and 1990 to individual NCOs and Privates to recognise their meritorious service. While this required the deliberations of a Medals Board, the medal is no longer awarded.
- The United Nations Peacekeeping Medal, introduced in 1989, and awarded to members of the Defence Forces who hold a medal for service with a UN mission, or a UN mandated mission.
- The Military Star awarded to members of the Defence Forces who are killed or fatally wounded because of a hostile act.
- The Service Medal FCA and SM, introduced in June 1961, and awarded to members of An Fórsa Cosanta Áitiúil and An Slua Muiri.
- The International Operational Service Medal, introduced in October 2016, and awarded to members of the Defence Forces deployed on overseas missions where no other mission medal has been awarded.
- The Defence Forces 1916 Commemorative Medal, awarded to members of the Defence Forces who were in service during the period 1 January – 31 December 2016.

While little importance or even notice seems to have been paid to this, all was about to change with the advent, in 1958, of Defence Forces' participation in overseas service.

### ***A New Type of Medal – The Military Medal for Gallantry***

The Military Medal for Gallantry, introduced in 1944, presented the Defence Forces with a completely different awarding process, one it had absolutely no experience of dealing with and for which little or no preparation had been made. This was to become patently obvious as the award process for this, and for The Distinguished Service Medal, initiated in February 1964, would demonstrate when awards were being considered for the Congo operation.

The Military Medal for Gallantry may be awarded to officers, non-commissioned officers, and privates of the Defence Forces and to members of the Army Nursing and Chaplaincy Services in recognition of the performance of any act of exceptional bravery or gallantry (other than one performed on war service) arising out of, or associated with, military service and involving risk to life and limb. The medal was awarded originally in just one class.<sup>10</sup> However, by 1961 when it was first awarded, it had somewhat unusually for a country's premier gallantry award, been divided into three classes. These were: 1st Class, 2nd Class, and 3rd Class – changed in January 1984 to With Honour, With Distinction, and With Merit. That the act of exceptional bravery or gallantry had to be performed outside of war service conformed to Ireland's neutral stance during the Second World War when it was envisaged the medal would be awarded in the context of operations against an invasion of the country by either of the belligerents. In the event of Ireland deciding to become actively involved in hostilities by declaring war, a separate series of 'War Service' medals would presumably have been issued. By 1944 however the likelihood of an invasion, and with it the award of this medal, was remote.<sup>11</sup> In the years that followed its introduction it would seem the award had been largely forgotten about and was only resurrected when the advent of overseas service saw a requirement for awards for gallantry and service.<sup>12</sup>

### ***A Second Medal is Required***

It may well happen that, during the Congo operation, some members of the Irish contingent may perform exceptionally meritorious difficult or dangerous service which should receive some special recognition. I think it would be well to give consideration now to the manner in which such recognition should be given, whether by way of a decoration or otherwise.<sup>13</sup>

Writing to Minister for Defence Kevin Boland TD on 26 August 1960, Taoiseach Seán Lemass thus initiated the question of recognition for Defence Forces' personnel serving with ONUC by means of award. The Department of Defence wasted no time in arguing against the Taoiseach's suggestion. ONUC personnel would be awarded a commemorative medal and service ribbon by the UN for Congo service and so 'in the circumstances it might not be considered desirable for us

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<sup>10</sup> DFR A19, An Roinn Cosanta, 24 July 1948.

<sup>11</sup> J.P. Duggan, *A History of the Irish Army* (Dublin, 1991), pp 213-217.

<sup>12</sup> On 14 December 1949 a question was asked on the award of The Military Medal for Gallantry for a 1946 act of bravery by a soldier after a crash at Baldonnel Aerodrome but the response was that time limitations now prevented consideration of the award. See <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/1949-12-14/34/>.

<sup>13</sup> DOD, 3/34932, Lemass to Boland, 26 August 1960.



to recognise meritorious etc service there by way of another decoration related specifically to the Congo.<sup>14</sup> The Department of Defence prepared a reply for its minister that emphasised the existing award of The Military Medal for Gallantry and the option of ‘recognition for meritorious service by way of promotion, in certain circumstances, to higher military rank.’<sup>15</sup> ‘Any case’ that might arise in the Congo would ‘best be met under one or another of these arrangements’.<sup>16</sup> Asked by the Department of Defence for his views, Chief of Staff Maj Gen Seán MacEoin replied that there should be ‘recognition in the form of a decoration’ for ‘exceptionally meritorious difficult or dangerous acts’ performed in the Congo, adding ‘the troops there are now legally on active service and the current reports of events suggest a substantial probability of such recognition being required in practice.’<sup>17</sup>

Replying to An Taoiseach Seán Lemass, Minister Boland mentioned the Military Medal for Gallantry and promotion as a reward for distinguished service, but followed the line that ‘the troops come under the operational control of the UN ... the UN makes no provision for decoration for gallantry ... it probably might be necessary to consult the UN.’<sup>18</sup> This is an example of a recurring theme across the Congo medals issue and in relation to service with ONUC in general. The Defence Forces, the Department of Defence and the Department of External Affairs had a subservient attitude towards the UN. They did not wish to raise the question of awards with the UN as it might be ‘embarrassing’ to the organisation.<sup>19</sup> The UN confirmed by February 1961 that no special decorations for deeds of gallantry or bravery would be issued in respect of ONUC service.<sup>20</sup>

Maj Gen MacEoin raised a further problem. If an individual qualified for the award of the Military Medal for Gallantry ‘we would not at the present be in a position to implement the terms of ROE [DFR] A 19, para 21 or 22 owing to the non-existence of the appropriate medal.’ Yet, seeing an opportunity, he wrote to Adjutant General Col P.J. Hally that ‘with this matter engaging the attention of An Taoiseach, the present would seem to be a good time to press for some action in regard to the provision of medals.’<sup>21</sup> As DFR A19 paragraphs 21 and 22 deal with the presentation of medals, the inference to be drawn is that the Military Medal for Gallantry might exist in regulations, but the medal had not been struck in physical form. An internal minute on Department of Defence files from 9 November 1960, the day after the Niamba Ambush, actions at which would lead to the first Military Medal for Gallantry being awarded, indicated that the medal was then ‘at the plaster cast stage.’<sup>22</sup>

Maj Gen MacEoin was also worried that the UN might not issue a special Congo medal ‘in a particular case of gallantry’ and ‘it may become necessary for us to do so’.<sup>23</sup> The debate in the Department of Defence now turned to whether ONUC service constituted war service: ‘As for

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<sup>14</sup> DOD, 3/34932, Creed to Ó Críodáin, 30 August 1960.

<sup>15</sup> DOD, 3/34932, Creed to Ó Críodáin, 30 August 1960.

<sup>16</sup> DOD, 3/34932, Creed to Ó Críodáin, 30 August 1960.

<sup>17</sup> DOD, 3/34932, Maj Gen MacEoin to Creed, 30 August 1960.

<sup>18</sup> DOD, 3/34932, Boland to Lamass, 30 August 1960.

<sup>19</sup> DOD, 3/34932, Creed to Ó Críodáin, 9 November 1960.

<sup>20</sup> DOD, 3/34932, Nolan to Cremin, 27 February 1961.

<sup>21</sup> DOD, 3/34932, Maj Gen MacEoin to Col Hally, 31 August 1960.

<sup>22</sup> DOD, 3/34932, Creed to Ó Críodáin, 9 November 1960.

<sup>23</sup> DOD, 3/34932, Maj Gen MacEoin to Col. Hally, 21 September 1960.

acts of gallantry the troops in the Congo, engaged in the performance of duties of a police character, could scarcely be regarded as on war service.<sup>24</sup> Thus a war service medal was not required. The Military Medal for Gallantry was deemed to cover active service with ONUC. This was the view of the Assistant Secretary of the Department of Defence. The matter was debated further and on 16 November 1960 the military members of the Council of Defence approved the award of a medal for gallantry on active service which would include UN service. DFR A19 was to be amended to allow for the issue of the Military Medal for Gallantry ‘in the circumstances of service in the Congo.’<sup>25</sup> There was no question of creating a specific Irish decoration for deeds associated with UN service.<sup>26</sup>

### ***The Distinguished Service Medal***

The 1961 Medals Board set an extremely high standard with its award of the Military Medal for Gallantry 2nd Class to Tpr Anthony Browne, who was killed in action at Niemba. Confusion then marked the deliberations of the 1962 Medals Board which was obliged to make recommendations not only for the Military Medal for Gallantry, but also for a medal, The Meritorious Conduct Medal, that did not and would not exist.

The introduction of The Distinguished Service Medal in February 1964 seemed to offer a solution to the problem. The new medal not only facilitated the recognition of acts of bravery or gallantry that might not merit the award of the Military Medal for Gallantry, but also rewarded those who provided the state with meritorious service.

However, no criteria under which the medal could be awarded in its three classes had been set by the time the 1965 Medals Board, popularly known at the time as the DSM Board, began its deliberations. As a result, no guidance to unit commanders to enable them to make informed recommendations was issued. There was no system of appointing Boards, no policy in relation to a standing board, on how many members a board should have, and on what ranks and appointments they should hold.<sup>27</sup> The 1965 Medals Board demonstrated that a considerable body of procedure and practice needed to be set down and agreed.

In July 1965, the Adjutant-General’s Branch issued a single page document ‘working rules and definitions’ on award criteria.<sup>28</sup> This explained that there would be a wide variety of opinion on what constitutes devotion to duty when meriting an award. Another memorandum, undated and unsigned, titled ‘Distinguished Service Medal’, offered as a basis for discussion, further ‘criteria on which to base awards’.<sup>29</sup> How the complex criteria proposed were to be applied to what would eventually involve some 360 cases before the board is unclear, but these memoranda demonstrate the difficulties faced by the 1965 Medals Board, particularly when adjudicating on recommendations for awards relating to devotion to duty.<sup>30</sup> By October 1965, there was a

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<sup>24</sup> DOD, 3/34932, Creed to Ó Críodáin, 9 November 1960.

<sup>25</sup> DOD, 3/34932, minute by Ó Críodáin, undated, but December 1960.

<sup>26</sup> DOD, 3/34932, Kearney to Cremin, 13 February 1962.

<sup>27</sup> MA, box, ‘Jadotville Medal Queries’, ‘Distinguished Service Medal’, undated memorandum for Col Shortall by Riar ‘A’, probably post-June 1965.

<sup>28</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 11NFGP, 1/8, ‘Medals and Decorations’, Lt Col Caseley, 15 July 1965.

<sup>29</sup> MA, box, ‘Jadotville Medal Queries’, ‘Distinguished Service Medal’, undated and unsigned.

<sup>30</sup> See Chapter 10: 1965 Medals Board Process.

considerable divergence of opinion among board members on the purpose of the Distinguished Service Medal award. To obtain some form of uniformity on the matter of distinguished service, a conference of ONUC unit commanders was held in the Department of Defence on 15 October 1965.<sup>31</sup> While this resulted in a lot of discussion, the matter remained essentially unresolved, and it would seem the Medals Board had to rely largely on its own initiative in adjudicating on the recommendations for the awards submitted to it.

The complex trail put in place for the award of the Military Medal for Gallantry and the Distinguished Service Medal involves the submission by a Commanding Officer of a recommendation made to him, through the chain of command, to the Deputy Chief of Staff (Support). The Deputy Chief of Staff (Support) is then obliged to satisfy himself or herself that a prima facie case exists for its award before placing the recommendation before a Military Board, appointed by the Chief of Staff for the purpose of investigating and deliberating on the cases for an award recommended to it. The award of a medal is then made by the Minister for Defence on the recommendation of the Military Board.

### ***Controlling the Awards Process***

DFR A19, Medals and Decorations [now DFR A9 (New Series) Dress and Medals] has consistently stated in its various iterations in relation to both the Military Medal for Gallantry and the Distinguished Service Medal that: ‘Awards of the Medal shall be made by the Minister for Defence on the recommendation of a Military Board which shall be appointed by the Chief of Staff for the purpose of examining and reporting on every recommendation for the award.’

In 1964 Col Christopher E. (Ned) Shortall, Director of Plans and Operations, argued that the wording of DFR A19 precluded the Chief of Staff from reviewing the findings of a Medals Board.<sup>32</sup> A minute, written by the Personal Staff Officer to the Chief of Staff in 1965, provides details of a discussion he had with the Deputy Judge Advocate-General on this issue.<sup>33</sup> According to the minute the Deputy Judge Advocate-General was of the opinion that as the Chief of Staff had convened the Board, he was entitled to comment on its findings when forwarding it to the Minister. He referred to Rules of Procedure which states that Boards shall, as far as may be convenient and practicable, follow the rules for Courts of Inquiry.<sup>34</sup> DFR A5, which deals with Courts of Inquiry, provides the convening authority with wide discretion in relation to the findings of Courts of Inquiry. Based on the opinion obtained by the Personal Staff Officer, this discretion extends to the findings of Boards, up to and including the rejection of a Board’s findings.

The use of this rather oblique interpretation of Rules of Procedure and Courts of Inquiry to sidestep the provisions of DFR A19 allowed the Chief of Staff to recommend to the Minister for Defence that the main recommendation of the 1962 Medals Board, that of the award of the only Military Medal for Gallantry from among the twenty-two it had considered, be rejected.<sup>35</sup> A Distinguished Service Medal 1st Class was subsequently awarded in this case by the 1965 Medals

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<sup>31</sup> MA, box, ‘Jadotville Medal Queries’, Lt Col Casey to OIC Ceann O, Ceann D, CTC, Aer Chór, Cft Mil Col, 7 October 1965.

<sup>32</sup> MA, 3/37397, S P&O to CFC, 20 July 1964.

<sup>33</sup> MA, box, ‘Jadotville Medal Queries’, minute signed by Cft S ÓL, February 1965.

<sup>34</sup> Paragraph 128 of Rules of Procedure (Defence Forces) 1954. S.I. No 243 of 1954.

<sup>35</sup> MA, box, ‘Jadotville Medal Queries’, Ceann Foirne to An tAire, An Bonn Míleata Calmachta, 5 February 1965.

Board which indicates the Minister did not authorise the award of the Military Medal for Gallantry on the Chief of Staff's recommendation.

The minute of the Personal Staff Officer to the Chief of Staff further states the Deputy Judge Advocate-General expressed concerns that it could also be argued the Minister for Defence had no function other than to award the medals on the recommendation of a Military Board. He advised the regulations should be amended to make them more explicit in this regard. This would allow the Minister to actively engage with the recommendations of a Medals Board rather than to just formally approve them. Amendments along these lines have never been incorporated into regulations.

This interpretation of the regulations, and the military and political inputs to the recommendations of the 1962 Medals Board, allowed the Chief of Staff to assume an overarching control of the medal awards process. The provisions in the regulations that facilitate this interpretation remain in place.

Under the provisions of General Routine Order (GRO) 43 of 1955, the Minister for Defence assigned duties to the military members of the Council of Defence<sup>36</sup>. However, while the Adjutant General [now the Deputy Chief of Staff (Support)] was assigned responsibility by the Minister for the administration of medals under paragraph 2. (2) (ii), it is the Chief of Staff who, under DFR A19 [now DFR A9 (New Series) Dress and Medals] is the convening authority for Medals Boards. Since 1998 only the Chief of Staff is assigned duties by the Minister for Defence. As a consequence, the Deputy Chief of Staff (Support) now has his/her duties, including those relating to medals, delegated to him/her by the Chief of Staff and not by the Minister for Defence. This could be seen to reinforce the centralised control of the medal awards process.

### ***Promotion in the Context of the 1961 Medals Board***

The 1961 Medals Board was the first of its type to convene. The eventual outcome of this Board resulted in the promotion of an officer for distinguished service and of an enlisted man for meritorious service/distinguished conduct, both of whom had originally been recommended by their units for the Military Medal for Gallantry.<sup>37</sup> The Board report in relation to the promotion of the officer states that while it did not recommend him for the award of the Military Medal for Gallantry, it did consider that his service was distinguished and worthy of recognition and invited attention to the provisions of DFR A15, paragraph 10, whereby an officer may be rewarded for distinguished service by promotion to higher rank to fill a vacancy in establishments. This is a provision in regulations that predates the introduction of the Military Medal for Gallantry but was not included in the 1948 edition of DFR A19 dealing with this medal. However, this provision, and its equivalent under DFR A10 for enlisted personnel, were subsequently added by amendment dated 9 August 1961 to DFR A19 for both the Military Medal for Gallantry and the Distinguished Service Medal.<sup>38</sup> These provisions remain in place.

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<sup>36</sup> The members of the Council of Defence are the Chief of Staff, the Adjutant-General and the Quartermaster-General

<sup>37</sup> MA, Medals Board Box 2, Report of Military Board on recommendations for the award of An Bonn Míleata Calmachta, 10 March 1961.

<sup>38</sup> See DFR A19, 1<sup>st</sup> Reprint – January 1965.

The Minister for Defence approved the promotion of the officer. The other living candidate before the Board was likewise not recommended for the award of the Military Medal for Gallantry. In his case the Board chose not to invite attention to the provisions in DFR A10 which allows for the promotion of enlisted personnel for meritorious service or distinguished conduct. However, the enlisted man in this case was subsequently promoted under these provisions at the behest of the Minister for Defence who expressed a desire that the decision of the Medals Board be reconsidered.<sup>39</sup>

Having already been rewarded with promotion on foot of the outcome of the 1961 Medals Board, these two recommendations were nevertheless placed before the 1965 Medals Board, which resulted in the award of the Distinguished Service Medal with Distinction to both.

It would seem, from the Independent Review Group's enquiries and its examination of the available documentation, these may be the only two promotions that have been authorised in the context of a Medals Board. The Independent Review Group has been unable to determine why these two individuals were uniquely accorded the double distinction of being promoted and of being awarded a medal for the same actions in the context of the deliberations of two separate Medals Boards. The Independent Review Group is also unable to state why other holders of the Distinguished Service Medal, and indeed holders of the Military Medal for Gallantry, have not been similarly considered for promotion in addition to being awarded a medal.

#### ***Promotion in the Context of the 1962 Medals Board***

The treatment of these two promotions is in stark contrast to the eight recommendations for promotion by OC 35 Inf Bn, three of whom were from 'A' Company. While it would seem OC 35 Inf Bn's recommendations for promotion, all of which relate to enlisted personnel, were processed separately to the other two categories of recommendations made by him (for the award of the Military Medal for Gallantry, and for 'Recognition of Meritorious Service') their associated documentation indicates they were considered by the 1962 Medals Board which recommended 'No Award' should be made in all cases. That was the last that was heard of them. They were not even included in the 1962 Medals Board's report to the Chief of Staff.<sup>40</sup> Why it was considered necessary to associate these recommendations for promotion with a Medals Board, especially as it was the Adjutant-General who authorised these promotions under DFR A10 on foot of the recommendation of a Commanding Officer, is not known. OC 35 Inf Bn's covering letter for the eight recommendations for promotion was addressed to the Adjutant-General and he recommended them specifically in accordance with the provisions of DFR A10, which deals with enlistments, promotions, discharges etc. He did not submit them in the context of DFR A19, which deals with medals. Yet despite this, these recommendations for promotion appear to have been placed before a Medals Board, appointed by the Chief of Staff, which in rejecting them took on a function that is assigned specifically to the Adjutant-General in regulations. The individual files for these recommendations for promotion were then included with the files of those in whose cases a Medals Board recommended that no award of a medal should be made and were eventually

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<sup>39</sup> MA, box, 'Jadotville Medal Queries', undated and unsigned briefing notes prepared for the Adjutant-General on this promotion.

<sup>40</sup> MA, box, 'Jadotville Medal Queries', 1962 Medals Board Report to An Ceann Fóirne, undated.

sent by OIC 'A' Administration Section to Enlisted Personnel Section for association with their personal files.<sup>41</sup>

### ***The Responsibility of a Medals Board***

The 1961 Medals Board confirmed the principle, already enshrined in regulations, that as well as recommending cases placed before it to the Minister for Defence for an award, a Medals Board also has a responsibility to reject those recommendations made to it that it does not consider merit an award.<sup>42</sup> This is a particularly important responsibility, especially in the context of where a unit has seen action and where as a result recommendations for awards are made for some of its personnel by its commander. In these circumstances, following the outcome of a Medals Board's deliberations, a number of the individuals recommended may be awarded medals.

The announcement of the awards should be the first indication to these individuals that they were recommended. Conversely, those who were recommended but were not awarded a medal should not become aware they were nominated. This intent is confirmed in guidance provided to the 1962 Medals Board that 'under NO circumstances was the fact that a recommendation has been made or considered, be made known to the person recommended until the award has been approved.'<sup>43</sup>

However, if knowledge of unit recommendations enters the public domain, three categories of named individuals will emerge:

- Those for whom no recommendation for an award was made at unit level.
- Those who were recommended for an award at unit level but whose recommendation was not confirmed by a Medals Board.
- Those who were awarded a medal at the end of the awards process.

Public knowledge of this would be insensitive and divisive and demonstrates the reasoning behind the confidential nature of award recommendations. While an appeals mechanism for those who were unsuccessful medal candidates might seem to be in the interests of justice and fair play, this would inevitably result in political representations and media attention. It could also result in officers becoming unwilling to make recommendations for awards as an appeal would inevitably become the default position taken by most if not all unsuccessful candidates. This would be damaging to the integrity and reputation of the medals award system. What is required is a medals award system that is seen to be independent, trusted and one that has built-in checks and balances.

The only reference to the issue of medal award appeals in the Defence Forces occurs in the Administrative Procedures for The Good Conduct Medal, which is no longer awarded. This states:

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<sup>41</sup> MA, Medals Board, box 1, OIF Riar 'A' to OIF RPL dated 18 Bealtaine 1971.

<sup>42</sup> Paragraph 17, DFR A19, Medals and Decorations, An Roinn Cosanta, 24 July 1948. 'The Military Board shall, before recommending the award of the Medal, satisfy itself of the incontestable proof of the performance of the act and that such act is sufficiently meritorious to merit the award.'

<sup>43</sup> MA, Medals Board Box 1, 'Guidance of Boards Considering Orders', undated.

‘There is no right of appeal against non recommendation for the award of the medal or for an unsuccessful recommendation.’<sup>44</sup>

In order to gain some insight into how other armed forces process their military awards, particularly in the area of bravery, those of the UK and the USA, who are probably closest to our own in their attitude towards these awards, were examined. These two countries represent the opposite ends of the spectrum in their attitude towards the practice of medal appeals. The British system does not have an appeals mechanism for its awards and guards its awards system by disposing of unsuccessful nomination files.<sup>45</sup> Nominees only become aware they were under consideration when their award is announced. The intent is to avoid disappointment and, presumably, embarrassment. To this end unsuccessful recommendations are not retained – in other words they are destroyed. While the destruction of historical records would seem to run contrary to modern practice, in a post-Brexit environment this approach is unlikely to change in the foreseeable future.

The United States of America has a comprehensive appeals mechanism with political input allowed if time becomes an issue.<sup>46</sup> As a result awards for actions during the American Civil War have been made over 150 years after the deed was performed. An example of this was the award of the Congressional Medal of Honour to Lt Alonzo H. Cushing, who died in action at the Battle of Gettysburg on 3 July 1863. Lt Cushing’s medal was presented to members of his family by President Barack Obama on 6 November 2014.<sup>47</sup>

While these two examples demonstrate a fundamental difference in their approach to appeals, the UK and USA both publish routinely reviewed, comprehensive, and detailed administrative instructions on the criteria for and the processing of the medal awards of their respective countries. These instructions have been made available for viewing on the internet.

### ***Multiple Medal Awards***

The question of the award of more than one bravery medal to an individual for separate actions over the period of a single operation or incident can arise. The practice in Britain and in the United States indicates that in such cases only the higher medal merited is awarded and all the actions carried out by the individual are detailed in the citation for that medal.<sup>48</sup> Precedent supports this custom and practice in the Defence Forces in that personnel, including individuals who fought at Jadotville, have been awarded one medal for the various acts they carried out during the course of an overseas tour of duty and even during the course of more than one tour of duty.

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<sup>44</sup> Paragraph 1036, ‘A’ Administrative Instructions Defence Forces Part 19 dated 1 March 1988 issued by direction of the Adjutant-General.

<sup>45</sup> JSP 761 Honours and Awards in the Armed Forces – Recommendations, (Published October 2016) Chapter 1, p 4. [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/557785/JSP761\\_Part1.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/557785/JSP761_Part1.pdf).

<sup>46</sup> Military Awards – Army Regulation 600-8-22 (Effective 5 Apr. 2019) Para 1-16, p 4. [https://armypubs.army.mil/epubs/DR\\_pubs/DR\\_a/pdf/web/ARN18147\\_R600\\_8\\_22\\_admin2\\_FINAL.pdf](https://armypubs.army.mil/epubs/DR_pubs/DR_a/pdf/web/ARN18147_R600_8_22_admin2_FINAL.pdf).

<sup>47</sup> US Dept of Defence, Medal of Honor Monday: Army 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Alonzo Cushing, 13 January 2020. <https://www.defense.gov/Explore/Features/story/Article/2053448/medal-of-honor-monday-army-1st-lt-alonzo-cushing/>

<sup>48</sup> The VC citation for Private Johnson Beharry, who earned his award in May 2004, and which runs to more than 1,300 words, provides an example of this. (<http://www.armytigers.com/persons/johnson-beharry-vc>).

### ***Administrative Instructions***

The current medals regulations do not differ substantially from those of the 1960s in relation to the award of the Military Medal for Gallantry and the Distinguished Service Medal. DFR A19 Medals and Decorations has been superseded by DFR A9 (New Series) Dress and Medals, issued on 18 December 2001. This, along with its associated Administrative Instruction lays down the procedures and administrative arrangements relating to these two medals, including the procedures for making a recommendation for their award and for the investigation of these by a military board appointed by the Chief of Staff.

Despite the passage of sixty years since Medals Boards have been established, Defence Force Regulations and their associated Administrative Instructions have yet to specify the number of members required to form a Medals Board, or the ranks or appointments they should hold. There is no standing Medals Board. Award criteria have yet to be formulated and published that provide accountable, comprehensive, clear, and unambiguous guidance when considering awards under the six grades of medals that make up the Military Medal for Gallantry and the Distinguished Service Medal. This could not be said to be in the best interests of the integrity and standing of these awards.

Additionally, under the provisions of paragraph 67 of Rules of Procedure 2019,<sup>49</sup> a board may be composed of any number of officers but in no case shall the board be composed of less than two officers. Conversely, this could mean that a Medals Board could have as few as two members. The Assistant Chief of Staff, who is a de-facto member of the General Staff, has been the president of all recent boards. The lack of any Administrative Instructions to the contrary could lead to a situation that would allow a Medals Board to be convened by the Chief of Staff where the Assistant Chief of Staff and one other officer make up the membership of that board.

This, along with the ability of the Chief of Staff and the Minister for Defence to materially change the recommendations of a Medals Board, could not be seen to be in the best interests of oversight, objectivity, or transparency.

It is understood that in order to ensure consistency is maintained across the awards process, some Medals Boards may have referred to the files of previous boards. This could very well result in the carrying forward of errors, inconsistencies and even partiality, leading to the institutionalisation of such characteristics in the awards process.

While it might be argued that the lack of instructions and guidance on the membership of a Medals Board allows flexibility in ensuring the composition of the board is appropriate to the task in hand, this is not sustainable. Neither is any contention that Rules of Procedure have remained consistent over the past 50 years a valid justification for continuing these practices.

While the Medals Boards convened in the 1960s had no precedent to work from, and were effectively learning on the job, the same cannot be said today where little progress is evident in the practices currently in place. In two of the more recent cases of awards, the medals were presented

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<sup>49</sup> S.I. no. 555 of 2019.



nine years after the events they were awarded for took place.<sup>50</sup> Additionally, the citations for the Military Medals for Gallantry and the Distinguished Service Medals that have been awarded have not been placed in the public domain, nor are the details of the actions and operations for which they were awarded. The stories of these awards form part of the history of the Defence Forces and of this country and should be told to its people and to the generation who serve it today.

Many of the earlier citations in particular provide little or no detail of relevant dates, or of the appointment and unit of the recipient. In one instance the operation in question took place a year earlier than is indicated in the original citation.<sup>51</sup> This could be seen to demonstrate the lack of focus, importance and urgency accorded to the processes for awarding medals.

### ***Issues with the Distinguished Service Medal***

There are inherent issues associated with an award such as the Distinguished Service Medal that sets out to cover such a wide spectrum of categories. The same medal, at the same grade, has been awarded to individuals who have been Killed in Action and to those who have been diligent administrators/hard workers in overseas appointments. Additionally, the route a recommendation takes would seem to preclude and perhaps even discourage its award for leadership at company and battalion level in an operational environment. The fact that only one Battalion Commander and two Company Commanders have been awarded the Distinguished Service Medal for the leadership of their units in over sixty years of unit involvement in overseas service is indicative of this.<sup>52</sup>

In the British system of awards<sup>53</sup> distinct awards are made for:

- Gallantry in Active Operations,
- In-Theatre Meritorious Service, and
- Command/Leadership in Active Operations.

This ensures the issues associated with the Distinguished Service Medal do not present themselves in Britain.

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<sup>50</sup> Presentation of the Distinguished Service Medal to the crew of Dauphin 248 on 19 June 2008 who died while on a Search and Rescue mission on 1 July 1999. Presentation of the Distinguished Service Medal to Naval Service personnel on 2 February 2018 for their part in an Arrest and Detention operation on 5 November 2008.

<sup>51</sup> The Citation for O.7107 Comdt James Flynn, who was awarded a Distinguished Service Medal with Distinction, states that during the period 7 to 13 October 1961, he was in command of a patrol with the task of following a Baluba war party. The patrol did not take place in October 1961 but in October 1960 when the then Capt Flynn was a member of C Coy 33 Inf Bn. The full details of the patrol are contained in pages 27 to 31 of 33 Inf Bn's history.

<sup>52</sup> The Distinguished Service Medal With Distinction - O.4938 Lt Col Patrick Barry awarded as OC B Coy 33 Inf Bn. The citation fails to provide details of appointment or unit. Lt Col Barry was promoted to that rank on foot of the recommendation of the 1961 Medals Board for the same action.

The Distinguished Service Medal With Distinction - O.6378 Comdt Joseph Fitzpatrick awarded as OC A Coy, 36 Inf Bn. The citation fails to provide details of appointment or unit.

The Distinguished Service Medal With Distinction - O.4484 Lt Col Michael Hogan posthumously awarded as OC 36 Inf Bn. The citation fails to provide details of date, unit, or appointment.

<sup>53</sup> See 1A2-1 at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/557785/JSP761\\_Part1.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/557785/JSP761_Part1.pdf)

While a Medals Review Board, established by the Deputy Chief of Staff (Support) on 8 February 2008,<sup>54</sup> concluded that the ‘existing medals are sufficient to cover special service and acts of valour and heroism’, it however ‘recommended the introduction of a Chief of Staff’s Citation for recognition of exceptional performance of duty that does not merit the award of a Distinguished Service Medal’.<sup>55</sup>

This recommendation would have resulted in the introduction of what is in all but name a fourth class for the Distinguished Service Medal. It would have further complicated an already complicated awards system and would not have helped resolve the problems associated with a medal that may be awarded for both gallantry and service. A Chief of Staff’s Citation might have even led to confusion between it and a Unit Citation. The recommendation was not implemented,<sup>56</sup> although Scrolls of Commendation have been presented since this decision was taken.<sup>57</sup>

The desire of the 2008 Medals Review Board to ensure the tradition, culture and ethos of the awards system was protected, is acknowledged. It is also absolutely acknowledged that any changes that might be made to the awards system must ensure the integrity of existing awards is maintained and protected.

### ***Unit Citation***

On 17 September 2016, in Custume Barracks, Athlone, a unit citation was formally presented to ‘A’ Company 35 Infantry Battalion to acknowledge the actions of that unit in Jadotville during September 1961.

On 2 December 2017 surviving Jadotville veterans and members of Veterans’ families were presented with the Jadotville Medal (An Bonn Jadotville).

The Defence Force Regulation authorising the Unit Citation and, what it terms the associated insignia, was made under section 26 of the Defence Act 1954 (No. 18 of 1954 and the Defence (Delegation of Ministerial Functions Order 2016 (S.I. No. 314 of 2016. It is cited as ‘Defence Force Regulations Unit Citation 2016’ and was signed by the Minister of State at the Department of Defence on 16 September 2016.

The appended Explanatory Note states: ‘These Regulations provide for the award of a unit citation to members of ‘A’ Company 35<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion who took part in the siege at Jadotville in September 1961.’ The regulation is therefore specifically limited in its conditions and application to awarding a citation, and insignia, to that unit for that specified single event.

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<sup>54</sup> Defence Forces, Medals Review Group Convening Order by, Maj Gen D. Ashe, Deputy Chief of Staff (Support), 8 February 2008.

<sup>55</sup> Defence Forces, Medals Review Group Interim Report, 11 March 2008.

<sup>56</sup> Defence Forces, OIC ‘A’ Admin to DF Personnel Policy Branch DOD, Criteria for the award for the Chief of Staff’s Citation, 22 April 2010.

<sup>57</sup> On 1 September 2016 to four crew members of LÉ Cliona for bringing an on-board fire under control on 29 May 1962 and on 2 February 2018 to two crew members of LÉ Niamh involved in Operation Seabright on 5 November 2008.

However, on Thursday, 19 September 2019 it was stated in Dáil Éireann by the Minister for State at the Department of Defence that: "This was the first time a Unit Citation was awarded within the Defence Forces".<sup>58</sup> This statement clearly indicates that a new award has been established, the first occasion for its presentation being to 'A' Company 35 Infantry Battalion.

Despite the Minister's statement, no provision appears to have been made in DFR A9 (New Series) Dress and Medals, to formalise this new award, including its associated medal. This means that no provision or mechanism currently exists for units of the Defence Forces to be recommended and considered for the award of a Unit Citation.

### ***An Issue with Title***

That the body, appointed by the Chief of Staff to consider medal awards, is referred to as a Medals Board has had far reaching consequences. It is an issue that remains unresolved. Placing it in the same category as Boards, which deal with matters such as the purchase and disposal of equipment; and Courts of Inquiry, which deal with matters such as accidents, injuries, and disciplinary related matters, is not appropriate.

The examination and recommendation for awards should perhaps more correctly be the function of a military committee, with its own regulations and procedures that would provide it with workable criteria and would copper-fasten its independence.

The question asked by the 1962 Medals Board on how much hard work and self-denial is equivalent to an act of bravery or when it pointed to the fact that an award which might be made alike for a high standard of administrative efficiency or conspicuous courage under fire, could, in individual cases, give room for invidious comment, remain unanswered and unresolved almost sixty years later.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Houses of the Oireachtas, Dáil Éireann Debate, Thursday 19 September 2019, Military Medals, Question 43. <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/question/2019-09-19/43/>.

<sup>59</sup> MA, box, Jadotville Medals Queries, Col James K. Cogan to An Ceann Foirne, 30 April 1962.



... 421445 Pte.  
... John 84197 Cpl.  
... 90926 Cpl.  
... 200386 Sgt.  
... 803923 Pte.  
... Michael 88511 Pte.  
... Michael J 810000 Pte.  
... John 98807 Cpl.  
... Thomas 810559 Pte.  
... Thomas F 94809 Cpl.  
... John 88618 Cpl.  
... Matthew J 806370 Pte.  
... Joseph 809893 Pte.  
... Kevin C 87230 Sgt.  
... 810223 Pte.  
... Francis 808261 Pte.  
... John F 96739 Cpl.  
... Anthony 87480 Pte.  
... 113181 Cqms.  
... John J 810214 Pte.  
... John 89748 Cpl.  
... Peter J 94823 Cpl.  
... Michael J 91440 Cpl.  
... 808749 Pte.  
... 117 Pte.  
... 704 Pte.  
... Pte.  
... 163 Pte.  
... Coy. Sg  
... Pte.  
Relihan Joseph 87715 Cpl.  
Riggs William 803473 Pte.  
Roche Christopher J 88569 Cpl.  
Roper Anthony 809530 Pte.  
Scally James J 809771 Pte.  
Seery Michael J 90925 Pte.  
Shanagher John V 809174 Pte.  
Smith Michael J 810244 Cpl.  
Stanford John J 808563 Pte.  
Stanley Noel 809693 Pte.  
Sullivan Timothy 807790 Pte.  
Sweeney Bernard 92710 Pte.  
Sweeney Philip J 807892 Pte.  
Tahaney James J 810567 Pte.  
Tiernan George F 90244 Sgt.  
Tiernan Seán 810383 Cpl.  
Tighe Michael J 809014 Pte.  
Tomkins Charles 70696 Pte.  
Williams Patrick J 95241 Pte.  
Williams Francis 77210 Cpl.  
Kavanagh James 807961 Pte.  
Dreel ... 800 Pte.  
Dunne ... 1685 Pte.  
Reilly ... 154 Pte.  
... 13 Pte.  
... Sgt.  
... 807143 Cpl.  
... 14723 Cpl.  
... 807159 Pte.  
... 808772 Pte.  
... John 90089 Pte.  
Larse 3169 (Sweden)  
... (proter)  
... 0 41138 (Sweden)  
... (Helicopter Pilot)  
... 11885 (Norway)  
... (Pter Pilot)

3. Nominal Roll, 'A' Company Memorial, Custume Barracks, Athlone. (Defence Forces Public Relations Section.)

## Chapter 5

# Consultation: Veterans, Families, Academics and Experts

'They went to their graves not knowing if they were recognised.'  
Collette Byrne, daughter of CQMS Patrick Neville.<sup>1</sup>

### *Overview of Chapter 5*

This chapter addresses the following issues:

- Conversations in a time of Covid,
- A Revelation of Interviews,
- Stand Easy,
- The Recordings,
- Giving of their Time,
- Focal Scoir (Last Word).

### *Conversations in a time of Covid*

To be honest, the Independent Review Group thought the extended national lockdown brought about by the Covid-19 Pandemic might represent a serious restraining factor. We were about to begin our work and here already was something that had the potential to impact significantly on our ability to communicate directly with historians, researchers, authors, the members of previous boards, serving and retired members of the Defence Forces and in particular the veterans of 'A' Company 35 Inf Bn and of other units deployed to Congo, along with their families.

The list for interview seemed to grow on an almost daily basis and, with it, little prospect of a relaxation in the restrictions on travel and gatherings. How were we to overcome this problem? Were we facing an indefinite postponement of our review? That really was not an option, particularly as the sixtieth anniversary of Jadotville was only months away.

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<sup>1</sup> Collette Byrne, interview with IRG, 28 January 2021.

Luckily we were not alone in facing this problem and so solutions had to be, and were, found. Welcome to the world of video conferencing. After a few bumpy starts that included some personal hardware and software upgrades, the Group began to settle down with the Microsoft Teams version of this now popular and indeed essential communications tool. This was facilitated in no small way by the Communications & Information Services Corps of the Defence Forces to whose personnel we convey our thanks. After a few Independent Review Group meetings we had managed to adjust picture and volume and were busy mapping out where the next three and eventually six months would take us.

This seemed to be the easy part of the problem to solve. The real challenge would come when we started our interviews, particularly with veterans, many of whom were in their 80s and might not be too familiar or comfortable with the technology. What we had not factored in of course is that Irish soldiers are renowned for their ability to adapt and adjust and to make the best of what little is available. This is what got 'A' Company through Jadotville, as we were reminded on more than one occasion. Grandchildren, in particular, were very much to the fore in smoothing the way for their very own heroes. We met many of them for a brief moment at the start of interviews and got a smile and a nod before they departed with the words to their grandad: 'Give us a shout if you have any problems.' And so off we went.

### ***A Revelation of Interviews***

The names of all the 125 individuals who engaged with the Independent Review Group, can be seen in Annex F of our Report. The interviews were a revelation and the high point of an unforgettable six months for us all.

If anything can be said to have been positive about Covid-19, the interviews, and in particular the atmosphere that surrounded them, were it. Each and every interview with a veteran was a unique and moving experience for the Group. These were soldiers who had endured so much but whose dignity and courtesy remained. The same can truly be said in respect of all family members who spoke with the Group. We were privileged to have met them all and to be welcomed openly into the kitchens and sitting rooms of Ireland, of the United States, of England, of Scotland, of New Zealand, and of Australia.

The value of these interviews to the Independent Review Group can be seen throughout our Report and in particular in chapters 6 and 7 and later in chapter 11. They provided a dimension to the military and social history we were investigating that no documentary source could provide.

The appearance on a screen on the kitchen table of half a dozen people, informally dressed, in their own kitchens, sitting rooms and offices was no different to speaking with friends and relations through a medium that had by now become the accepted norm for many, one we would all become comfortable with as the pandemic continued. The intimacy of the interview setting made for a more relaxed and informal approach, which we hope provided a less stressful atmosphere for participants. Meeting in a local barracks or in a hotel in Ireland would not have achieved anything like it. These locations, even with the facilities that would no doubt have been laid on for us, would have seemed formal and even forbidding to many of the participants, making it difficult for them to relax and to be themselves.



### ***Stand Easy***

We acknowledge that many participants found it difficult and, at times, painful to recall and discuss events and occurrences from sixty years ago, and to do so within an unfamiliar group. It was not easy, and we appreciated and were always aware of that fact. In particular, the lead up to the interviews was going to reawaken memories and might become the cause of renewed stress. To allay these fears Mick Dillon of our Group, who so ably led our efforts in contacting veterans and their families across the globe, particularly through the Irish United Nations Veterans Association (IUNVA) and the Organisation of National Ex-Service Personnel (ONE), made ongoing and informal contact beforehand with them. That a Regimental Sergeant-Major has the ability to put people at ease is yet another compliment to the Irish soldier.

Paul Pakenham, our chairperson, also engaged with veterans and family members beforehand to reassure and to encourage them. It is fair to say that after our initial interviews word soon spread within the veteran community that here was a respectful, listening forum, without a hidden agenda, where veterans and family members were welcomed and where they could speak openly and freely in a listening atmosphere. We also followed up interviews with a phone call to check how things were going and to pass on information requested.

Many told us harrowing stories and it is to the credit of all participants that they were so open and honest in their interviews and interactions with the Independent Review Group in revealing memories and incidents which, in many cases they had never before discussed in such detail. We wish to record our deep appreciation to all participants who contributed so much to our work. Our conversations with you confirm the debt we owe to such a remarkable generation of Irish soldiers. We salute you.

The Review Group was impressed, time and time again with the dignity, inherent decency, humility and honesty of the veterans and of their family members. The sincerity and lack of exaggeration in their recall of events, the generosity of spirit towards their colleagues and companions, their complete revulsion at having to kill and wound the enemy, all shine through even sixty years after the events. The very idea of there being an ‘enemy’ was foreign to them as Peacekeepers, but they were put in a situation where they had to fight, and they rose to that challenge. Their greatest criticism was directed towards distant superiors, who sent them, unsupported, to Jadotville.

While many of the experiences recounted were harrowing, so much so that moments had to be called to allow an opportunity for everyone to collect themselves, the veterans and family members expressed their thanks to have been finally given the opportunity of telling their story to an official body. It was a long time in coming and the reason for this was a question we did not have an answer to. As well as tears, laughter could be heard as well. Happy days were recalled of parents whose love for their children and for each other was a cherished memory. The quality of apple tarts were compared and promises of hospitality were made when better days would make it possible. Our interview with James Tahaney was timed to ensure his cows had been milked beforehand. Milking waits for neither God, man, nor the Independent Review Group.

### ***The Recordings***

The Independent Review Group was particularly careful to ensure those being interviewed were informed beforehand that the interviews would be recorded for the purposes of record keeping, and to protect the integrity of all parties. These procedures adhered to the Data Protection Acts 1988 to 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). At the conclusion of the interviews each participant was formally written to asking them how they would like their interview to be retained in Military Archives. Under the 1963 Copyright Act (Ireland) recorded interviews are protected by Copyright. The recorded interviews were an essential source to the Independent Review Group and are quoted from throughout our Report. The recorded interviews will become part of the collection cared for by the Military Archives of Ireland, preserved as a permanent resource sound recording. They will be accessible, subject to the terms laid down by each person interviewed, through the Independent Review Group Collection.

As a result of these interviews a resource and a dimension has been added to the collections in Military Archives. In years to come researchers and historians will be able to listen to the authentic voices of those who fought at Jadotville.

### ***Giving of their Time***

The ability to speak to serving and retired soldiers, historians, researchers and authors, through the medium of video conferencing, particularly those residing outside of Ireland, widened and enhanced our research.

Among the academics we spoke to was Dr Swapna Kona Nayudu, who spoke to us from Singapore. She has reviewed the archives of the Indian peacekeepers and made time for us while organising relief for her family and community in India who were facing a pandemic crisis. Prof Miles Larmer, of St Antony's College, Oxford, provided us with the historical context for the events at Jadotville from a Katangese perspective. Historian and author Maurin Picard, the North America Correspondent for *Le Figaro* spoke to us from New York and provided useful information on the French mercenaries operating in Katanga.

Authors we spoke to included Rose Doyle, author of *Heroes of Jadotville*, who spoke to us from France, and recalled her memories of her uncle Comdt Pat Quinlan. Declan Power, author of *Siege at Jadotville*, discussed his memories of hearing the stories of Jadotville told in Mullingar, and his examination of the subject. We also spoke with Cpl Michael Whelan, award winning poet, historian and author of *The Battle of Jadotville: Irish Soldiers in Combat in the Congo, 1961* who recalled his experiences in interviewing veterans at a time when the history of Jadotville was relatively unknown.

The Independent Review Group benefited from speaking to serving and retired Defence Forces personnel and learnt from their expertise, experiences and understanding in areas such as UN operations including ONUC, trauma management, personal support services, medal process, military doctrine and capabilities, and previous reviews of Jadotville.



For any group engaged in consultations in the manner of the Independent Review Group, it is essential that they draw on the available expertise and any similar body of knowledge in the conduct of their work.

***Focal Scoir (Last Word)***

It was a privilege for the members of the Independent Review Group to have participated in these interviews. They have created memories that will live with us long after our report has been delivered. It was an honour to be able to speak with everyone we had the pleasure to meet during the interviews.

The soldier members of the Independent Review Group are proud to have worn the same uniform as those Irish men who fought in the Battle of Jadotville under the leadership of Comdt Pat Quinlan.



4. Welcome to Katanga, Lt Seamus Condon, Elisabethville. (Col Seamus Condon Collection, Military Archives.)

## Chapter 6

# Katanga 1961 – Re-examining the Operational Environment and the Battle of Jadotville

‘I remember coming down in the morning and she said “I saw Paddy last night and he was in his army uniform and he was racing, trying to get through the Cnocán, that’s a hill behind the house, but it was in flames and he couldn’t get through the flames to get to the house and there’s something wrong”, and there was something wrong, we got a telegram within two days to say that they were besieged.’<sup>1</sup>

Rose Doyle, niece of Comdt Pat Quinlan.

I don’t believe that typical run of the mill soldiering got those fellows out of there alive.<sup>2</sup>

Declan McCabe, son of Sgt Martin McCabe, ‘A’ Company, 35 Inf Bn.

‘I came of age as a soldier in Jadotville ... I did my duty ... I didn’t shirk it.’<sup>3</sup>

Pte Michael Tighe, ‘A’ Company, 35 Inf Bn.

‘Everyone that I had action with always played their part, no one cried off.’<sup>4</sup>

Pte Noel Stanley, ‘A’ Company, 35 Inf Bn.

‘It is a battle I fight seven nights a week, it has cost me dearly, and most people who were out there suffered exactly the same. It’s a thing that you go to bed right as rain and you wake up screaming and roaring.’<sup>5</sup>

Pte Paul Malone, ‘A’ Company, 35 Inf Bn.

‘It was great to be able to tell that story to somebody after too long.’<sup>6</sup>

Pte James Tahaney, ‘A’ Company, 35 Inf Bn.

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<sup>1</sup> Rose Doyle, recounting a dream Comdt Pat Quinlan’s mother Mary Quinlan (née Shea) had in the days leading up to the Battle of Jadotville (Rose Doyle, interview with IRG, 18 May 2021). His mother felt that she sometimes had dreams that foretold events.

<sup>2</sup> Declan McCabe, son of Sgt Martin McCabe, interview with IRG, 11 February 2021.

<sup>3</sup> Pte Michael Tighe, interview with IRG, 19 February 2021.

<sup>4</sup> Pte Noel Stanley, interview with IRG, 21 January 2021.

<sup>5</sup> Pte Paul Malone, interview with IRG, 2 February 2021.

<sup>6</sup> Pte James Tahaney, interview with IRG, 28 January 2021.

## **Overview of Chapter 6**

This chapter addresses the following issues:

- Introduction: ‘This is our history. What these men have achieved will be talked about for many years to come’,
- ONUC Organisation,
- Katanga Command: Deployments August and September, 1961,
- An Age Analysis of ‘A’ Company,
- ‘A’ Company Group and the Battle of Jadotville in Context,
- The Dilolo Patrol, Operation Rumpunch and Force Mide,
- ‘A’ Company Leaves for Jadotville,
- Responsibility for Sending ‘A’ Company to Jadotville,
- ‘A’ Company’s first days in Jadotville: ‘It is peaceful and quiet and I hope it stays that way’,
- ‘A’ Company Surrounded 12 September 1961: The Eve of Operation Morthor,
- Commencement of Battle of Jadotville 13 – 14 September 1961,
- ‘We were told that he was dead’: How the wives of ‘A’ Company supported each other and their families through the Battle of Jadotville,
- The Battle of Jadotville 14 – 17 September 1961,
- Ceasefires in Elisabethville and Kamina,
- Jadotville and Kolwezi: ‘A’ Company in Captivity,
- Reports on the Battle of Jadotville,
- ‘A’ Company Released,
- Growing Tension within the 35 Inf Bn over Jadotville.

### ***Introduction: ‘This is our history. What these men have achieved will be talked about for many years to come’.***<sup>7</sup>

The Katangese attack on ‘A’ Company, 35 Inf Bn at Jadotville from 13 to 17 September 1961 is traditionally presented in a one-dimensional manner as five days of combat after the initial encirclement of the Irish peacekeeping force by the Katangese Gendarmerie, with ‘A’ Company, without orders to withdraw, following standard operating procedures and digging in as a response. This traditional perspective for all intents and purposes views the Battle of Jadotville in isolation from events occurring elsewhere in Katanga. It is also a perspective presented primarily through the actions of Comdt Pat Quinlan, the company commander of ‘A’ Company.

Comdt Pat Quinlan has in recent years been elevated to heroic status. In the words of former Chief of Staff of the Defence Forces Lt Gen Gerry McMahon DSM, Comdt Quinlan was ‘a rough, tough, mad soldier.’<sup>8</sup> Comdt Quinlan was not always liked by his fellow soldiers, but he was admired. In a 2017 Military Archives oral history interview, Col Seán Norton DSM said of Comdt Quinlan: ‘I didn’t like him, that bit I did know of him, even afterwards, but what he has done, what

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<sup>7</sup> Adrian Bradley, son of Jadotville veteran Pte Robert Bradley, written submission to IRG, 1 February 2021.

<sup>8</sup> MA, MAOHP-0005, Lt Gen Gerry McMahon, interviewed 21 December 2016.

he did and listening to what the lads had done, you see the soldiers are the guys, never mind the officers, it's the soldiers will tell you who's who."<sup>9</sup>

This chapter recontextualises the Battle of Jadotville in its Katanga-wide and international perspective – particularly the perspectives of the UN and the Irish government. It also seeks to integrate into the narrative information received by the Independent Review Group from 'A' Company veterans on the Battle of Jadotville and its aftermath. The chapter seeks to situate their voice into the narrative as they were the soldiers engaged in battle at Jadotville.

### ***ONUC Organisation***

ONUC's Force Headquarters was located in Leopoldville 1,424 miles by road and two time zones (2 hours difference) from Elisabethville. Flight time between both cities is approximately three hours. ONUC had seven brigades with their respective headquarters located in Leopoldville (Leopoldville Province) Luluabourg (Kasai Province), Stanleyville (Orientale Province), Bukavu (Kivu Province) and three brigades located in the Katanga province - Albertville, Elisabethville and Kamina. Katanga Command was established on 5 August 1961 as an operational command coordinating and controlling the three ONUC brigades operating in the province of Katanga. Brig K.A.S. Raja was appointed as its commander. The Albertville, Elisabethville and Kamina brigades were the components of Katanga Command. On the establishment of Katanga Command, personnel of 35 Inf Bn augmented its staff.

### ***Katanga Command – Deployments August and September 1961***<sup>10</sup>

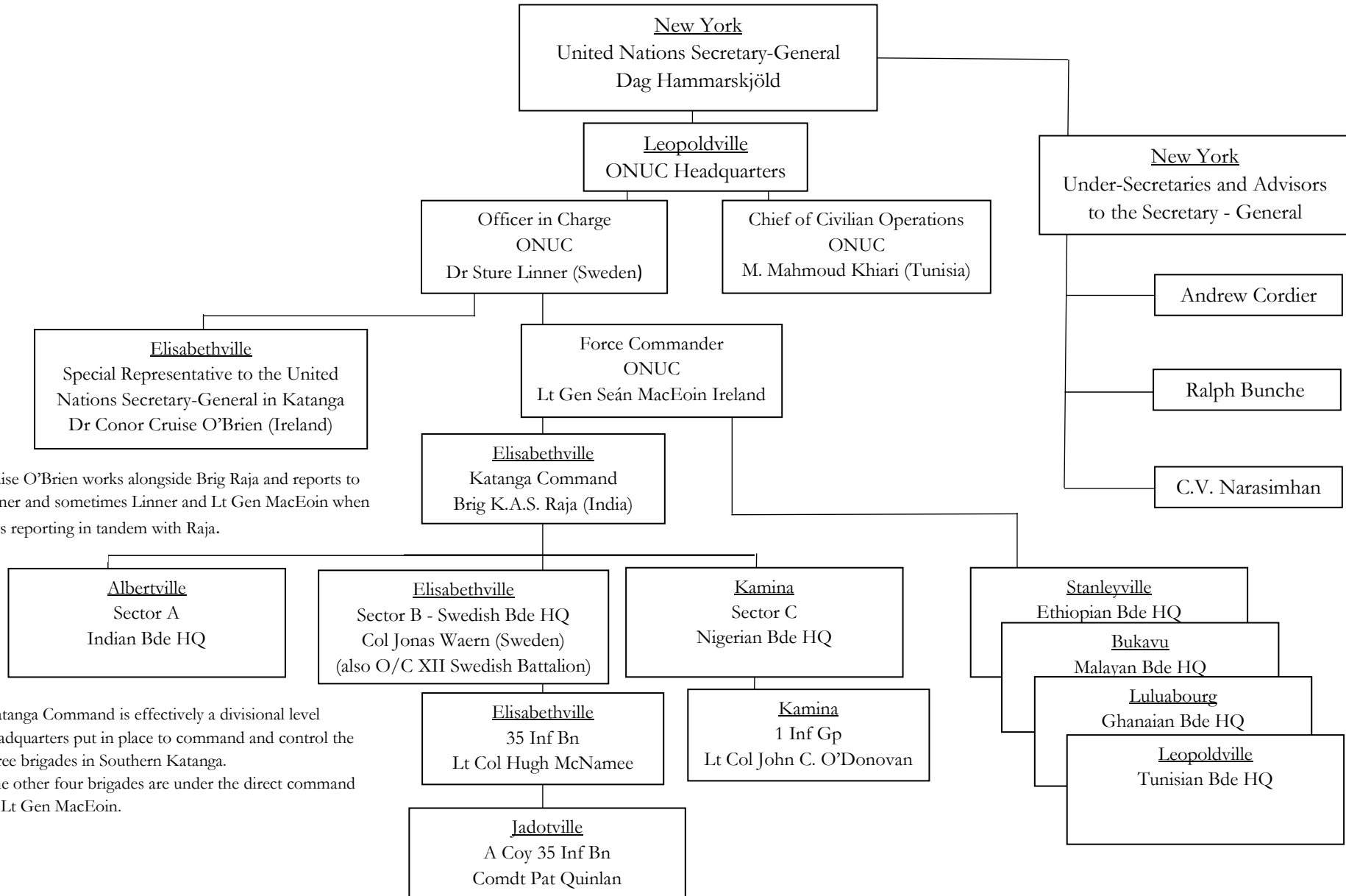
Katanga Command was divided into three Sectors:

- Sector A with HQ in Albertville and positions at Albertville, Nyunzu, Niemba, Kabalo and Manono. Contingents were supplied by India (2,434), Ethiopia (639), Ghana (614) and Canada (10). Total strength was 3,697.
- Sector B with HQ in Elisabethville. Total strength was 2,393 deployed in Elisabethville and Jadotville. The combat troops numbered 1,994, comprising of the Tactical HQ Indian Independent Brigade (32), 1 Dogra Battalion (879), XII Swedish Battalion (less two companies (460), 35 Inf Bn (623). The HQ, administrative and logistics personnel (244) made up by Indian, Canadian, Italian and Pakistani personnel. With 'A' Company (156 personnel) deployed to Jadotville on 3 September, the 35 Inf Bn had 467 in Elisabethville.
- Sector C with HQ in Kamina Base. Total strength was 516. Sector consisted of 434 combat troops from Ireland and Sweden: 1 Infantry Group (333) and a Swedish Company (101). Administrative and Logistics consisted of eighty two personnel including Signals Detachments from Sweden and India, Military Police from Denmark and Norway, an Engineer Detachment from Sweden, a Workshops Team from Norway and Medical as well as air traffic personnel from various countries.

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<sup>9</sup> MA, MAOHP-0003, Col Seán Norton DSM, interviewed 30 January 2017.

<sup>10</sup> UNA, S/787/0004/07, 'Location Statements', 30 August 1961, pp39-40.



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Cruise O'Brien works alongside Brig Raja and reports to Linner and sometimes Linner and Lt Gen MacEoin when he is reporting in tandem with Raja.

Katanga Command is effectively a divisional level headquarters put in place to command and control the three brigades in Southern Katanga. The other four brigades are under the direct command of Lt Gen MacEoin.

### *An Age Analysis of 'A' Company, 35 Infantry Battalion*

Category	Number	Average Age	Eldest	Youngest
Officers	10	34 years 4 months	43 years 5 months	25 years 8 months
Sergeants	14	35 years 6 months	46 years 7 months	25 years 5 months
Corporals	30	29 years	41 years 11 months	18 years 8 months
Privates	102	23 years 7 months	51 years 8 months	18 years
All Ranks	156	26 years 5 months	51 years 8 months	18 years

- The lower age limit for recruits entering the Defence Forces for general service in the 1950s and 1960s was 17.<sup>11</sup>
- The ages of the 156 men who served at Jadotville have been calculated from the nearest month at their birth to the end of August 1961, the last full month before the battle.
- The Chaplain, Fr Joseph Fagan, is included with the officers for statistical purposes. There were 2 Commandants, 3 Captains, 4 Lieutenants and a Chaplain. The Company Commander, Pat Quinlan was 42 years 6 months. The Officers were mature men with an average age of over 34 years.
- The Company Sergeant, Jack Prendergast 46 years 7 months, the Company Quartermaster Sergeant, Paddy Neville 42 years 9 months, are included with the 12 Sergeants for statistical purposes. These were also mature men with an average age of nearly 36 years.
- There were:
  - 2 Corporals aged 18 years.
  - 15 Corporals in their 20s.
  - 10 Corporals in their 30s.
  - 3 Corporals in their 40s.
- There were:
  - 25 Privates aged 19 years.
  - 11 Privates aged 18 years.
  - 52 Privates in their 20s.
  - 11 Privates in their 30s.
  - 10 Privates in their 40s.
  - 1 Private in his 50s.

There is evidence that some members of 'A' Company, who were in their teens, may have claimed to have been older when they enlisted and were therefore younger than is indicated in this age analysis. It is difficult to quantify how widespread this practice was. The best-known example is Pte Matt Quinlan who turned 18 according to his record sheet at the end of August 1961. His family recall that Matt celebrated his 17th birthday while in captivity, which was during September/October 1961. If his birthday took place towards the end of his captivity, he would have been 14 months younger than is indicated in his record. If this figure is applied for statistical purposes to the ages of all 36 Privates who were in their teens, it would give:

- 20 Privates aged 18 years.
- 14 Privates aged 17 years.
- 2 Privates aged 16 years.

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<sup>11</sup> Comdt P.D. Kavanagh (ed.), *Irish Defence Forces Handbook* (Dublin, 1968), p 24.

Even in this extreme case statistical exercise, which assumes all of the teenage Privates had provided false dates of birth on enlistment, the incidence of underage soldiers is not significant.

The contention this was a youthful unit, giving the impression the majority of 'A' Company members were very young, is not supported by the statistics that have been provided here:

- The officers were a mature group of leaders and would have been older than their equivalent ranks in other armed forces.<sup>12</sup> There was no officer below the age of 25 which indicates the level of training, maturity, and experience each possessed, down to the Platoon Commanders.
- With the exception of a couple of young Corporals, the NCOs, particularly the Sergeants, were long service professionals. They were experienced and well-trained leaders which is evidenced by their individual performances at Jadotville. The Sergeants had, on average, 17 years' service, and the Corporals, 10.
- The age profile of the leadership of 'A' Company, at all levels, indicates a mature, professional, and experienced cohort.
- While there were some 36 Privates in their teens, this is more than balanced by the age profile of Privates as a whole. This shows they had an average age of nearly 24 years, which indicates five years' service on average. This is in line with the age profile of Privates in western armies.<sup>13</sup>

The performance and endurance under fire by the members of 'A' Company, along with their weapons handling and tactical ability, confirms this was a well led, mature and cohesive fighting force, born out of service, training and experience.

Concerns have been expressed about the age profile of 'A' Company. Thirty-six privates were in the eighteen to nineteen age bracket. The incidence of under-age soldiers is not significant. Fourteen of 'A' Company's personnel were over the age of forty, at least one of whom was in his fifties. Many personnel of 'A' Company were at, or were approaching, an age where active service in an overseas operational unit would no longer be a career option.

### ***'A' Company Group and the Battle of Jadotville in context***

The fighting at Jadotville did not take place in isolation. 'A' Company Group, to give 'A' Company its prescribed designation in military parlance, was an independent fighting force deployed to Jadotville on the orders of ONUC's Katanga Command, following the direct instruction of the ONUC Force Commander Lt Gen Seán MacEoin and the UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld. The Battle in Jadotville took place as ONUC launched a major operation in Elisabethville against Katanga, titled Operation Morthor, aimed at ending Katanga's secession. Popularly translated to be a Hindi term for 'smash and grab', Morthor is in fact a Gurkhali term meaning 'fight and destroy'.<sup>14</sup> While 'A' Company was inexplicably written out of this operation by ONUC commanders in Elisabethville, 'A' Company was viewed as a target and potential hostages in the context of the operation by the Katangese. However, attacking 'A' Company in

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<sup>12</sup> Average ages per rank in US Military [https://tfumux.fandom.com/wiki/Average\\_ages\\_per\\_rank\\_in\\_US\\_Military](https://tfumux.fandom.com/wiki/Average_ages_per_rank_in_US_Military).

<sup>13</sup> Rank Progression British Army <https://apply.army.mod.uk/what-we-offer/army-life/ranks>.

<sup>14</sup> Interview with Dr Swapna Kona Nayudu, Harvard University Asia Center, interviewed by IRG on 27 April 2021.



Jadotville kept valuable Katangese military assets from attacking ONUC in Elisabethville, while ONUC attempts to reinforce and relieve 'A' Company in Jadotville took scarce ONUC assets away from the fighting in Elisabethville.<sup>15</sup>

'A' Company's situation in Jadotville needs to be seen in this wider context and also within the context of the perimeter defence of the massive Kamina Base airfield, 320 kilometres to the northwest of Jadotville, by the Defence Forces 1 Infantry Group and their Swedish and Malayan counterparts, to explain how the Battle of Jadotville was understood at the time by those in HQ 35 Inf Bn and in Katanga Command.<sup>16</sup>

It is tempting to see the Battle of Jadotville in reverse, running back from Comdt Quinlan's forced surrender, through the battle, to the initial encirclement and back to the arrival of 'A' Company in Jadotville. A forced surrender, however, was only one of several possible outcomes facing 'A' Company, HQ 35 Inf Bn and Katanga Command as the Battle of Jadotville took place. This popular history of the Battle of Jadotville is linear and focuses on one outcome alone. The developing situation in Jadotville and in Elisabethville and in Kamina, indeed across Katanga where ONUC was engaged with Katangese forces, was always fluid and dynamic, changing from minute to minute and extremely uncertain due to the poor communications system in place. No one except personnel of 'A' Company and their Katangese attackers knew what was really happening in Jadotville. With the 35 Inf Bn in action in Elisabethville as part of a wider ONUC operation, Jadotville and 'A' Company at times faded from view elsewhere. Viewed from Elisabethville and certainly viewed from Leopoldville and the UN Secretariat in New York, Jadotville was a sideshow, an incident that might resolve itself by local agreement, or by the successful relief and reinforcement, or by the withdrawal of 'A' Company. The eventual outcome, a forced or negotiated surrender, was not contemplated.

A dimension also left out of the historiography and the contemporary public narrative on the Battle of Jadotville is the view from the perspective of the Katangan military and their political leaders. The Gendarmerie infantry forces attacking 'A' Company did not exist in isolation; they were part of the developing armed forces of the state of Katanga. The two French officers leading the Gendarmerie in Jadotville were receiving their orders from Elisabethville. The Gendarmerie forces under their command deployed against 'A' Company followed standard infantry attack tactics. They were equipped with weapons of equivalent capability or better than 'A' Company. Their combat experience was limited, but, and it is impossible to verify this because of the lack of archival sources and histories on the Congolese side, some most likely had been under fire before, and in combat during the civil war in North Katanga, while others were raw recruits with only basic training.

Capt Noel Carey explained that the Gendarmerie would attack, carry out flank attacks and pincer movements on the Irish; they had 'good tactical movement and they knew what they were doing ... they were more hardened than we realised.'<sup>17</sup> Pte Noel Stanley felt that 'they were good soldiers, let me put it to you this way: they had to be good soldiers, because they had to have some discipline

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<sup>15</sup> A view expressed to the IRG by Pte Tom Gunn, 28 January 2021.

<sup>16</sup> The need to take this wider perspective was emphasised to the IRG by Brig Gen Liam MacNamee on 12 January 2021.

<sup>17</sup> Capt Noel Carey, interview with IRG, 21 January 2021.

considering that we were their prisoners afterwards and they didn't mistreat us.<sup>18</sup> Capt Carey also remembered that

as they were coming through the bush they seemed to bunch, which was, you know, not the ideal thing to do, and I suppose there was only certain areas they could come through the bush, and that's where they received terrible casualties I would say, now I'm not going to hazard anything about casualties, but I didn't even want to hear about casualties, because that wasn't our aim.<sup>19</sup>

This is a very important point which many veterans made clear to the Independent Review Group and which is not appreciated by those who have engaged with Jadotville as an unsavoury 'body count' exercise.

Comdt Aidan Donnelly (Retd) told the Independent Review Group that his father, Comdt Liam Donnelly (Retd) spoke about the combat in Jadotville 'in terms of, I suppose, the accuracy and functionality of the equipment as opposed to, the implication was that they were hugely effective.'<sup>20</sup> He never spoke about casualties.

Cpl Muiris de Barra, B Coy 1 Inf Gp and his colleagues saw combat as intense as that at Jadotville at Kamina Base during the September 1961 fighting in Katanga. Discussing his own experiences at Kamina and his impressions of those of 'A' Company at Jadotville with the Independent Review Group he pointed out that

it's not the amount of people that get killed that shows you were brave, it's more the people that stayed alive that showed you were brave and that your commanders or whoever was in charge knew what to do to save you. Because they are firing more bullets or as many bullets as you and you are knocking them down and they are not knocking you down the difference is the professionalism of one over the other.<sup>21</sup>

Specific information on the Katangese forces attacking 'A' Company is limited, but they were a conventional light infantry force. Enlisted men and NCOs were generally from the Katangese population, and officer ranks generally of experienced officers from French or Belgian backgrounds. They took their orders down a very loose chain of command and were operating to the political agenda of the Katangese state which saw itself in September 1961 as coming under external attack from the forces of the United Nations intent on ending Katanga's bid for independence.<sup>22</sup>

Two French mercenaries oversaw the Gendarmerie forces attacking 'A' Company in Jadotville: Michel de Clary and Henri Lasimone. De Clary was from a French aristocratic family and was in

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<sup>18</sup> Pte Noel Stanley, interview with IRG, 21 January 2021.

<sup>19</sup> Capt Noel Carey, interview with IRG, 21 January 2021.

<sup>20</sup> Aidan Donnelly, interview with IRG, 3 February 2021.

<sup>21</sup> Cpl Muiris de Barra, interview with IRG, 16 February 2021.

<sup>22</sup> The IRG is grateful to Professor Miles Larmer, St Antony's College, Oxford for sharing with the IRG his expert knowledge of the Katangese Gendarmerie. For more information see Miles Larmer and Erik Kennes, *The Katangese Gendarmerie and war in Central Africa* (Bloomington, 2016). Capt Noel Carey also provided a valuable assessment of the Gendarmerie forces facing 'A' Company.

his fifties; Lasimone was in his forties and had at least a basic military training. De Clary remains something of a mystery figure, Lasimone defected to the United Nations for personal reasons after the fighting in Katanga ended. Both were under the command, and this is a loose use of the term, of the renowned French soldier Roger Falques.<sup>23</sup> Roger Falques was not, contrary to popular myth, in Jadotville during the September 1961 fighting, but was acting as a military adviser to the Tshombe<sup>24</sup> government, and as a de facto commander of the Katangese Gendarmerie from Elisabethville.<sup>25</sup> In terms of the chain of command between Jadotville and Elisabethville, it was limited and loose, but operating in a general sense to the orders of Katangese Interior Minister Godefroid Munongo<sup>26</sup> whose political powerbase included Jadotville.

As to the numbers of Gendarmerie attacking 'A' Company, the figures popularly mentioned as being in the thousands, and which were mentioned by Comdt Quinlan himself, refer to Gendarmerie forces in the wider Jadotville region. At most in attack against 'A' Company at any one time was a company level force (circa 150), with a battalion level force (circa 650) located in the terrain surrounding 'A' Company, and with smaller section and platoon level attacks taking place to probe 'A' Company's defences, sometimes simultaneously, seeking weak points to infiltrate.<sup>27</sup>

Those who maintain that 'A' Company was attacked by thousands of soldiers at once need only to try to imagine how to place such an attacking force within the limited geographical area 'A' Company were deployed to see that it was an unlikely scenario. 'They weren't actually in droves like that', recalled Pte Michael Greene, 'four or five maybe at a time would come at us at a time and we'd fire at them and they go back or be shot.'<sup>28</sup> As Capt Noel Carey put it, '3,000, no, no, that's ridiculous, and I mean that's the one thing that I am always fearful of, the exaggerations that go on at times about the enemy.'<sup>29</sup>

The preceding points are not made to denigrate or run down the view from the trench, anthill machine gun post, or mortar pit in Jadotville. The Independent Review Group was privileged to interview twenty-one 'A' Company veterans of the Battle of Jadotville, and to receive written submissions from other Irish veterans, while others who were not in a position to undertake interviews gave their assent to the IRG's work.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Roger Faulques (14 December 1924 – 6 November 2011) was a French maquis resistance fighter in World War II and was awarded the Croix de Guerre at the age of 20. He served in Indochina as a Lieutenant with the French Foreign Legion ending the war with six wounds and eight citations. He served in Algeria as an intelligence officer of the 1st REP during the Battle of Algiers. Faulques was given leave to provide support to the Katanga rebellion in the former Belgian Congo. Having retired from the army with the rank of Colonel, Faulques was a mercenary, first in North Yemen in 1963/1964 in support of British intelligence and then in Biafra on behalf of the French government.

<sup>24</sup> Moïse Tshombe, born 1917 near Kapanga (Katanga) into a wealthy family of Ba-Lunda merchants. In May 1960, he was elected as deputy to the Katanga provincial Government. Having declared Katanga independent, he was elected President.

<sup>25</sup> Information from Maurin Picard, journalist and author of *Ils ont tué Monsieur H. Congo, 1961. Le complot des mercenaires français contre l'ONU* (Paris, 2019) provided during an interview with the IRG, 29 April 2021. The IRG is very grateful to M. Picard for providing an insight into how the French military influence increased in Katanga in 1961 and into who the French mercenaries in Katanga were and their motivations.

<sup>26</sup> Godefroid Munongo, born 1925 in Bunkeya, (Katanga). Member of the ruling family of the small Ba-Yeke tribe. Founder member and first president of Conakat in 1958. Elected as a deputy to the Katanga Assembly in May 1960 and became Minister of the Interior in the Katanga Provincial Government.

<sup>27</sup> A point made by Cpl Tadhg Quinn to the IRG, interview with IRG, 21 January 2021.

<sup>28</sup> Pte Michael Greene, interview with IRG, 22 April 2021.

<sup>29</sup> Capt Noel Carey, interview with IRG, 21 January 2021.

<sup>30</sup> Whereas fully supportive of the process, some members of 'A' Company veterans elected not to engage with the work of the IRG primarily for health reasons. See Annex H of this Report.

The IRG made contact with Congolese academics and historians in Lubumbashi, but found there was no oral history perspective from the Katangese side.<sup>31</sup>

The narrative of the Battle of Jadotville has been dominated by accounts drawn from Comdt Pat Quinlan's report dated 31 October 1961, the main body of which is included in Unit History as Annex B,<sup>32</sup> the 'Battle of Jadotville' as described in Comdt Pat Quinlan's personal notes,<sup>33</sup> and extracts of his letters to his wife Carmel in Ireland.<sup>34</sup> However, this chapter adds in the voices of the veterans interviewed by the Independent Review Group and by earlier interviewers for television and radio documentaries, material kindly given to the Independent Review Group by the families of Jadotville veterans, contemporary perspectives on the battle and the context of the battle from declassified UN, Irish and British archival sources. The chapter attempts to broaden the voices telling the history of the Siege and Battle at Jadotville and give a comprehensive, multidimensional, contextualized account of the Battle of Jadotville and its aftermath.

### ***The Dilolo Patrol and Operation Rumpunch***

The 35 Inf Bn deployed from Ireland to Elisabethville, Katanga in June 1961. The Battalion's first weeks in Elisabethville were relatively quiet, though tension in the city increased throughout August. The 35 Inf Bn conducted long-range route-finding patrols to Dilolo on the Angolan border, to Mokaiyibo and Kipushi on the Rhodesian border, and to Jadotville, Kolwezi and Kamina.<sup>35</sup>

During the period 23 to 27 August elements of 'A' Company, under the command of Capt Dermot Byrne, with the support of three armoured cars from the Armoured Car Group, were deployed on a long-range patrol to the town of Dilolo to rescue a stranded Congolese politician and his wife under threat by the Tshombe regime.<sup>36</sup> Dilolo was 450 miles from Elisabethville.<sup>37</sup> They succeeded in this task and en-route back to Elisabethville were instructed by Comdt Pat Quinlan to expedite their return, as an ONUC operation was about to take place in Elisabethville. Passing through Jadotville on their return, they encountered no difficulties, and they found the all-important bridge over the Lufira River on the main road between Jadotville and Elisabethville unguarded by Gendarmerie.<sup>38</sup>

That forthcoming UN operation, 'Operation Rumpunch', was an attempt by ONUC to remove the growing influence of foreign mercenaries on the development of the Katangese Gendarmerie, the developing army of the secessionist state of Katanga. The mercenaries were to be rounded up in a concerted move against their barracks and lodgings on 29 August 1961. Fearing an intelligence leak, the action was brought forward to dawn on 28 August 1961.

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<sup>31</sup> The IRG is grateful to Professor Donatien Dibwe dia Mwembu, University of Lubumbashi, for his correspondence with the IRG and insights into the writing of the history of Katanga in the 1960s.

<sup>32</sup> MA, Unit History, 35 Inf Bn, p 93. Comdt Quinlan submitted a report dated 30 October (which he stated was from memory as he had not access to his notes) to Lt Gen MacEoin in person in Leopoldville. The report was subsequently sent by MA to FC ONUC to the Defence Forces COS on 23 Nov 61. Paragraphs 1 to 12 of this report (Lead-up to the Battle of Jadotville) are not included in the Unit History which starts with 'Battle 13 – 17 September'.

<sup>33</sup> Provided to the IRG by Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd) by email, 1 February 2021.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

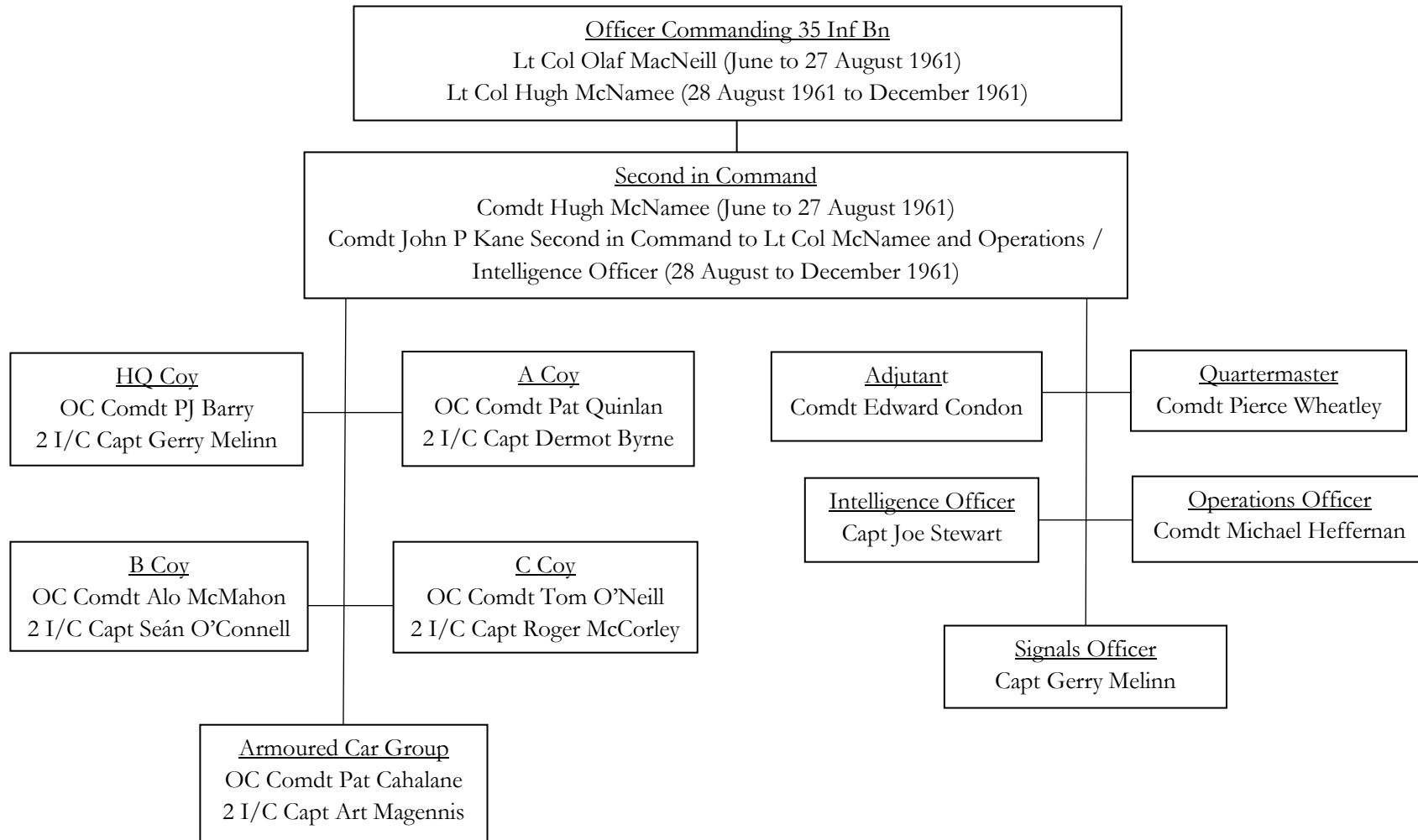
<sup>35</sup> MA, Unit History, 35 Inf Bn, p. 9.

<sup>36</sup> MA, Unit History, 35 Inf Bn, p. 11.

<sup>37</sup> MA, Unit History, 35 Inf Bn, p. 62.

<sup>38</sup> Sqn Sgt Des Keegan, Armoured Car Group, 35 Inf Bn, interview with IRG, 9 February 2021.

## Organisation - 35 Inf Bn



During Operation Rumpunch 'A' Company was tasked by OC 35 Inf Bn, Lt Col Hugh McNamee, to take the Gendarmerie HQ in Elisabethville, to arrest white mercenaries and surround Minister Munongo's house.<sup>39</sup> At 0500hrs on 28 August 1961, Comdt Quinlan assembled a composite force from 'A' Company with elements of 'B' Company for the task, supported by a section of armoured cars. According to Col Joe Leech, it was 'the only dangerous task' 35 Inf Bn undertook during Rumpunch.<sup>40</sup>

Maintaining the element of surprise, Operation Rumpunch saw the successful rounding up and dispatch from Katanga of 73 or so mercenaries, 41 of whom were arrested by 35 Inf Bn.<sup>41</sup> Other mercenaries, who became aware of what was happening, melted away into the bush and jungle surrounding the Katangese capital. Operation Rumpunch was at best a partial success.

### ***Force Mide***

Before 'A' Company deployed to Jadotville a composite group of one Swedish company and one Irish company ('B' Company, 35 Inf Bn) under Swedish command and known as 'Force Mide'<sup>42</sup> was to be stationed 'temporarily' in Jadotville from 29 August as part of Operation Rumpunch.<sup>43</sup> Force Mide's objective was 'to take control and prevent uprisings and untoward incidents.'<sup>44</sup> Lt Col McNamee told his company commanders that 'Gen Raja wants to impress on Katangese that UNO means business.'<sup>45</sup> Force Mide was to accept the surrender of mercenaries and 'guard against [an] uprising against [the] European population'.<sup>46</sup> It was to remain in Jadotville for two to three weeks and show the European population that ONUC 'were on alert'.<sup>47</sup> It was a 'flying the flag' operation of the type then typical in ONUC, a mission to show the UN's presence in an area.

ONUC Force Commander, former Chief of Staff of the Irish Defence Forces, Lt Gen Seán MacEoin told UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld that Force Mide was 'to ensure the maintenance of law and order and to prevent any trouble from the Gendarmerie'.<sup>48</sup> On his force's arrival in Jadotville on 30 August, Maj Ulf Mide of the XII Swedish Battalion, was forcefully told by representatives of Jadotville's European population that he and his men were not wanted in the town. This situation was confirmed to the Independent Review Group by Brig Gen James Farrell who, as a young lieutenant was a platoon commander with B Coy, 35 Inf Bn and part of Force Mide. Brig Gen Farrell added that in Jadotville, B Coy dug in only as necessary for basic security and 'we set up tents and what have you, and didn't go into an operational situation', with some officers staying in a hotel in Jadotville itself.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> MA, Unit History, 35 Inf Bn, p 13.

<sup>40</sup> Col J.A.O. Leech private papers, undated, comment by Col Leech on the 50th Command and Staff Course presentation on the Battle of Jadotville, 1993.

<sup>41</sup> MA, Unit History, 35 Inf Bn, p. 14.

<sup>42</sup> Major Ulf Mide, XII Swedish Battalion.

<sup>43</sup> UNA, S/840/2/4, HQ Katanga Command to ONUC HQ Leopoldville, 1205Z, 3 September 1961. 'A' Company had originally been tasked to take part in Force Mide but were replaced by 'B' Company.

<sup>44</sup> UNA, S/840/2/4, (O-1626) HQ Katanga Command to ONUC Leopoldville and HQ Sector B, Brig Raja for Lt Gen MacEoin, 0950Z, 29 August 1961.

<sup>45</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 35INFBN, 2/8, Battalion Commander's Conferences, minutes, 29 August 1961.

<sup>46</sup> UNA, S/840/2/4, HQ Katanga Comd to ONUC HQ Leopoldville, 1616Z, 3 September 1961.

<sup>47</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 35INFBN, 2/8, Battalion Commander's Conferences, minutes, 29 August 1961.

<sup>48</sup> NLS, L179/160, (ONUC 5034) Lt Gen MacEoin to Dag Hammarskjöld, 30 August 1961.

<sup>49</sup> Brig Gen James Farrell (Retd), interview with IRG, 21 January 2021. A point also noted by Lt Jim Condon in his diary (MA PC 346).

Assessing his precarious position and considering his mission no longer had any objective (there being no chance of an uprising against the European population), Maj Mide sensed his isolation and on receipt of instructions from Katanga Command's Sector B commander Col Jonas Waern, withdrew his forces from Jadotville on 1 and 2 September.<sup>50</sup> 'Situation tense in town – orders to return to Elisabethville', noted Lt Jim Condon in his diary.<sup>51</sup> According to Comdt Pearse Wheatley, B Coy was under orders to return to Elisabethville on 2 September.<sup>52</sup> This task was accomplished by 1930hrs on 2 September.<sup>53</sup>

When Force Mide's return to Elisabethville became known to Belgian Foreign Minister Paul Henri Spaak, he sent an angry telegram to the UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld on 2 September that the European population of Jadotville was now unprotected, and consequently he intended to evacuate the Belgian women and children from the city.<sup>54</sup> In Hammarskjöld's absence, C.V. Narasimhan and General Indarjit Rikhye at the UN Secretariat in New York asked the civilian head of ONUC Sture Linner and its Force Commander Lt Gen MacEoin for information on the movements of Force Mide and 'in view of the panic aspect of such [an] evacuation' asked if the stationing of UN troops in Jadotville could be reconsidered.<sup>55</sup>

Lt Gen MacEoin had to act. First ONUC HQ had to find out from Katanga Command 'whether UN troops stationed at Jadotville and strength'.<sup>56</sup> This suggests that ONUC HQ was in the dark as to which of its forces were in Jadotville, and whether they were still in the town. Katanga Command initially told Lt Gen MacEoin that Force Mide was in Jadotville. Lt Gen MacEoin then explicitly instructed Katanga Command that these UN forces were not to be withdrawn from Jadotville without first notifying him.<sup>57</sup> He did not seem to know that Force Mide was no longer in Jadotville.

### ***'A' Company Leaves for Jadotville***

Through 3 September Katanga Command spun cover stories to HQ ONUC in Leopoldville that Force Mide was in Jadotville. This ensured that New York had comforting information that there had been ONUC troops in the town from 29 August. A new force had to be assembled in a hurry to go to Jadotville to fill the gap left by Force Mide. This was 'A' Company of the 35 Inf Bn. Only on the afternoon of 3 September, after 'A' Company had departed for Jadotville, did Katanga

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<sup>50</sup> Information provided to the IRG by Dr Andreas Tullberg, Lund University, Lund, Sweden, March 2021.

<sup>51</sup> MA, PC 346, entry for 1 September 1961.

<sup>52</sup> MA, PRCN, 73/1/7, Congo Journal, June-December 1961, Comdt Pearse Wheatley, 35Bn ONUC, Book I, 31 August 1961.

<sup>53</sup> MA, PC 346, entry for 2 September 1961.

<sup>54</sup> Spaak was acting on foot of the intervention of Union Minière, see (PHS 331) Spaak to Gillet, 7 September 1961, for example 'Pour le surplus, chaque fois que vous m'avez signalé une action de l'ONU qui vous paraissait dangereuse, je me suis empressé d'en informer l'Organisation internationale, et je suis intervenu pour qu'il y soit mis fin. Il en a été ainsi durant des derniers jours, lorsque les 'casques bleus' ont quitté Jadotville; qu'un absentéisme important s'est manifesté parmi vos ouvriers; ou que vous ayez témoigné une légitime inquiétude en ce qui concerne votre personnel. Etant donné tout ceci, il est peut-être un peu facile et un peu injuste de me demander de mettre 'tout en oeuvre pour éviter un désordre qui est imminent'.'

Translation: 'Additionally, each time that you have reported to me an action by the UN that appeared dangerous to you, I hastened to inform the international organisation, and I stepped in to end it. It was so during the last days, after the 'Blue Helmets' had left Jadotville; only for significant absenteeism to be apparent amongst your workers, or when you had legitimate concerns about your staff. Given all of this, it is perhaps a little simplistic and a little unfair to ask me to do 'everything to avoid the disorder which is impending'.

<sup>55</sup> NLS, L179/160, (6111) Narasimhan and Gen Rikhye to Lt Gen MacEoin, 2 September 1961.

<sup>56</sup> UNA, S/822/1/4, (OPS 1402) HQ ONUC Leopoldville to HQ Katanga Command, 0724Z, 3 September 1961.

<sup>57</sup> UNA, S/840/2/4, (FC 503) Lt Gen MacEoin to ONUC Elisabethville, 1645Z, 3 September 1961. FC 503 is in response to a signal (O1621) which refers only to Force Mide.

Command change its line and tell ONUC Headquarters that 'A' Company had been sent to Jadotville to replace Force Mide.

'A' Company received verbal orders on the early afternoon of 3 September to move to Jadotville to protect the white population in the town from an allegedly growing threat from the ethnic population. The minutes of the 35 Inf Bn Commander's conference record the instructions Comdt Quinlan received verbally:

- 2: Jadotville
- a: A Coy from [Elisabethville] Airport to Jadotville.
- b: If over a long period there will be rotation.
- c: L.O. from B Coy to accompany/orient A Coy.
- d: Union Minière Company Security officer is a good man to contact.
- e: (1) 160 Gendarmes in Jadotville.  
(2) 1,600 Shinkolobwe.  
(3) 300 Kolwezi.
- f: Transport limited – make the most of what's there.
- g: Section Armoured Cars under command.<sup>58</sup>

Comdt Quinlan's own notes record that

the Belgian Foreign Minister (Spaak) cabled UN New York to send troops immediately to Jadotville to protect the white population that were in grave danger of being massacred by natives. At this time Force MIDE had returned and I was informed that the white population of Jadotville were apprehensive and had requested UN protection.<sup>59</sup>

Capt Noel Carey remembered his company commander Comdt Pat Quinlan returning from the Battalion Conference to announce that 'we were to pack up immediately and be ready to move to a town called Jadotville by 1300 hours ... everything was rushed in order to make the deadline.'<sup>60</sup> 'A' Company had been slated to move to Leopold Farm in Elisabethville on 4 September. The news was soon circulating around company lines that 'A' Company were on the move elsewhere.<sup>61</sup> The 35 Inf Bn medic Pte John Dreelan volunteered to join 'A' Company for the trip to Jadotville, when CS O'Hanlon of HQ Company went around the medics looking for volunteers as 'there was a mission going on to Jadotville, well it looked like we were going on a nice trip, on a holiday type of thing, well, anyway I wanted to volunteer and go and see, maybe not action, but to see part of the countryside.'<sup>62</sup>

With transport across Sector B at a premium, on 4 September, 'A' Company was transported in Irish and Swedish vehicles, which had a limited lift capacity. As a result, 'in the rush'<sup>63</sup> they left their 81mm mortars in Elisabethville 'for some reason' and also their emergency pack rations.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 35INFBN, 2/8, Battalion Commander's Conferences, minutes, 29 August 1961.

<sup>59</sup> Document 'Extract from Comdt Pat Quinlan's letters home', 21 January 2021 provided by Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd) to IRG.

<sup>60</sup> Capt Noel Carey, 'The siege at Jadotville', unpublished memoir.

<sup>61</sup> Pte Thomas Flynn, interview with IRG, 1 April 2021.

<sup>62</sup> Pte John Dreelan, interview with IRG, 25 February 2021.

<sup>63</sup> Capt Noel Carey, interview with IRG, 19 January 2021.

<sup>64</sup> Pte Thomas Gunn, interview with IRG, 28 January 2021.



The failure to bring their two assigned 81mm mortars to Jadotville was a grave mistake. Seven 81mm mortars were handed over from the 34 Inf Bn to the 35 Inf Bn, were retained at Battalion level, and were distributed to A, B and C Coys as required. Capt Noel Carey wrote later that ‘A’ Company

were told to leave our 81-millimetre mortars and our emergency pack rations behind and that they would be sent on later. This proved to be critical. Captain Donnelly only discovered this loss to support platoon when the Swedish transport arrived in Jadotville by which time it was too late to rectify.<sup>65</sup>

As Capt Liam Donnelly, Platoon Commander Support Platoon, ‘A’ Company, was in the Jadotville advance party, he was not aware that the 81mm mortars had been left in Elisabethville until the Swedes with their transport had left ‘A’ Company in Jadotville. Pte Thomas Flynn, who was trained on mortars remembered the 81mm mortars being packed on a truck and put into storage in Elisabethville: ‘My involvement in that was loading them on the truck and sitting on the top of them while we drove them into Elisabethville to a building of some kind.’ His understanding was they were left behind because ‘A’ Company did not have transport for them. He added ‘I guess we thought we could do without them, I don’t know.’<sup>66</sup> Pte Paul Malone felt that ‘the 81 would have given us more firepower and we could have taken Jadotville and the outcome would have been totally different’, he added later ‘something else should have been sacrificed to allow that [the 81mm mortar] to come forward.’<sup>67</sup> Cpl Seán Tiernan felt that leaving them behind was ‘a big, big mistake ... we should have had them with us.’<sup>68</sup> By phone on 9 September to Lt Col McNamee, Comdt Quinlan requested ‘for a strong reinforcement to be sent out to ‘A’ Company. Two platoons and four armoured cars with 81-millimeter mortars if possible.’<sup>69</sup> At 1931hrs on 14 September, HQ 35 Inf Bn was requested to send 81mm Mortars and one second line ammunition to Jadotville.<sup>70</sup> Lt Col McNamee understood that the 81mm Mortars were brought with the deployment to Jadotville<sup>71</sup>.

Comdt Donnelly was ‘really upset when the 81s didn’t arrive’ in Jadotville. His son Aidan recalled that ‘he was really thick about it, he just couldn’t understand you know how, they were his mortars, out where they were and the next thing they were gone, and they had been redeployed.’<sup>72</sup>

Cpl Seán Foley was suspicious of the move to Jadotville: ‘there was this thing in the back of your mind, even though I was only a junior NCO, if they [Force Mide] had come out of Jadotville they must have had a very good reason to come out.’<sup>73</sup> Pte John Gorman put it succinctly: ‘Why would you send in 150 men less-equipped to replace a unit of 300 men?’<sup>74</sup> The answer was as an ad-hoc urgent response in light of the fallout from Spaak’s telegram and as a scratch force to cover the hasty return of Force Mide. Until Spaak’s cable arrived the Secretary-General and the Force

<sup>65</sup> Capt Noel Carey, ‘The siege at Jadotville’, unpublished memoir.

<sup>66</sup> Pte Thomas Flynn, interview with IRG, 1 April 2021.

<sup>67</sup> Pte Paul Malone, interview with IRG, 2 February 2021.

<sup>68</sup> Cpl Seán Tiernan, interview with IRG, 20 April 1961.

<sup>69</sup> MA, ACC, 2016/24, copy of ‘A’ Company radio log, entry for 2330 (approx.), 9 September 1961.

<sup>70</sup> Record of all messages between ‘A’ Coy and HQ 35 Inf Bn, signed by Capt M.G. Melinn, Signal Officer.

<sup>71</sup> MA, Col Pat Quinlan’s service record, Lt Col McNamee to Deputy Adjutant-General 22 June 1962.

<sup>72</sup> Comdt Aidan Donnelly (Retd), interview with IRG, 3 February 2021.

<sup>73</sup> Interviewed in ‘War Stories: The Congo: Jadotville’ (RTE, 2007).

<sup>74</sup> Quoted in Declan Power, *Siege at Jadotville* (Dunshaughlin, 2005), p. 145.

Commander thought there were still UN forces in Jadotville and Lt Gen MacEoin did not seem to know that Force Mide had withdrawn.

### ***Responsibility for Sending ‘A’ Company to Jadotville***

Of the plan to move to ‘A’ Company Jadotville, Comdt Pearse Wheatley recorded in his journal that:

Last Saturday, A Coy was ordered to move to Leopold Farm today, and yesterday (Sunday) he was ordered to send half of his Coy to Jadotville and the balance to move today. This appears all the more absurd when one knows that B Coy only completed its move back from Jadotville on Sunday, after spending only one week there. We have been assured that the order for the above came direct from UN HQ in New York. The story goes that Union Minière (the copper mining co.) mines in Jadotville would be closed if their European workers there were not protected. A Coy finished its move this evening.<sup>75</sup>

The decision to send ‘A’ Company to Jadotville was taken by Katanga Command following Leopoldville’s intervention after ONUC Headquarters had received Hammarskjöld’s instructions. Brig K.A.S. Raja was against the deployment, but Leopoldville acted ‘against local military advice’ and forced Brig Raja to act.<sup>76</sup> Once ‘A’ Company was in Jadotville ONUC Force Commander Lt Gen MacEoin instructed Brig Raja that UN troops should not be withdrawn from Jadotville ‘without prior permission of this headquarters’.<sup>77</sup> They hammered the message home to Katanga Command: ‘Do NOT repeat NOT withdraw UN troops from Jadotville without prior permission of this Headquarters.’<sup>78</sup> After Force Mide’s withdrawal and Spaak’s angry telegram to Hammarskjöld, ‘A’ Company was going to be kept in Jadotville to save the UN’s face. The request to provide ‘notification’ to ONUC Headquarters from earlier in the day, became a specific instruction to seek ‘permission’ from ONUC Headquarters if ‘A’ Company was to be withdrawn from Jadotville. Dr Conor Cruise O’Brien, in a private letter to an Irish officer Capt M.J. Masterson who criticised Brig Raja over the despatch of ‘A’ Company to Jadotville, responded that:

Raja could hardly be said to have been seriously at fault. He had strongly recommended that no company should be sent to Jadotville and had also recommended that the Company, once sent, should be withdrawn. He was overruled by orders from ONUC Command Leopoldville, given by teleprinter in my presence. A different type of commander might well have ignored the risky instructions from on high, but this would not have been in Raja’s character.<sup>79</sup>

Brig Raja’s traditional hierarchical attitude towards the military chain of command that he was part of, was confirmed to the Independent Review Group by Indian academic and expert in India’s involvement in UN peacekeeping Dr Swapna Kona Nayudu.<sup>80</sup> Despite this attitude, Brig Raja may

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<sup>75</sup> MA, PRCN, 73/1/7, Congo Journal, June-December 1961, Comdt Pearse Wheatley, Book I, 4 September 1961.

<sup>76</sup> NAI, DFA, 305/384/31/II, Boland to Cremin, 30 October 1961.

<sup>77</sup> NLS, L179/160, (A-2074) Linner and Lt Gen MacEoin to Narasimhan and Maj Gen Rikhye, 3 September 1961 (incorrectly dated 3 August 1961), and NLS, L179/160, Linner and Lt Gen MacEoin to Narasimhan and Maj Gen Rikhye, 4 September 1961.

<sup>78</sup> UNA, S/822/1/4, ONUC HQ Leopoldville to HQ Katanga Command, 1926Z, 3 September 1961.

<sup>79</sup> UCDA, P82/540, Cruise O’Brien to Capt M.J. Masterson, Athlone, 19 Mar. 1963.

<sup>80</sup> Dr Swapna Kona Nayudu, interview with IRG, 27 April 2021.

not have advised ONUC HQ of the withdrawal of Force Mide. Cruise O'Brien's line is also revealing as it shows that Brig Raja intended that 'A' Company would not remain in Jadotville for an extended period and would be removed as soon as possible. ONUC HQ in Leopoldville had other ideas.

ONUC Leopoldville was acting on orders from the Secretary-General of the United Nations. Dag Hammarskjöld told Belgian Foreign Minister Paul Henri Spaak on 4 September that 'Le détachement de 150 hommes des forces de l'ONU qui se trouve a Jadotville n'a pas ete retire et ne sera pas. The 150-man UN detachment which is in Jadotville has not been withdrawn and will not be.'<sup>81</sup> Hammarskjöld also told the civilian head of ONUC Sture Linner<sup>82</sup> on 5 September that 'protection in Jadotville should not be reduced below original strength', which suggests Hammarskjöld was not aware of the difference in numbers between Force Mide and 'A' Company.<sup>83</sup>

ONUC Headquarters had somewhat ambiguously told the UN Secretariat that 'our troops in Jadotville have not, repeat not been removed', so it would seem that Hammarskjöld did not know about the two different forces.<sup>84</sup> But in this cable Hammarskjöld remarked that he was 'repeating' his view that UN forces were required in Jadotville. This remark places ultimate responsibility for the despatch of UN forces to Jadotville with the UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld, but both Sture Linner and Lt Gen MacEoin in ONUC Headquarters, and Brig Raja in Katanga Command must also take some responsibility in the decision. This view was reported to Chief of Staff of the Defence Forces Maj Gen Seán Collins-Powell shortly afterwards by Capt Basil Greer: 'Troops were concentrated in Elisabethville with the exception of the company in Jadotville, the withdrawal of which was ordered but countermanded by direct intervention by the Secretary Gen on the pleadings of Spaak.'<sup>85</sup> However, the decision as to which UN forces were sent to Jadotville rested with Katanga Command in Elisabethville on instruction from ONUC HQ in Leopoldville, and the subsequent decision to keep 'A' Company there rested with ONUC civilian head Sture Linner and ONUC Force Commander Lt Gen Seán MacEoin in line with directions from UN Headquarters.

***'A' Company's first days in Jadotville: 'It is peaceful and quiet and I hope it stays that way'***<sup>86</sup>

Sixteen miles or so outside Jadotville, the main road from Elisabethville, along which 'A' Company travelled in their convoy of jeeps and trucks, crosses the deep and fast flowing Lufira River. The road is carried across the river by means of a box girder bridge. A small distance south west of the bridge was a separate railway bridge carrying the line between Jadotville and Elisabethville. Whoever controlled Lufira Bridge, controlled access to Jadotville from the Elisabethville direction. The road bridge was undefended, or very lightly defended, as 'A' Company crossed it en route to Jadotville. Pte Frank McManus remarked to his friend Pte James 'Lubo' Scally that 'if anything happens, we're not going to get back out of here, because that bridge ... you wouldn't get past it

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<sup>81</sup> UNA, S/772/2/3, Linner to O'Brien, draft of Hammarskjöld's reply to Spaak (EV-409), 4 September 1961.

<sup>82</sup> Chief Civilian Operations and Officer in Charge.

<sup>83</sup> NLS, L179/160, (6152) Hammarskjöld to Linner, 5 September 1961.

<sup>84</sup> NLS, L179/160, (A2074) Linner and Lt Gen MacEoin to Narasimhan and Maj Gen Rikhye, 3 September 1961.

<sup>85</sup> MA, PRCN, 16/1/83, Capt Greer to Maj Gen Collins-Powell, undated but September 1961.

<sup>86</sup> Capt Liam Donnelly to Capt M. Greany, Renmore Barracks, Galway, 8 September 1961. From a postcard to Capt Greany, a copy of which is in the possession of the IRG.

if it was taken over. We were caught on the far side of it, and we weren't going to get back out of it.<sup>87</sup> Speaking to the Independent Review Group in February 2021, Pte McManus explained 'I thought the bridge should have been manned by UN and controlled'. The failure of ONUC to take and hold Lufira Bridge was a major tactical error. As soon as 'A' Company crossed the Lufira River, the Gendarmerie increased their defences on the bridge. Ceding control of Lufira Bridge to the Gendarmerie meant that as soon as 'A' Company crossed it, they were hostages of the Katangese in Jadotville.<sup>88</sup> Pte Tadhg Quinn recalled that when he and his colleagues saw the Gendarmerie on Lufira Bridge 'you could see everybody's face dropping, like everybody knew we were in dire straits, because from once we crossed that bridge, you know, it was only just a matter of time before we were killed or captured.'<sup>89</sup> He felt that 'it was a totally disastrous decision ... don't get isolated, don't get yourself out of your support. We didn't get that way, we were put that way. Going across that bloody river ... it shouldn't have happened.'<sup>90</sup> 'A' Company knew all too well the dangers of Lufira Bridge, but indicative of the mood in HQ 35 Inf Bn was a journal entry by Comdt Pearse Wheatley that 'The gendarmerie has a guard on the bridge across the Lufira river and just won't let UN pass. We hope they will tire of this.'<sup>91</sup>

'A' Company brought with them a section of two armoured cars commanded by Lt Kevin Knightly, from 35 Inf Bn's Armoured Car Group. With the attachment of these vehicles, Katanga Command told Leopoldville that Quinlan's deployment was a 'strong patrol'.<sup>92</sup> Some hours later, they admitted that 'A' Company was 'weak', adding that there was 'considerable uneasiness' amongst the European population of Jadotville.<sup>93</sup> Views on the mood in Jadotville changed frequently and suggest that Katanga Command had no accurate information on the position in the town. On 4 September, Jadotville was 'perfectly quiet'; Katanga Command described 'A' Company's role as being to 'allay anxiety'.<sup>94</sup> A later assessment suggested that up to five battalions of ONUC troops would be needed to hold Jadotville.<sup>95</sup> 'A' Company's dangerously isolated position was clear to Katanga Command. However, 'A' Company was expected to remain in Jadotville for only a few days and the ONUC deployment in the town would be 'reviewed thereafter'.<sup>96</sup>

Though CQMS Paddy Neville recalled there was 'a queer feeling about the place',<sup>97</sup> Comdt Quinlan's initial reports show that 'A' Company was 'well received' and all was quiet.<sup>98</sup> Indeed Pte John Gorman and Pte Noel Stanley were able to take a trip into Jadotville town while off duty one evening for a few drinks, they got hostile looks, but no other trouble.<sup>99</sup> Yet Pte Leo Boland recalled 'I don't think we were welcome there.'<sup>100</sup> Comdt Quinlan's company established itself in a mixed residential and business area on either side of a straight section of the main road from Elisabethville

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<sup>87</sup> Pte Frank McManus, interview with IRG, 18 February 2021.

<sup>88</sup> This point was made time and again by 'A' Company's veterans interviewed by the IRG.

<sup>89</sup> Cpl Tadhg Quinn, interview with IRG, 21 January 2021.

<sup>90</sup> Cpl Tadhg Quinn, interview with IRG, 21 January 2021.

<sup>91</sup> MA, PRCN, 73/1/7, Congo Journal, June-December 1961, Comdt Pearse Wheatley, Book I, 11 September 1961.

<sup>92</sup> UNA, S/840/2/4, HQ Katanga Comd to ONUC HQ Leopoldville, 1616Z, 3 September 1961.

<sup>93</sup> UNA, S/840/2/4, HQ Katanga Comd to ONUC HQ Leopoldville, 2235Z, 3 September 1961.

<sup>94</sup> UNA, S/840/2/4, (ELLE0822) HQ Katanga Comd to ONUC UN HQ Leopoldville, 1815Z, 4 September 1961.

<sup>95</sup> UNA, S/219/7/15, memorandum 'relative strengths', no date.

<sup>96</sup> UNA, S/822/1/4, HQ Katanga Comd to ONUC HQ Leopoldville, 1740Z, 3 September 1961.

<sup>97</sup> CQMS Paddy Neville remembering in 2002. Copy of letter in possession of IRG.

<sup>98</sup> UNA, S/840/3/4, (OPS 191) (Secret), HQ Sector-B to ONUC HQ Leopoldville. 2010Z, 6 September 1961.

<sup>99</sup> Pte Noel Stanley, interview with IRG, 21 January 2021.

<sup>100</sup> Pte Leo Boland, interview with IRG, 18 February 2021.

leading into Jadotville. The location had been chosen by the United Nations and previously occupied by Force Mide. Comdt Quinlan set up his headquarters in a small building behind the Purfina Garage, a filling station which he described as ‘a large two storey building with a double garage on the ground floor and two self-contained flats overhead.’<sup>101</sup> He estimated that his position was some 2,500 yards from the town. He wrote in his account of the forthcoming battle that:

The villas we occupied were the villas which the UN had taken over previously for Force MIDE. These villas were scattered along approximately one mile of the road. Two additional villas in isolated locations surrounded by bush were allocated for us but Capt Byrne refused to take these over when he arrived with the Coy Advance Party. This was a stroke of luck as the Coy would have been in a very bad position indeed when the attack opened if we had been scattered so much.

The company had no choice as to where to locate as these villas were rented by the UN for use by any UN troops that would visit the Jadotville area.

As a defensive position this certainly would not have been the choice of any commander but on the 3rd Sept the idea of having to go into battle in Jadotville did not appear to be a possibility.

On arrival in Jadotville all platoons dug trenches for local protection as per Coy SOP.<sup>102</sup>

Comdt Quinlan’s role in initiating these Standard Operating Procedures has been much commented upon to the Independent Review Group. While 35 Inf Bn ‘dug trenches everywhere we went’,<sup>103</sup> these trenches in Jadotville ‘saved our lives at the end of the day’, said Pte Paul Malone.<sup>104</sup> To Pte John Shanagher it was ‘the greatest order we ever got for it saved our lives.’<sup>105</sup> Digging in was part of Comdt Quinlan’s standard infantry training, and while he ensured his personnel were dug in, the practice being SOP, was common across the 1 Inf Gp in Kamina, the 35 Inf Bn in Elisabethville, and even extended to the Armd Car Gp as part of the defence of its headquarters. It was all part of training and ‘it was taught to us from day one in the Army ... we carried out our work, our duties and our training that we were taught in Custume Barracks in Athlone.’<sup>106</sup> Some ‘A’ Company veterans recalled digging in almost immediately, others that the digging in began after four or five days once the Gendarmerie threat began to rise. Cpl Muiris de Barra, B Coy, 1 Inf Gp made an important point about the experience of digging in, which like his ‘A’ Company counterparts at Jadotville he and his 1 Inf Gp comrades did at Kamina Base:

one thing I have to say about Irish army soldiers in comparison to other soldiers out there - we dig, and that might seem stupid, but to me, now, as I look back at it, that is

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<sup>101</sup> ‘Battle of Jadotville (As described in Comdt Pat Quinlan’s personal notes)’, entry 5 September 1961. Provided to IRG by Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd), 2 February 2021.

<sup>102</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 35INFBN 2/5, Comdt Quinlan to Lt Gen MacEoin, 30 October 1961.

<sup>103</sup> Pte Noel Stanley, interview with IRG, 21 January 2021.

<sup>104</sup> Pte Paul Malone, interview with IRG, 2 February 2021. This was a point made by many of the veterans of ‘A’ Company interviewed by the IRG.

<sup>105</sup> Pte John Shanagher, interview with IRG, 4 February 2021.

<sup>106</sup> Pte John Shanagher, interview with IRG, 4 February 2021.

what saved so many of our lives because we did that simple thing, we made our defences good, or as good as we could in a particular situation.<sup>107</sup>

These trenches saved Irish soldiers' lives at Kamina and Jadotville.

There is no doubt, Brig Gen Chris Moore told the Independent Review Group, that Comdt Pat Quinlan 'took his orders, executed his orders in the very best tradition ... and not only that but took steps to ensure that his men were properly dug in, as they should have been, and that his men were deployed in the best way possible to defend their post and secure their own safety and well-being'.<sup>108</sup>

Brig Gen Moore, who researched, analysed and wrote the 2004 report that ultimately led to the 'exoneration' of 'A' Company and the erection of a memorial to 'A' Company in Athlone, and the unveiling of portraits in the Military College continued, 'in my opinion that's nothing more than what a commander should do, that's his job.' However, Brig Gen Moore added 'as an aside' that Comdt Quinlan did this

exceptionally well, and he could not have done any better, I don't think any man in his position could have done better. I think it was exemplary the work he did and the way he led his Company and the way he conducted himself all throughout the whole episode.

The siting of trenches and weapons was not all Comdt Quinlan's initiative, though he did supervise the process.<sup>109</sup> He delegated authority to his platoon commanders, who undertook much of the siting work, and selected locations with the best fields of fire.

In a defensive operation a company commander will carry out a recce to assess his area of responsibility, will divide it up into platoon areas of responsibility and will also site the support weapons. The platoon commanders will then site their trenches within their own platoon areas.

It would be normal practice for each of the platoon commanders to discuss and confirm their proposed trench positions with the company commander before digging commences. The same would also apply to the final siting positions for the support weapons by the Support Platoon Commander. This is to ensure there are no gaps in the defence, especially at the platoon boundaries. The company commander might have to adjust a platoon commander's proposed layout to achieve this and to cover the danger areas he has identified.

The area 'A' Company occupied was surveyed, ranges were calculated and range cards drawn up for 60mm mortars and machine guns. Lt Joe Leech recalled that he sited his platoon's trenches and weapons 'with the draughtsmanship and help of [Lt] Noel Carey', adding that 'the layout was unchanged until the consolidation after the initial action'.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> Cpl Muiris de Barra, interview with IRG, 16 February 2021.

<sup>108</sup> Brig Gen Chris Moore, interview with IRG, 21 January 2021.

<sup>109</sup> Pte Tom Gunn, interview with IRG, 28 January 2021.

<sup>110</sup> Col J.A.O. Leech private papers, undated, comment by Col Leech on 50th Command and Staff Course presentation on the Battle of Jadotville, 1993.

One of Lt Leech's platoon, Pte Noel Stanley, recalled digging these trenches along with Pte Robert Larkin and that they shored them up with timber. He also said that Lt Leech himself positioned the trenches.<sup>111</sup> It was hard ground and 'there was men digging trenches constantly, we all got a good turn at that. Now the ground in Jadotville is not like the ground in Ireland as you are under the equator there and the ground was so hard'.<sup>112</sup> 'Like concrete; red earth, baked', was Cpl Seán Foley's description.<sup>113</sup> Pte James Tahaney remembered digging trenches alongside his colleagues. It was hard work on hard ground. A pick axe would 'hop off' the ground and it took several days to dig trenches in the beginning 'but most fellows got handy' at it and you learned to 'dig your own hole and get it down as far as you can and then you try to undermine it, and when you dig you use your pick to burst it up the way, so that is how we got to be able to dig ourselves in.'<sup>114</sup> Spoil was packed into sandbags to further bolster defences it was 'hard graft and work' and 'we used timber, we used everything, for to put up a fortress that was impenetrable, if we could see it that way, that we could save ourselves from being shot. That we did. It was a very dry ground, but it took the best of men to do it.' The trenches were essential as there was no cover at 'A' Company's location, only light bush which while it is 'covered from sight, it is not covered from fire, so we had to dig down to get cover from fire.'<sup>115</sup>

Pte Thomas Flynn recalled being directed to dig a pit for his 60mm mortar under the direction of Sgt Tom Kelly and how 'A' Company were dug in on either side of the main Jadotville to Elisabethville road and how they noticed increasing Gendarmerie patrols back and forth through their position.<sup>116</sup> Pte Frank McManus remembered opening fire with his Bren machine gun on a car that refused to stop after he fired a warning shot at it. He suspected the driver was observing 'A' Company's positions and weapons locations.<sup>117</sup> The situation in Jadotville was changing. Pte Tom Gunn recalled

getting familiarised with the area around us for a day or two. We got a few vibes from the Katangese, that they were constantly patrolling in front of us, up and down the main road from Jadotville to Elisabethville in jeeps surveying our positions, and, you know, getting a general view of where we were deployed. And those were the vibes we were getting and they got worse. The patrols became more regular, not regular, but more often. And I remember Lt Carey and myself and three others, we got a jeep, on a reconnaissance patrol, kind of a little mini recce, up towards Jadotville and we only got to where the railway line crosses the road and the next thing we were ... machine guns ... I remember one which was staring at me, it was an American Browning, you are probably familiar with it, that was trained on the jeep and a mercenary came over and negotiated with Lt Carey and he explained to him that we were just going on a usual round the camp patrol and we got the message and we turned back. So that was a sign that they were preparing, because that position was well fortified, that Browning and other weapons pointing straight at us and down the road, that was a signal it was getting a bit serious.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Pte Noel Stanley, interview with IRG, 21 January 2021.

<sup>112</sup> Pte James Tahaney, interview with IRG, 28 January 2021.

<sup>113</sup> Cpl Seán Foley, interview with IRG, 9 February 2021.

<sup>114</sup> Pte James Tahaney, interview with IRG 28 January 2021.

<sup>115</sup> Pte James Tahaney, interview with IRG 28 January 2021.

<sup>116</sup> Pte Thomas Flynn, interview with IRG, 1 April 2021.

<sup>117</sup> Pte Francis McManus, interview with IRG, 8 February 2021.

<sup>118</sup> Pte Tom Gunn, interview with IRG, 21 January 2021.

Pte Gunn also saw increasing numbers of Gendarmerie observing 'A' Company in positions to the right of 'A' Company towards Jadotville on higher ground in the Golf Course area, and to the left of 'A' Company's position on lower ground.

Meeting the Mayor of Jadotville on 6 September, Comdt Quinlan found him 'cold and formal' and resentful of the presence of 'A' Company.<sup>119</sup> Comdt Quinlan replied that he was in Jadotville to maintain peace and would not cause any trouble. This information of the worsening situation in Jadotville took at least forty-eight hours to pass to Katanga Command in Elisabethville and upward to the Force Commander Lt Gen MacEoin in Leopoldville. Indeed, on 6 September, Lt Gen MacEoin was not in Leopoldville, but at a special meeting with Brig Raja and Cruise O'Brien at Kamina, where the roots of what became Operation Morthor were planted.

Despite the evolving situation in Jadotville, during the afternoon of 6 September, on the instructions of Comdt Quinlan a patrol under the command of Lt Joe Leech, departed Jadotville at 1320hrs for Kolwezi, returning at 2300hrs. The patrol consisted of No 1 Platoon and an armoured car section under the command of Lt Kevin Knightly. This represented one third of 'A' Company's manoeuvre element, and all the company's armoured cars. The patrol had communications with both HQ 35 Inf Bn in Elisabethville and 'A' Company in Jadotville. On route to Kolwezi, the patrol encountered a Gendarmerie checkpoint at a bridge, and were refused passage by a Gendarmerie officer of the rank of 2/Lt, who sought permission from the 'Police Commissioner' to allow the patrol through. The deployed Gendarmerie was of platoon strength, they were 'extremely edgy and suspicious of UNO'. As permission was not forthcoming, Lt Leech returned to Jadotville. In his notes on the patrol, which include a sketch of the deployment at the bridge, Lt Leech's recommendations included: 'before future patrols to Kolwezi, contact should be made between ONU and local mayor and/or district commissioner, this would obviate most obstacles'.<sup>120</sup>

Through 6 September Katanga Command were still reporting to the Force Commander that 'Initial reports from 'A' Company indicates that troops were well received and that all is quiet'.<sup>121</sup> However, by 7 September tension was very high in Jadotville and 'A' Company was facing open hostility from the European population in the town. Those from whom 'A' Company were renting villas were told not to help Comdt Quinlan in any way.<sup>122</sup> 'If you had a blunt knife you could slice the tension there', was how Pte Tadhg Quinn recalled this period.<sup>123</sup> Comdt Quinlan drove to Elisabethville to report the situation to Lt Col McNamee and Dr Conor Cruise O'Brien and express his uneasiness at 'A' Company's position in Jadotville. He met with Lt Col McNamee who undertook to speak to Dr Cruise O'Brien and Brig Raja but Comdt Quinlan 'received no information or decision'.<sup>124</sup> This is most likely because at this point, unknown to 'A' Company,

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<sup>119</sup> 'Battle of Jadotville (As described in Comdt Pat Quinlan's personal notes)', entry 6 September 1961. Provided to IRG by Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd), 2 February 2021.

<sup>120</sup> Col J.A.O. Leech private papers, handwritten patrol report, 6 September 1961.

<sup>121</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 1INFGP, 3/5, OPS 191, HQ Sector B Katanga Command to ONUC HQ, Leopoldville, 'Daily sitrep 041400 to 051900', 1900Z, 5 September 1961.

<sup>122</sup> 'Battle of Jadotville, as described in Comdt Pat Quinlan personal notes', provided by Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd), 20 January 2021. Entry for 7 September 1961.

<sup>123</sup> Cpl Tadhg Quinn, interview with IRG, 21 January 2021.

<sup>124</sup> 'Battle of Jadotville, as described in Comdt Pat Quinlan personal notes', provided by Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd), 20 January 2021. Entry for 7 September 1961.



and unknown to the 35 Inf Bn, plans for Operation Morthor were being set in place by Dr Cruise O'Brien and Brig Raja.

'A' Company spent the 8 September improving its defensive positions and stocking up on what perishable food could be purchased locally. Writing from Leopoldville to Dublin on 8 September ONUC Force Commander Lt Gen Seán MacEoin gave the Chief of Staff of the Defence Forces Maj Gen Seán Collins-Powell the strategic overview of ONUC's position in Congo that 'the situation here has settled for the time being at least, that is we don't have any very serious situation on our hands other than some tenseness in Katanga.'<sup>125</sup> In the vastness of Congo and even of Katanga, on the ground events of great seriousness such as that evolving in Jadotville, were often seen simply as local problems not of greater significance across ONUC's theatre of operations.

### ***'A' Company Surrounded***

On 9 September Capt Liam Donnelly, the medical officer Comdt Joe Clune, armourer Pte Michael Dunne with an escort travelled to Elisabethville.<sup>126</sup> Comdt Quinlan sent a message to Lt Col McNamee in Elisabethville via Capt Liam Donnelly, that he was in a perilous position in Jadotville, and he recommended that 'A' Company be withdrawn at once or strongly reinforced. Comdt Quinlan also asked that ONUC take and hold the vital bridge on the Elisabethville to Jadotville road over the Lufira River, while he would actively remove the Gendarmerie roadblocks around his position. Lt Col McNamee, who Capt Donnelly found at a social engagement at 'Les Roches' with Dr Conor Cruise O'Brien, assured him 'that all would be well and there was no need to worry.'<sup>127</sup> Comdt Quinlan recorded that Lt Col McNamee had agreed to his plan 'at first but after consultation with Brig Raja and Dr Conor Cruise O'Brien it was abandoned' and he was instructed that his orders were to hold on as long as possible without resorting to force.<sup>128</sup> Comdt Quinlan was 'to stay put and all would be well.'<sup>129</sup> Writing to Comdt Donnelly in 1993, Comdt Quinlan remembered:

My recollection of your journey to Elisabethville on 9 September is that I sent you specially to explain our predicament and the hopelessness of our position at Jadotville to Lt Col McNamee and to Cruise O'Brien – if possible and to pass on my strong recommendation that 'A' Company be withdrawn as our stated mission was a complete misrepresentation of the true situation. The white people whom we were supposed to defend were openly hostile to UN. If the Company was not to withdraw a new mission with strong reinforcements was necessary.<sup>130</sup>

Comdt Quinlan's isolated company was now set to become a political pawn in the worsening relations between the United Nations and Elisabethville that were, unknown to 'A' Company, about to descend into open hostilities.

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<sup>125</sup> MA, PRCN, 16/1/83, Lt Gen MacEoin to Maj Gen Collins-Powell, 8 September 1961.

<sup>126</sup> In addition to conveying a situation report to OC 35 Inf Bn, Capt Donnelly may also have been exploring the possibility of bringing the 81mm mortars back to Jadotville.

<sup>127</sup> Capt Noel Carey, submission to IRG.

<sup>128</sup> 'Battle of Jadotville (As described in Comdt Pat Quinlan's personal notes)', entry September 1961. Provided to IRG by Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd), 2 February 2021.

<sup>129</sup> Capt Noel Carey, submission to IRG.

<sup>130</sup> Comdt Liam Donnelly private papers, Col Quinlan to Comdt Donnelly, 20 January 1993.

Gendarmerie forces were building up around Jadotville during the early afternoon of 9 September as ‘one Gendarmerie Coy returned to Jadotville.’<sup>131</sup> To Comdt Liam Donnelly, who was Platoon Commander Support Platoon, and who had gone to great lengths to get Comdt Quinlan’s message through to Elisabethville, ‘the lack of direction, information and material support from higher authority was difficult to fathom.’<sup>132</sup>

One indicator of the mood in 35 Inf Bn Headquarters was a journal entry by Comdt Pearse Wheatley for 9 and 10 September 1961:

Last night A Coy in Jadotville was surrounded by the Gendarmerie. I suspect nothing happened. In any event we are so well armed that we could not be taken by any force in Congo. Isn’t that a consoling thought. Of course we are security conscious, but being so is in itself a strain especially at our age. Behind it all there is the feeling that we here are merely playing at war games and that we could easily frighten ourselves – just like children.<sup>133</sup>

The situation in Jadotville was far more serious that Comdt Wheatley understood it to be.

By the evening of 9 September ‘A’ Company was surrounded by Gendarmerie who staged a mock attack on the Irish position, advancing to within a set distance of Irish lines before being recalled.<sup>134</sup> Katangese forces were also evident at the road blocks on the Jadotville and the Elisabethville ends of the road bisecting ‘A’ Company’s positions. ‘A’ Company was in a precarious situation as the population they were sent to protect led the move to oppose the ONUC presence in the town. Comdt Quinlan ordered his men to continue to dig-in under cover of darkness and thus to strengthen existing and prepare new defensive positions. To meet a surprise attack at night they slept fully clothed and with their weapons loaded beside them. Medic Pte John Dreelan remembers that ‘as things got more tense the boss man himself would make sure that everybody was well protected.’<sup>135</sup> Pte Dreelan carried a Carl Gustaf 9mm submachine gun, ‘A’ Company’s Medical Officer, Comdt Joe Clune a Webley Mk IV .38 revolver.

Comdt Quinlan spoke to Lt Col McNamee by phone late on 9 September asking ‘for a strong reinforcement to be sent out to ‘A’ Company. Two platoons and four armoured cars with 81-millimeter mortars if possible.’<sup>136</sup> At 2015hrs on 9 September, ‘A’ Company indicated that it was being surrounded by Gendarmerie. The next morning at 0950hrs further reports said that:

two Sections of Gendarmerie had dug in at the level crossing about one mile from Irish Company, one Platoon of Gendarmerie in houses at railway crossing in JADOTVILLE.

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<sup>131</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 1INFGP, 3/5, HQ Sector B, Elisabethville to HQ ONUC, Leopoldville, 1600Z, 9 September 1961.

<sup>132</sup> Comdt W.G. Donnelly, ‘Congo – 1961: submission to the Chief of Staff’ (1996).

<sup>133</sup> MA, PRCN, 73/1/7, Congo Journal, June-December 1961, Comdt Pearse Wheatley, Book I, 9-10 September 1961.

<sup>134</sup> Information from Capt Noel Carey, October 2012. This was also recalled by Pte Paddy Hogan to the IRG on 18 February 2021.

<sup>135</sup> Pte John Dreelan, interview with IRG, 25 February 2021.

<sup>136</sup> MA, ACC, 2016/24, ‘A’ Coy radio log, entry for 2330 (approx.), 9 September 1961.

Report from OC 'A' Company indicates that situation is not critical. Unconfirmed report that Gendarmerie are handing out weapons to Africans.<sup>137</sup>

Despite being offered the opportunity by Lt Col McNamee to remain in Elisabethville, Comdt Clune and Capt Donnelly elected to return to Jadotville.<sup>138</sup> Capt Donnelly, accompanied by Comdt Clune, escorted by a platoon from B Coy, supported by armoured cars, left Elisabethville for Jadotville on the early afternoon of 10 September carrying rations and medical supplies. Fifteen miles from Jadotville at Lufira Bridge, they encountered a 'very apprehensive' thirty-strong Gendarmerie force who feared the Irish would attack.<sup>139</sup> Lufira Bridge was the critical choke point on the road between Elisabethville and Jadotville and it was now Katangese strategy to hold it as strongly as possible to isolate 'A' Company. The truck carrying medical supplies and rations driven by Pte O'Brien of B Coy, and a jeep driven by Pte Dell, with Comdt Clune and Capt Donnelly as passengers were let through. They encountered three further roadblocks, each manned by a Gendarmerie platoon, before entering Jadotville.

The Gendarmerie ring around 'A' Company was again strengthened on 10 September. Capt Noel Carey recalled that:

at around 1100 hours there was a call from our front trenches that there was movement in the scrub area along our front. The platoons were all alerted and stood to in their trenches. We saw Katangan troops led by some mercenaries begin to advance on our positions approximately 500 yards away. Comdt Quinlan gave orders to hold our fire but with the Katangans advancing closer tension mounted and we could hardly hold our fire much longer. Then as suddenly as they had appeared with whistles blowing the Katangans retreated back into the bush and we wondered was this an effort to provoke us or a rehearsal for the real thing.<sup>140</sup>

At 0900hrs on the morning of 11 September, Lt Col McNamee told Comdt Quinlan that 'he was going to Mr O'Brien and General Raja to get the Jadotville situation resolved and get the FCA to call off the encirclement.'<sup>141</sup> It seemed that high level UN officials were going to see Tshombe to end the developing siege of 'A' Company's positions. That afternoon Lt Col McNamee again told Comdt Quinlan to 'expect calling off encirclement of your position soon. Talks proceeding.'<sup>142</sup> For the first time Lt Gen MacEoin wrote of the evolving situation in Jadotville in his diary noting simply 'Tension' in the town.<sup>143</sup>

In Jadotville, 'A' Company, still surrounded, found that the facility for the local purchase of food supplies cut off; its Headquarters was receiving threatening phone calls, and they knew that elements of the European population had attempted 'to rouse the Africans against UN but so far

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<sup>137</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, IINFGP, 3/5, (OPS196) Headquarters Katanga Command, Sector B to ONUC Leopoldville, Daily Sitrep 091600Z to 101630Z, 1530Z 10 September 1961.

<sup>138</sup> Comdt Aidan Donnelly (Retd), interview with IRG, 1 February 2021.

<sup>139</sup> UNA, S/840/3/4, unnumbered Sitrep for 10 to 11 September 1961, 12 September 1961.

<sup>140</sup> Capt Noel Carey, submission to IRG.

<sup>141</sup> MA, ACC, 2016/24, 'A' Company Radio Log, entry for 0900, 11 September 1961. [FCA was the code for the Gendarmerie]

<sup>142</sup> MA, ACC, 2016/24, 'A' Company Radio Log, entry for 1615, 10 September 1961.

<sup>143</sup> MA, PRCN, 1/2/17, Lt Gen MacEoin Diary, entry for 11 September 1961.

the response has been negligible.<sup>144</sup> Comdt Quinlan recorded that the European population were trying to ‘incite the African population to support the Gendarmerie and the Mercenaries and to attack my Company. All the white population who attended these meetings were employees of Union Minière.’<sup>145</sup> Pte Joe O’Kane reckoned that there was ‘a person there, a person in Jadotville, who was giving information’ to Comdt Quinlan about what the Gendarmerie was doing near the town so that Comdt Quinlan had a good idea of how the situation was evolving.<sup>146</sup>

It was ‘tense but not critical’ as night fell on 11 September.<sup>147</sup> Assured by HQ 35 Inf Bn that high level talks were continuing to resolve the situation in Jadotville, ‘A’ Company reported ‘Alert on here. Situation very dangerous.’<sup>148</sup> Though food supplies through local purchase had been cut, Comdt Quinlan’s men had seven days emergency rations with them. Comdt Quinlan wanted to stage a show of force to remove barricades and call the Gendarmerie’s bluff. However, HQ 35 Inf Bn again said talks were continuing between Dr Cruise O’Brien and Tshombe. In a possible reference to these talks, Lt Jim Condon recorded in his diary ‘the occupation of the airport bartered against the release of ‘A’ Company at Jadotville’, adding ‘two platoons insufficient for the Jado job ... there are large numbers of gendarmerie in the area.’<sup>149</sup> Dr Cruise O’Brien speculated that ‘A’ Company would be withdrawn as it ‘served no useful purpose’.<sup>150</sup> A show of force would ‘spoil [the] political crisis which was at hand’ in Elisabethville and which was to lead to a showdown between Katanga and ONUC, yet it seemed from Gendarmerie Commander Col Muké<sup>151</sup> that the blockades might be withdrawn on 12 September.<sup>152</sup> A further re-supply patrol from HQ 35 Inf Bn for Jadotville on 12 September was forced to return on account of mechanical failure, four miles out of Elisabethville. Sector B now knew ‘A’ Company was stuck. The tension continued to rise across Katanga and at Kamina Air Base the 1 Infantry Group were ordered to ‘stand to’.

### ***12 September 1961: The Eve of Operation Morthor***

In Dublin, the Department of External Affairs had only press reports on Comdt Quinlan’s ‘uncertain fate’ to rely on when analysing the situation in Jadotville.<sup>153</sup> Iveagh House urgently sought from the Irish Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York information on the ‘action contemplated to relieve Irish troops’ in Jadotville.<sup>154</sup> There was nothing to report. Hammarskjöld’s military adviser Maj Gen Rikhye had no information to give Chargé d’Affaires Brendan Nolan about ‘any situation’ at Jadotville and did not investigate the situation further, instead leaving for Idlewild Airport to see Secretary-General Hammarskjöld off as he departed for Leopoldville at 1730hrs on 12 September.<sup>155</sup> The Defence Forces Director of Plans and

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<sup>144</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 1INFGP, 3/12, Headquarters Katanga Command, Sector B to HQ Katanga Command, Daily Sitrep 101530Z to 111700Z, 1700Z, 11 September 1961.

<sup>145</sup> Memorandum by Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd), ‘The Battle of Jadotville - Master Copy – Final’, entry by Comdt Pat Quinlan for 11 September 1961.

<sup>146</sup> Pte Joe O’Kane, interview with IRG, 25 February 2021.

<sup>147</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 1INFGP, 3/12, secret Sitrep (1), 12 September 1961.

<sup>148</sup> MA, Unit History, 35 Inf Bn, p. 15.

<sup>149</sup> MA, PC 346, diary entry, 11 Sept 1961.

<sup>150</sup> Quoted in ‘The Jadotville Affair’, (Col. Chris Moore), July 2004.

<sup>151</sup> Col Norbert Muké, later Maj Gen.

<sup>152</sup> This message is in MA, ACC, 2016/24, ‘A’ Company Radio Log, entry for 2233, 11 September 1961, 35 Inf Bn to ‘A’ Company.

<sup>153</sup> NAI, DFA, PMUN 387 (M/13/6/4 pt 2), (No. 232) Estero to Uncireann, 12 September 1961.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>155</sup> NAI, DFA, 305/384/31, report by Brendan Nolan, ‘Sequence of events at Jadotville’.

Operations cabled the Irish ONUC Liaison Officer in Leopoldville looking ‘at once’ for the locations of 35 Inf Bn units.<sup>156</sup> That night Comdt Quinlan

was very worried and I smelled something in the air. I asked three times for information from Battalion on the general situation but the only reply I got was “Níl aon scéal” – there is no news. I was on the C12 by voice to Lt Col McNAMEE and others at Bn HQ a number of times on the day/evening of the 12th Sept but I was never given a hint of the planned action in Elisabethville the following morning. The Orderly Officer at JADOTVILLE on the night of 12th Sept (Lt Tom QUINLAN) was on the wireless to Capt. STEWART at Bn HQ that night and (Capt. STEWART) was asked specifically for any information. The answer was that everything was normal. I am convinced that the staff at Bn HQ were ordered NOT to give info of MORTHOR to A Coy. WHY? I can only reason that it was thought that I might take some action that would alert the Gendarmerie. I know now of course that all at ELISABETHVILLE thought it would be only a couple of hours job and that it would be all over.<sup>157</sup>

Comdt Quinlan continued:

had I been informed earlier of the MORTHOR plan I would have known what to expect next morning and I could have planned accordingly. I have no doubt that the final outcome would have been different and “A” Coy would not have been captured. The whole outcome of MORTHOR could have ended in success.<sup>158</sup>

It seems that 1 Inf Gp received advance notice of Op Morthor ‘Notwithstanding all this we were not completely satisfied with the position when at 2300 hours on 12th September we were informed that a general alert would be on from 0400 hrs on the morning of the 13th’.<sup>159</sup>

Comdt Quinlan was wrong to focus so closely on what his actions might have been and it was myopic to think that he and ‘A’ Company alone could have altered the outcome of Operation Morthor. It was not that the 35 Inf Bn did not specifically want him to know about Operation Morthor, it was that Katanga Command and Sector B wanted as few people to know as possible about Operation Morthor, and called for complete radio silence, despite the dispatch of telexes in the clear on the forthcoming operation to all ONUC units. Ultimately this was in vain as the Katangese had advance knowledge of the ONUC operation that was about to take place.

The following morning in New York, it was the same story, and as 13 September unfolded and news of Operation Morthor trickled through, the Irish Permanent Mission to the UN ‘obtained some information regarding the situation in Elisabethville but no word of Jadotville’.<sup>160</sup> Ralph Bunche at the UN Secretariat later cabled angrily to Sture Linner in Leopoldville that ‘news of plight of Irish Company in Jadotville, received in Leopoldville 11 September was not relayed to

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<sup>156</sup> UNA, S/791/43/4, teleprinter message, 12 September 1961.

<sup>157</sup> Memorandum by Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd), ‘The Battle of Jadotville - Master Copy – Final’, entry by Comdt Pat Quinlan for 12 September 1961.

<sup>158</sup> Memorandum by Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd), ‘The Battle of Jadotville - Master Copy – Final’, entry by Comdt Pat Quinlan for 12 September 1961.

<sup>159</sup> MA, Unit History, 1 Inf Gp, p. 50.

<sup>160</sup> NAI, DFA, 305/384/31, report by Brendan Nolan, ‘Sequence of events at Jadotville’.

New York until 14 September.<sup>161</sup> Arguably had 'A' Company's position been known in New York, the UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld might not have authorized Operation Morthor.

'A' Company's position was not considered in New York, Leopoldville, or, most importantly, in Elisabethville as 'a positive indication of serious trouble but was considered ... to be just another typical Congolese incident.'<sup>162</sup> Indeed the situation in Jadotville was reported 'improved' late on the afternoon of 12 September.<sup>163</sup> ONUC Intelligence Officer Lt Col Bjorn Egge felt that those planning Operation Morthor 'regarded the threat to the Irish company in Jadotville as a calculated risk.'<sup>164</sup> In fact Sector B and Katanga Command had totally misjudged the implications of Jadotville for operations in Elisabethville. By keeping 'A' Company in Jadotville, essential troops for Operation Morthor were cut off and tied down outside Elisabethville. Further assets required for Operation Morthor had to be diverted to undertake two unsuccessful attempts to relieve 'A' Company. Dag Hammarskjöld had fallen for 'a clever trick to disperse the UN forces.'<sup>165</sup>

In Jadotville on the night of 12 to 13 September, Comdt Quinlan sought, but did not receive, hourly situation reports from HQ 35 Inf Bn in Elisabethville. He continued 'A' Company's defensive preparations:

After dark this night I ordered that every man would be dug in completely in trenches. They worked like Trojans and all were dug in by 0100hrs the next morning (Wednesday). After dark on this night, we pulled back the men from roadside positions in order to avoid a surprise attack with grenades from passing vehicles. New weapon pits were dug in enfilade positions away from the road and these were manned.<sup>166</sup>

Writing of the position now occupied by 'A' Company, Comdt Quinlan recalled in November 1992 that 'this was essentially a perimeter defence, not a deliberately planned and chosen location.'<sup>167</sup> It was not a location of choice, and in defending it, Comdt Quinlan in essence applied the training he received at various levels of courses during his infantry officer training in the Military College. He deployed 'A' Company in a 'Company in Perimeter Defence' posture.

'A' Company's defences were made up of an outer perimeter of 'mainly isolated strongpoints consisting of Light Machine Gun teams well dug into small anthills or in fortified buildings' as well as riflemen in pits and trenches 'in rear of LMG locations.' The positions were joined by interlocking fire and 'mutual support was the key.' Centrally within 'A' Company's position was Company Headquarters, the cook house, ammunition stores, the communications centre and mortar crews along with some riflemen to form an inner perimeter 'based mainly on the fortified bungalows and other buildings as well as trenches.' In addition, 'alternative positions were prepared to meet attack from any direction and to support the Outer Perimeter.' Comdt Quinlan

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<sup>161</sup> NLS, L179/160, (6338) Bunche to Linner, 17 September 1961.

<sup>162</sup> NAI, DFA, 305/384/31, Report by Brendan Nolan, 'Sequence of events at Jadotville'.

<sup>163</sup> UNA, S/840/3/4, Sitrep 11-12 September 1961.

<sup>164</sup> Col J.T. O'Neill private papers, Lt Col Egge to O'Neill, 22 April 1998.

<sup>165</sup> B. Chakravorty and S.N. Prasad, *The Congo Operation 1960-63* (Delhi, 1976), p. 70, footnote 2.

<sup>166</sup> Memorandum by Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd), 'The Battle of Jadotville - Master Copy - Final', entry by Comdt Pat Quinlan for 12 September 1961.

<sup>167</sup> MA, PRCN, 0304, Comdt Quinlan, 'Battle of Jadotville - Congo 13-17 September 1961 "A" Coy Gp, 35 Inf Bn ONUC. Notes', 25 Nov. 1992. All further quotes in this section are from this document.

also had at his disposal two Ford armoured cars with Vickers medium machine guns, as well as a jeep with a mounted Vickers. His plan, if attacked, was 'to hit up all enemy formations and movements as far out as possible, and so break up his moves and demoralize him before he could even reach the start line for his attack.' Events in Elisabethville overnight on 13 September, the plans and orders for which were unknown to 'A' Company and its commander, now made this attack a foregone conclusion.

### **13 September 1961**

At 0400hrs on 13 September 1961, ONUC initiated a coordinated military operation across Elisabethville to end Katanga's secession from Congo. Operation Morthor was supposed to be a short sharp shock to bring down Tshombe's government. It was supposed to be over by the time later that day when UN Secretary-General Hammarskjöld touched down in Leopoldville.<sup>168</sup> ONUC made some initial limited gains across Elisabethville. Katangese forces then re-organised and counterattacked far more effectively than Brig Raja or Dr Cruise O'Brien expected. Dr Cruise O'Brien publicly announced that Katanga's secession was over. The sounds of fighting in the background belied the statement.

Although Tshombe requested a cease-fire on the morning of 13 September, in addition to the attacks on UN forces in Elisabethville and Jadotville, attacks occurred within the Katanga Command at the UN garrison in Albertville<sup>169</sup> and the UN base in Kamina (1 Inf Gp) from 14 September.<sup>170</sup>

The press reported that in the days before Operation Morthor, HQ 35 Inf Bn in Elisabethville considered 'A' Company to be 'in a tight spot – but we are not perturbed.'<sup>171</sup> With the initial fighting in Elisabethville dying down, the situation facing 'A' Company in Jadotville came to the fore. But HQ 35 Inf Bn knew that Comdt Quinlan and his men had seven days of rations and morale was high. The 35 Inf Bn expected that 'A' Company would hold out and there would be a ceasefire.<sup>172</sup> HQ 35 Inf Bn hoped that the situation in Jadotville would be solved by diplomacy. However, seeking information on the situation in Jadotville from New York, Ralph Bunche informed Sture Linner and Lt Gen Seán MacEoin that the Irish Permanent Mission to the United Nations had told the UN Secretariat that press reports in Ireland said that 'O'Brien had refused to negotiate with Tshombe' for the relief of 'A' Company.<sup>173</sup>

'A' Company was not included in the Operation Order for Operation Morthor. Nor does the 35 Inf Bn appear as 'minus', or at less than full strength. Reading the Operation Order alone, one might be forgiven for thinking that 'A' Company did not exist. Indeed, a sole voice noticed by the Independent Review Group pointing out the dangerous absence of 'A' Company was that of

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<sup>168</sup> Hammarskjöld first heard of Operation Morthor after he landed in Accra, Ghana. He was however aware that a further UN operation was planned in Elisabethville. The UN Secretariat had given the operation the 'green light'. See Michael Kennedy et al (eds.), *Documents on Irish Foreign Policy, Vol XI, 1958-1961* (Dublin, 2018), p. 707, Boland to Cremin, 18 September 1961.

<sup>169</sup> United Nations, *The Blue Helmets, A Review of United Nations Peacekeeping*, (New York 1990), p. 245.

<sup>170</sup> MA, Unit History, 1 Inf Gp, p 15.

<sup>171</sup> *Irish Independent*, 13 Sept 1961.

<sup>172</sup> A point also made to the IRG by Sqd Sgt Des Keegan who was involved in the fighting in Elisabethville with the 35 Inf Bn Armoured Car Group, during an interview with the IRG on 9 February 2021.

<sup>173</sup> NLS, L179/160, (No. 6337) Bunche to Linner and Lt Gen MacEoin, 13 September 1961.

Comdt Pearse Wheatley who noted of the tasks facing the 35 Inf Bn in Elisabethville on 13 September 1961: 'and all of this with A Coy absent in Jadotville.'<sup>174</sup>

Once it was deployed in combat in Elisabethville from 13 September 1961, the 35 Inf Bn focused directly on the situation in the city. Harsh as it sounds, Jadotville became a sideshow from the perspective of events in Elisabethville as the overstretched 35 Inf Bn was immersed in a rapidly worsening military situation, elements surrendered, and were taking casualties in combat including two killed in action and a third missing in action. For the 35 Inf Bn in Elisabethville, their actions in combat, multiple deaths and personnel taken prisoner, crowded out thoughts of 'A' Company. Yet to veterans of 'A' Company, they in Jadotville were the 'holding force' that prevented up to 3,000 Gendarmerie heading for Elisabethville as the Katangese forces in the wider Jadotville area had to remain there to engage with 'A' Company rather than with the main UN operation in Elisabethville.<sup>175</sup>

At the time, and over the years since, it seemed to 'A' Company personnel they had been ignored as Operation Morthor was put into effect. Those who say that 'A' Company should have been told when they were leaving Elisabethville that a new UN operation against Katanga was likely miss the point, that Operation Morthor was only definitely decided upon between 6 and 9 September. However, a personal communication of some form to Comdt Quinlan was surely possible. ONUC was trying in vain to prevent news of Operation Morthor leaking to the Katangese, but the Katangese knew well that a new UN operation against them was planned. ONUC Sector B and Katanga Command tried to keep radio silence about Operation Morthor. The Force Commander Lt Gen MacEoin was not told until 2200hrs on 12 September that Operation Morthor was to take place (though he denied for many decades afterwards that he knew about the operation at all before it was launched).

If it is true that Lt Gen MacEoin only became aware of the operation at 2200hrs on 12 September, then this is the second time that Brig Raja and Katanga Command had kept the Force Commander in the dark. He was not informed there were no troops in Jadotville with the departure of Force Mide, and Katanga Command now kept Lt Gen MacEoin in the dark on the planning and preparation of a major operation it was about to launch.

No one told 'A' Company until Operation Morthor was underway that the operation was to take place. To have told them would have allowed extra time for defensive measures, and also allowed time to act on whether or not to take Lufira Bridge.

According to Comdt Quinlan, 'at approx 0725hours on Wednesday 13 September I received a signal from Bn HQ informing me of op MORTHOR and that it had been successfully accomplished. This was the first indication I had of any operation or action to take place in E'ville'.<sup>176</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> MA, PRCN, 73/1/7, Congo Journal, June-December 1961, Comdt Pearse Wheatley, Book I, 13 September 1961.

<sup>175</sup> Pte Tom Gunn, interview with IRG, 28 January 2021.

<sup>176</sup> MA, Unit History, 35 Inf Bn, p.93.



It was news that left 'A' Company feeling increasingly vulnerable.<sup>177</sup> As the news arrived, men were already up and about, and many were at daily Mass. From the Jadotville town direction some personnel not attending Mass noticed Gendarmerie jeeps with .5 machine guns mounted, approaching 'A' Company positions. The infantry on the jeeps dismounted, and ran towards 'A' Company's positions, firing as the jeep-mounted machine guns opened up. 'A' Company came under brief but sustained mortar and machine gun fire around 0730hrs and 'returned [fire] with success' scattering the attacking Gendarmerie who fled into the bush.<sup>178</sup> Lt Joe Leech felt that 'the critical factor was Sgt John Monaghan going to shave! With towel draped over his neck, he dropped behind a Vickers and broke the back of the rush from the bus depot.'<sup>179</sup> The alert signal went off – three bursts of a sub machine gun, and when 'that was heard, and you'd want to see the scatter, everyone, including the priest.'<sup>180</sup> Pte Joe O'Kane was at Mass and he remembered:

whenever the alarm went, whenever the thing happened, the attack, we ran out of the door of where the priest was saying the Mass, and there was a road just out in front of us, and there was a hedge about four foot high and one thing that I never done was I went out, and we hadn't our guns and that with us, we left our guns down in where we were staying and I jumped that hedge – four foot high – a thing I never done, and up the road and into the trench.<sup>181</sup>

Coming under fire was a new experience for all in 'A' Company. Cpl Seán Tiernan remembered being put right about what was happening by Pte Tosh McManus who was in his trench with him:

I was the Corporal, he was the Private, but because he was three years older than me he had more sense ... why, because we had camouflage bushes around the trench and this guy heard zip ... zip ... zip, and I didn't know what it was and I said to him "what's that zipping?", "Put down your head you eejit", he said, "They're bullets". It was the Gendarmerie, the other army, firing on us, and I didn't know what it was.<sup>182</sup>

'A' Company radioed to 35 Inf Bn tactical HQ in Elisabethville that Gendarmerie forces of an estimated strength of twenty 'attempted to rush our position. They opened fire and we returned fire and drove them off. Much Gendarmerie activity on our front and flank. We are holding our fire. I expect it is only the beginning – est. strength 300'.<sup>183</sup> The response came from HQ 35 Inf Bn: 'Defend yourself with max force.'<sup>184</sup> The initial attack had lasted about ten minutes. Shortly afterwards, 'A' Company was advised by HQ 35 Inf Bn that 'Elisabethville was in our hands'. On the ground in Elisabethville, Lt Jim Condon recorded a very different situation in his diary: 'Jado Jack under fire – serious situation at Jado. Reports coming in from centre [of Elisabethville]

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<sup>177</sup> Capt Noel Carey interview with Michael Kennedy, Dublin, August 2012.

<sup>178</sup> UNA, S/822/4/2, (OPS/B/30) Sector B to Katanga Command, 1350, 13 September 1961.

<sup>179</sup> Col J.A.O. Leech private papers, undated, comment by Col Leech on 50th Command and Staff Course presentation on the Battle of Jadotville, 1993.

<sup>180</sup> Pte John Shanagher, interview with IRG, 4 February 2021.

<sup>181</sup> Pte Joe O'Kane, interview with IRG, 25 February 2021.

<sup>182</sup> Cpl Seán Tiernan, interview with IRG, 20 April 2021.

<sup>183</sup> MA, ACC, 2016/24, 'A' Company Radio Log, entry for 0845, 13 September 1961.

<sup>184</sup> MA, box, 'Jadotville Medals Queries', 35 Inf Bn radio log, entry for 0844, 13 September 1961. MA, ACC, 2016/24, 'A' Company Radio Log, the version of the radio log is the same for this date/time, except there is no mention of 300 just 'much FCA to our flank.' (0835, 13 September 1961).

– Prince Leopoldville Farm balance of ‘B’ Coy in defence – slit trenches – shooting all round. Serious open war.<sup>185</sup>

Lt Condon’s diary contains a number of entries written during the fighting at Jadotville that show use of slit trenches and camouflage by 35 Inf Bn in Elisabethville in the same manner as ‘A’ Company did at Jadotville.<sup>186</sup>

Of the initial Gendarmerie attack in Jadotville, Capt Noel Carey remembered that:

I could see a number of trucks stopping at the bus station beside Support Platoon and fully armed Katangan troops dismounting. I shouted at members of the platoon and moved to number one platoon area who were going to Mass and shouted at them to get to their trenches. As I was proceeding to the company headquarters, I heard a burst of fire and my heart was in my mouth as I crouched in the ambulance believing I was the target. Comdt Quinlan set up his headquarters on the road. He gave orders to the platoon commanders to go forward to their platoon positions. I was given the task of setting up a roadblock on the road at our position and we placed a Land Rover and some oil barrels across the road covered by an 84mm antitank gun. As I was completing this task, I thought I heard the pop of a mortar round being fired.

Suddenly there was the crump of a mortar round followed by several more explosions forward at Support Platoon’s area. “What the fuck is happening”, I shouted. I could hardly believe that we were being mortared. But worse was to come as the rat-tat of a heavy machine gun could be heard coming from the golf course area. We had no inter-platoon communications and no idea of casualties or of the general situation. Capt Donnelly had moved forward to Support Platoon and found that the NCOs had got all the platoon under cover. Everything happened so suddenly with mortar shells falling around them and heavy machine gunfire from the golf course that it was difficult to locate the enemy. His<sup>187</sup> mortar and machine gun crews returned fire and could make out Katangese vehicles in the area of the golf course. They fired a number of rounds and after a period of time that Katangese fire ceased. Afterwards he was informed that his mortar fire had hit a number of Katangese killing the senior mercenary commander.

During the attack, Lt Leech’s No 1 Platoon had ‘taken out a section’; Leech recalled in the 1990s that ‘the Bren gunner was [Pte Noel] Stanley.’<sup>188</sup> Pte Stanley and Pte Robert Larkin said that they had two to three days’ supply of ammunition in their trench for their Bren gun as well as having Gustaf sub-machine guns. Pte Stanley remembered how they ‘cursed Pat Quinlan and praised him afterwards’ for ensuring they were dug in.<sup>189</sup> Pte Stanley explained, ‘A’ Company ‘dug trenches everywhere we went and we cleared spaces[.] Once we started firing we stayed in [our] trenches.’ The Gustaf sub-machine gun, essentially a close quarters weapon, proved of little use and over the

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<sup>185</sup> MA, PC 346, Lt Jim Condon, diary entry, 13 September 1961.

<sup>186</sup> MA, PC 346, Lt Jim Condon, diary entry, 21 September 1961.

<sup>187</sup> Capt Donnelly’s.

<sup>188</sup> Col J.A.O. Leech private papers, undated comment by Col Leech (Retd) on 50th Command and Staff Course presentation on the Battle of Jadotville, 1993.

<sup>189</sup> Pte Noel Stanley, interview with IRG, 21 January 2021.

coming days. Pte Stanley and Pte Larkin took shifts on the Bren gun, resting as they could in their trench, and sleeping on a groundsheet.

For Pte Larkin and Pte Stanley this was all yet to come. It was still just after the first Gendarmerie attack and, according to Sgt Walter Hegarty, ‘after spasmodic firing on both sides things quieted down.’<sup>190</sup> This was the first time that any soldier in ‘A’ Company had ever experienced hostile incoming fire. Later Comdt Quinlan discovered that the Gendarmerie plan was:

to drive three jeeps with mounted LMGs along the road through our position and open fire on the men as they were assembled in a cluster attending Mass. Simultaneously an enemy company was creeping forward through the bush to assault and capture us in the resultant confusion. This plan was later confirmed by Pierre MARK. Gendarmerie Captain CHIPOLO all but admitted it when he told me that they planned to take us all prisoners in two hours.<sup>191</sup>

The reference by Capt Chipolo to taking prisoners provides an understanding of the Gendarmerie’s intent in respect of ‘A’ Company on 12 September.

Had they succeeded in this initial attack, the result for ‘A’ Company would have been ‘slaughter’ while attending Mass.<sup>192</sup> Pte Michael Tighe, who ‘heathen that I am’, was not at Mass, heard the rattle of the incoming Gendarmerie machine gun fire, grabbed his Bren machine gun ‘and legged it as fast as I could straight down to my trench and jumped in to be joined shortly by Cpl Devine and Pte Sullivan.’ They remained in their trench for about two hours, and saw large numbers of Gendarmerie about 800 yards away in the bush. CS Jack Prendergast, whose actions during the battle were recalled by many veterans interviewed by the Independent Review Group, and which were described as ‘outstanding’ by Capt Noel Carey, checked with Pte Tighe and his colleagues to see that they had their reserve ammunition supplies.<sup>193</sup> Pte Tighe asked for permission to open fire and was told by CS Prendergast to hold fire as a second attack was expected about 1100hrs, and if that attack occurred, then ‘pick your target and fire for effect.’<sup>194</sup>

CS Jack Prendergast, described by his son Joseph as ‘a very dynamic individual’ whose ‘leadership [and] his “never say never” attitude’ was one of the central figures in ensuring ‘A’ Company’s position and defences.<sup>195</sup> In his mid-forties in September 1961 he had ‘a very good officer/NCO relationship’ with Comdt Quinlan. Joseph Prendergast told the Independent Review Group that ‘they were always side by side’ and that ‘maybe Pat Quinlan relied on my father a bit for his experience, obviously my father was a very experienced person and soldier at the time, compared to maybe some of the commissioned officers who were quite young and inexperienced.’ CS Prendergast had joined the Defence Forces in 1939 and his long service as well as his significant military skills and leadership qualities made him something of a father figure to many men. CS Prendergast spoke little about what he went through at Jadotville. He was described in October

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<sup>190</sup> Letter/cum diary written by Walter Hegarty (Pl Sgt, No 2 Pl) to a friend at home in Ireland. Copy in possession of IRG.

<sup>191</sup> ‘Battle of Jadotville (as described in Comdt Pat Quinlan’s personal notes)’, given to IRG by Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd), 20 January 2021.

<sup>192</sup> Cpl Tadhg Quinn, interview with IRG, 21 January 2021.

<sup>193</sup> Capt Noel Carey, interview with IRG, 19 January 2021.

<sup>194</sup> Pte Michael Tighe, interview with IRG, 19 February 2021.

<sup>195</sup> Joseph Prendergast, interview with IRG, 20 May 2021.

1961 by one of his 'A' Company comrades as 'that man with the heart of a lion'.<sup>196</sup> His role in 'A' Company was honoured when in 2016 the 2 Brigade Training Centre named the award for the best student on their potential NCOs course after BSM Jack Prendergast honouring his 'outstanding levels of skill, bravery and leadership.'

The role of 'A' Company's NCOs in providing leadership during the fighting in Jadotville was extremely important. They were dealing with personnel who had never been under fire before, who were in most cases much younger than they were, some in their teens. Leading by example, NCOs provided experience, leadership and mentorship by taking responsibility at front line level.

Under the command of Lt Joe Leech, No 1 Platoon took the brunt of the initial Gendarmerie infantry attack. The platoon positions were facing towards Jadotville town and the golf course area. Engaging the enemy, Pte Noel Stanley reckoned there were 'three or four hundred, well they wouldn't be attacking all at the one time, they came in in groups and then moved back.'<sup>197</sup> Because they were coming through brush and trees, the attacking force was not fully visible at the one time. Pte John Dreelan thought the initial encounter might be the end of it 'I thought it was just going to be a skirmish, people shooting long distances, you know, taking pot shots and no one would get hit, but it soon was blown into a full time battle.'<sup>198</sup> The Gendarmerie moved forward, often within one hundred yards of the Irish positions and 'once you saw half a dozen or more of them coming through the trees you had to fire back'.<sup>199</sup> Here the Vickers and Bren machine guns proved to be 'A' Company's most effective direct fire weapons.

In a situation report to Brig Raja mid-morning 13 September, the Officer Commanding Sector B, Col Jonas Waern reported that Comdt Quinlan's men had repulsed a Gendarmerie attack and were surrounded by an estimated 300 Gendarmerie.<sup>200</sup> In attack, the Gendarmerie 'had the habit of opening up and blazing away with everything, you couldn't say it was directed fire.'<sup>201</sup> No one had time to count the attacking force, but there 'was a constant supply coming in, I don't know how many, you could say, but you didn't have much time for looking about you, you were shocking busy, you were clearing everything that was coming your way.'<sup>202</sup>

On the morning of 13 September, Lt Col McNamee discussed the situation in Jadotville with Brig Raja at 'Les Roches', Conor Cruise O'Brien's official residence. Information as to what was happening in Jadotville had not made it to New York, where it was still being treated as of very minor importance, and some wondered 'if any basis existed for reports' of the 'incident'.<sup>203</sup>

At the same time, Comdt Quinlan radioed HQ 35 Inf Bn that 'big reinforcement Gendarmerie expected 1130hrs. Large scale attack on my position expected soon after. Can you send rft [reinforcements]'.<sup>204</sup> 'A' Company remained surrounded.<sup>205</sup> Yet after the initial attack, there was

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<sup>196</sup> Digitised tape recording of messages from Jadotville, kindly sent by Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd) to the IRG, February 2021.

<sup>197</sup> Pte Noel Stanley, interview with IRG, 21 January 2021.

<sup>198</sup> Pte John Dreelan, interview with IRG, 25 February 2021.

<sup>199</sup> Pte Noel Stanley, interview with IRG, 21 January 2021.

<sup>200</sup> UNA, S/822/4/2, (OPS/B/17) Waern to Raja, 0855, 13 September 1961.

<sup>201</sup> Cpl Seán Foley, interview with IRG, 9 February 2021.

<sup>202</sup> Pte James Tahaney, interview with IRG, 28 January 2021.

<sup>203</sup> NAI, DFA, PMUN 387 (M/13/6/4 Pt2), UNEIREANN to ESTERO (No. 315), 13 Sept 1961.

<sup>204</sup> MA, PRCN, 1/2/17, MacEoin diary, entry for 13 September 1961.

<sup>205</sup> TNA, FO 371/154889, 'Journal de Campagne', 1600 13 September 1961.

‘the oddest quietness I’ve ever heard, you’d feel a pin dropping, you’d hear it dropping, there was no sound.’<sup>206</sup> Then it all started again and a Katangese assault began shortly after 1130hrs. ‘All hell broke loose’ as Katangese mortar rounds hit ‘A’ Company’s positions.<sup>207</sup> Pte Michael Tighe ‘heard a whistling sound, and all of a sudden, I’d never heard before or do I want to hear again, the explosions that happened were absolutely mind numbing.’<sup>208</sup> Pte Tighe and his two comrades

dropped on our knees to the bottom of our trench while the mortars exploded all around us, I prayed, as I never prayed before, and I promised that if I ever got out of there, I’d never miss Mass again, but I don’t think that promise lasted too long, but anyway. There we were in the bottom of the trench shaking uncontrollably, you couldn’t see anything for dust and debris, you couldn’t hear anything because we were deaf from the explosions. It’s something that I think that you people, certainly you people that aren’t of military background, unless you’ve been in that situation, might find it hard to understand. This is completely disorientating, you cannot think straight, you cannot put a sentence together in your head, what to do, all I could do was shake, and pray, at the bottom of the trench.<sup>209</sup>

With ‘rounds impacting off the buildings and rounds impacting off the trenches while the mortars exploded all around us’<sup>210</sup> the attack lasted for over an hour, ‘A’ Company ‘fought gallantly’, repulsing this second attack.<sup>211</sup> Comdt Quinlan was ‘quite confident that he will be able to hold out.’<sup>212</sup> Yet in trenches at Jadotville the situation was different; ‘we were taking a heavy beating from those mortars’.<sup>213</sup> Men were scared, as Pte Noel Stanley put it ‘when you go into battle for the first time you are scared, at any time you are scared, if you are not scared there’s something wrong with you’, but he added that his training and discipline helped him overcome the fear.<sup>214</sup> Pte John Dreelan described it as ‘a different type of scariness, you don’t know what is going to happen next, it’s not like as if you want to run, it’s not that way, it’s a different kind of wariness, probably, than anything else, but not scared.’<sup>215</sup> As the dust and disorientation of the initial mortar attack dissipated, Pte Michael Tighe brought himself together and looked up from the bottom of his trench to see tracer rounds overhead:

so I thought, I can’t stay down here all day, so I ventured slowly but surely to peer over, and I still shaking from head to toe, to peer over the side of the trench, and I grabbed my Bren, and, away in the distance, I could see the area from which the tracer was being fired, so I lifted my sights, I think it was around 350-400 yards and I fired a burst, and, whether it was effective or not I don’t know, but the firing by the tracer stopped, and so at that stage I had broken the voodoo, I had peered above the parapet and I wasn’t going to get down again, or so I thought. So, I engaged the enemy at 400 yards, 250 yards, at various times, and while I don’t feel any great pride in what I am saying to you, I took out two

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<sup>206</sup> Cpl Tadhg Quinn, interview with IRG, 21 January 2021.

<sup>207</sup> Cpl Tadhg Quinn, ‘War Stories: The Congo: Jadotville’ (RTE, 2007).

<sup>208</sup> Pte Michael Tighe, interview with IRG, 19 February 2021.

<sup>209</sup> Pte Michael Tighe, interview with IRG, 19 February 2021.

<sup>210</sup> Cpl Sean Foley, ‘War Stories: The Congo: Jadotville’ (RTE, 2007).

<sup>211</sup> UNA, S/213/3/4, (A-2143) Linner to Narasimhan, 1218Z, 14 September 1961.

<sup>212</sup> UNA, S/213/3/4, (A-2143) Linner to Narasimhan, 1218Z, 14 September 1961.

<sup>213</sup> Pte Michael Tighe, interview with IRG, 19 February 2021.

<sup>214</sup> Pte Noel Stanley, interview with IRG, 21 January 2021.

<sup>215</sup> Pte John Dreelan, interview with IRG, 25 February 2021.

guys and later went down and I took their bayonets. Now I know it's not the done thing, but in my youthful exuberance and this, that, and the other I had a souvenir.<sup>216</sup>

Comdt Quinlan knew he was 'greatly outnumbered, by perhaps 20 to 1, and that the enemy had heavy mortars<sup>217</sup> with which they could reduce my position from outside the range of my weapons.'<sup>218</sup> But these accounts of the Gendarmerie strength were only estimates. In a radio message 'A' Company told HQ 35 Inf Bn at 1152hrs that 'have been fired on and returned fire. Firing still in progress, strength of opposition unknown.'<sup>219</sup>

At 1138hrs, messages were passed in Irish by HQ 35 Inf Bn to 'B' and 'C Coys to 'prepare two rifle platoons and a support platoon for journey to Jadotville.'<sup>220</sup>

Capt Noel Carey described the second attack mid-morning vividly and in detail:

The firing lasted for over an hour and just as a lull occurred, I heard a shout from my forward trench that we were under attack from our front. I immediately rushed to the forward trench jumped in and my section Corporal, Sean Foley, was pointing at a scrub area in front of No 2 platoon and I could make out figures coming through the bush. Eventually they advanced to within 400 yards of us coming on to No 2 platoon who commenced firing directly at the Katangans and mercenaries. We were firing from an enfiladed position and my Bren gunner was engaging the targets as they were in the open. I found my Gustaf submachine gun of little use and eventually took over firing the Bren gun directed by Corporal Foley.<sup>221</sup> The Katangans still came forward but the direct volume of fire eventually broke their attack. It stuttered and eventually stopped and broke back into the bush. We were elated with our success. The adrenaline is flowing keeping you on top of the task and also the realization that as the platoon commander the platoon expected you to be their leader even if you were scared just as much as they are. The heat and dust in the trench was stifling but apart from the need to consume large quantities of water, food was not a problem. That morning we had our first casualty when Private Bill Ready, forward in number one platoon position, was shot in the stomach and was fortunate as a second bullet struck his ammunition pouch glancing off it. He was removed to the casualty station. Mortar and machine gunfire continued in support and No 1 Platoon area as our lads returned fire causing many casualties.<sup>222</sup>

Pte Ready was receiving medical attention. The Medic, Pte John Dreelan recalled Pte Ready's injuries, 'there was this big gaping wound, I had never seen anything like it before ... what I remember, my biggest shock, I dressed him, I replaced the dressing on a few occasions for him, and that was rather disturbing, I'll be honest with you.'<sup>223</sup>

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<sup>216</sup> Pte Michael Tighe, interview with IRG, 19 February 2021. In captivity Tighe's having these bayonets placed his life in danger when they were discovered by his Gendarmerie captors.

<sup>217</sup> Gendarmerie equipment at Jadotville did not include 'heavy mortars' i.e. 120mm heavy mortars, 'A' Company was equipped with 60mm (light) mortars while their allocated 81mm (medium) mortars remained in Elisabethville.

<sup>218</sup> Rose Doyle with Leo Quinlan, *Heroes of Jadotville. The soldier's story* (Dublin, 2006), quoting Comdt Quinlan, p. 28.

<sup>219</sup> MA, ACC, 2016/24, 'A' Company radio log.

<sup>220</sup> MA, PC58, 35 Inf Bn radio log.

<sup>221</sup> A point made about the Carl Gustaf 9mm submachine gun also by Pte Noel Stanley (interview with IRG, 21 January 2021).

<sup>222</sup> Capt Noel Carey, 'Info Brief' provided to IRG, 31 Dec. 2020.

<sup>223</sup> Pte John Dreelan, interview with IRG, 25 February 2021.

The attacks on 'A' Company continued on and off all day. Gendarmerie attacked through the bush to the south of 'A' Company and Comdt Quinlan got information of a 'large group of Gendarmerie (60 - 100) ... in very close formation approaching the Golf Links at a range of 1000 yards'.<sup>224</sup> There was sporadic machine gun fire, and fire from what was identified as a French 75mm howitzer, though Gendarmerie Commander Col Norbert Muké was on record as saying that the Gendarmerie had no artillery pieces. Lt Joe Leech felt it was a Bofors 40mm gun,<sup>225</sup> of which the Gendarmerie were known to have a small quantity.<sup>226</sup> 'A' Company, though with less men and lighter weapons, were able to repulse these attacks. Some of the Gendarmerie attacks lacked organisation. Pte James Tahaney recalled 'they ran everywhere ... they had no leader in that bunch, and so there was a lot of firing, they didn't give up firing on you.'<sup>227</sup> After a burst of Vickers machine gun fire from 'A' Company, the Gendarmerie dispersed into cover. Similarly after receiving 60mm mortar rounds from 'A' Company, Cpl Tadhg Quinn laconically recalled that the Gendarmerie 'sort of lost interest in going forward so they turned back where they were able.'<sup>228</sup> Asked about the numbers in attack, Pte Joe O'Kane said they could number from only two or three at a time up to a section or a platoon, but he added 'what could you do about it, you just had to give them a little bit of a blast with the machine gun.'<sup>229</sup> Given the number of Gendarmerie sometimes in attack, Pte Noel Stanley felt 'A' Company should really have suffered more casualties, indeed 'they should have annihilated us, I mean we were stuck'.<sup>230</sup>

Comdt Quinlan explained later that:

I did not know the strength or disposition of the opposition in Jadotville but I estimated it at 600 - 1000 troops (This information from my houseboy). I did not know or expect at that time that the whole white male civilian population was also in armed opposition to me. I thought that not more than 50 white men would be under arms and these I thought would be mostly mercenaries.<sup>231</sup>

Pte Tom Gunn described how he and Pte Paddy Donnelly, his No 2 on the Bren gun, defended their position against the attacking Gendarmerie:

I had a field of fire of about 300 yards, fairly good, and there was a hill at the back ... it was very clear in front of us, say from 200 yards down, it was open ground, and when they came to that we didn't fire on the front fellows, we fired on the fellows coming down the hill, a burst of machine gun fire, we figured that the fellows in front wouldn't probably realise they were under fire really, so that when the fellows in front came within the

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<sup>224</sup> Battle of Jadotville from Comdt Pat Quinlan's notes, 20 January 2021 provided to the IRG by Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd).

<sup>225</sup> It was likely that the weapon was a 75mm anti-tank gun. The Gendarmerie had 40mm guns available in Elisabethville.

<sup>226</sup> Lt Joe Leech private papers, undated, comment by Lt Leech on the 50th Command and Staff Course presentation on the Battle of Jadotville, 1993.

<sup>227</sup> Pte James Tahaney, interview with IRG, 28 January 2021. Pte Tahaney also recalled Gendarmerie being driven forward by their officers under fire.

<sup>228</sup> Cpl Tadhg Quinn, interview with IRG, 21 January 2021.

<sup>229</sup> Pte Joe O'Kane, interview with IRG, 25 February 2021.

<sup>230</sup> Pte Noel Stanley, interview with IRG, 21 January 2021.

<sup>231</sup> 'Battle of Jadotville (as described in Comdt Pat Quinlan's personal notes)', given to IRG by Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd), 20 January 2021.

hundred yards we opened up and we had them in the open. That repelled them. I don't know if they were shot or killed, they just fell and they disappeared anyway.<sup>232</sup>

Snipers hidden in trees became a constant threat as the fighting developed. Pte Tahaney described how to deal with them: "The only way I'd know there was a sniper in a tree was you'd see the rope hanging down, you'd be careful, and then you'd fire on the tree, the rifle would fall down but the man didn't. He was tied in the tree."<sup>233</sup> He added that Gendarmerie who got closer, up to within twenty yards, were engaged with grenades fired from Energa launchers. These violent actions caused serious trauma to many 'A' Company veterans over the years. Pte Michael Tighe described a recurring dream that lasted for sixty years afterwards:

I've dreamt about it, I've had nightmares, it's not six months ago, well maybe nine months ago, since I've had my last nightmare where my wife had to pull me back in the middle of the night. I've had one recurring dream that has diminished over the years, thankfully, and it was on a Sunday morning and there wasn't a breeze and there was a sniper making life very uncomfortable, and as I said, there wasn't a breeze, and about 250 yards away there was a line of trees and I thought there was movement in the trees so I asked the other guy "do you see movement in that tree" and he said "there is movement there", so I took aim and I put a burst up the left hand side of the tree and I came down the right, I was about half way down the right when the body fell out of the tree, but he didn't fall, he was tied and he was hanging, and he was hanging there for about two days, and that came back to haunt me for years.<sup>234</sup>

At 1315hrs, Comdt Quinlan radioed Elisabethville seeking reinforcements as soon as possible, and at 1347hrs, to include section of 81mm mortars and ammunition.<sup>235</sup> Mortar fire had already been particularly effective at Jadotville. Sgt Thomas Kelly's Mortar Section had destroyed a number of Gendarmerie ammunition trucks that morning.<sup>236</sup> 'We were good at what we did', recalled Cpl Tadhg Quinn, but, as perhaps was the case here, 'there was a very large element of luck.'<sup>237</sup> Yet of Sgt Kelly, Cpl Christy Roche said 'he was a marksman with the mortar, he could land a mortar shell on a six pence.'<sup>238</sup>

In the afternoon, at 1630hrs, there was another 'large scale' attack and 'some infantry got into the bush close to our position and appeared to join up with some of the force that attacked us in the early morning and who had gone to ground in this area.'<sup>239</sup> At this time, but possibly for different reasons, ONUC Force Commander Lt Gen MacEoin ordered that 'A' Company be reinforced. He 'was NOT willing to withdraw the Company'; he considered that to do so 'will have [a] bad psychological effect.'<sup>240</sup> He noted in his diary that day that 'Jadotville Coy cut off'.<sup>241</sup>

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<sup>232</sup> Pte Tom Gunn, interview with IRG, 21 January 2021.

<sup>233</sup> Pte James Tahaney, interview with IRG, 28 January 2021.

<sup>234</sup> Pte Michael Tighe, interview with IRG, 19 February 2021.

<sup>235</sup> MA, PC 58, 35 Inf Bn radio log.

<sup>236</sup> Pte Thomas Flynn, interview with IRG, 1 April 2021.

<sup>237</sup> Cpl Tadhg Quinn, interview with IRG, 21 January 2021.

<sup>238</sup> Liam Roche, interview with IRG, 20 April 2021.

<sup>239</sup> Memorandum by Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd) dated 20 January 2021, 'The Battle of Jadotville from Comdt Quinlan's notes', entry for 13 September 1961.

<sup>240</sup> UNA, S/822/4/4, 'Aide Memoire - Op Morthor', undated.

<sup>241</sup> MA, PRCN, 01/02/17, 13 September 1961.



Also noting the evolving situation was Comdt Pearse Wheatley. He recorded in his own Congo journal that on 13 September 1961

I spent some time on the radio talking to A Coy in Jadotville. At an early hour P Quinlan reported that he was surrounded by 300 Gendarmerie and had information that a further 1000 were due from Kolwezi by 1130AM. He expected to be attacked shortly after that. In fact he was attacked early in the morning by a small party who were easily driven off. He was fired on repeatedly during the day and was told that there would be no more nonsense that he would defend himself by use of maximum force. He called for reinforcements during the day.

We could not help A Coy because though the operation appeared to have succeeded by 7 am, gendarmerie counter attacked with armoured cars and infantry groups, here there and everywhere all over the city. We were too thin on the ground to be of any great use. So the ding-dong shooting went on for the day.<sup>242</sup>

By lunchtime on 13 September, preparations were belatedly underway to send a reinforced Irish company to Jadotville to reinforce 'A' Company. It was to be 'underway in a few hours'.<sup>243</sup> The relief force for Jadotville was commanded by Comdt John Kane, Battalion Second-in-Command and Operations/Intelligence Officer.<sup>244</sup> It was made up of No 5 and 6 Pls and Sp Pl from B Coy 35 Inf Bn, supported by a cavalry section of armoured cars and a medical element. Named 'Force KANE', it left Elisabethville at 1615hrs on 13 September in five trucks and a minibus protected by two Irish armoured cars and two Swedish APCs. It was a 'hastily organised force'; the men were tired, having been engaged in Operation MORTHOR.<sup>245</sup> Force KANE was expected to arrive at Jadotville on the afternoon of 14 September and link up with 'A' Company.

Comdt Pearse Wheatley described Force Kane as 'scraped together', but he added that

if they succeed in joining A Coy they will all leave at once for E'ville. We all feel that there are bound to be casualties. Tomorrow the Force Comdr (McKeown) is having another battalion flown in to help us solve the situation here, and with A Coy back from Jadotville we will be very happy (now time for dinner).<sup>246</sup>

As Force Kane prepared to leave for Jadotville, UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld arrived by air in Leopoldville. He found a very different situation to that which he expected. Operation Morthor had not been a success, Tshombe was still in power and his armed forces were counter attacking in Elisabethville and Jadotville. British diplomats in Salisbury reported to Leopoldville

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<sup>242</sup> MA, PRCN, 73/1/7, Congo Journal, June-December 1961, Comdt Pearse Wheatley, QN 35Bn ONUC, Book I, 13 September 1961.

<sup>243</sup> UNA, S/822/4/2, (OPS/B/28), Sector B to Katanga Command, 1305, 13 September 1961 and (OPS/B/30), Sector B to Katanga Command, 1350, 13 September 1961.

<sup>244</sup> Comdt Kane, Intelligence Officer, was appointed second-in-command when Lt Col McNamee was appointed OC 35 Inf Bn. Comdt Kane was senior by two cadet classes to Lt Col McNamee. He retained the appointment of Intelligence Officer and also took over the Operations Officer's appointment when Comdt Sean Barrett was detached to Katanga Command. Comdt Kane was effectively second-in-command and the Ops Int Officer of 35 Inf Bn.

<sup>245</sup> MA, Unit History, 35 Inf Bn, appendix c, p. 1.

<sup>246</sup> MA, PRCN, 73/1/7, Congo Journal, June-December 1961, Comdt Pearse Wheatley, Book I, 14 September 1961.

and London that the possibility of 'A' Company holding out 'seems small'.<sup>247</sup> As night fell on 13 September, 'A' Company expected again to come under attack. At 1722hrs, 'A' Company radioed HQ 35 Inf Bn 'still under mortar fire, expect heavy attack at dark. Gendarmerie only in action. Population NOT taking part'.<sup>248</sup>

In Jadotville, fighting had been 'sporadic' through the day, 'it would go pretty hard for fifteen minutes or whatever, then it would fade out, and half an hour later you would do the same again. There was a lot of targets early on in the day. It was like a shooting gallery, but we weren't allowed to shoot them'.<sup>249</sup> Comdt Quinlan was 'arranging cease fire and talks.' He radioed Elisabethville at 1830hrs advising that he had 'only one wounded. Enemy casualties expected heavy. In touch with reinforcement but reception poor'<sup>250</sup> 'Force Kane held up at Lufira Bridge at 1840hrs'.<sup>251</sup>

At 1940hrs, Comdt Quinlan radioed Elisabethville again 'The Gendarmerie has learned a lesson. Our morale very high, everyone dug in, hope you are right. God bless you all'.<sup>252</sup> Lt Gen MacEoin informed the UN Secretariat in New York, who relayed the message to Dublin, that 'A' Company was still holding out under fire, though the relief company was delayed by a road block at Lufira Bridge.<sup>253</sup> From Leopoldville, Sture Linner told C.V. Narasimhan at the UN Secretariat in New York, that he sincerely hoped 'these things have reached them ... boys are still holding on to their post gallantly'.<sup>254</sup> He emphasised the sporadic communication with 'A' Company, but knew enough to add that they had inflicted 'fairly heavy' casualties on the Katangese.

Force Kane was expected to be 'fighting their way through' to Comdt Quinlan in Jadotville.<sup>255</sup> But all was not well. Force Kane had not made good its initial attack on Lufira Bridge, seventeen miles from Jadotville. It had been halted by obstacles and Gendarmerie fire as light faded on 13 September.<sup>256</sup> An initial attempt to 'bounce the bridge, to force our way over using the heavy fire power of the armoured vehicles' failed, as although armoured cars could cross the obstacles on the bridge, the trucks carrying infantry could not.<sup>257</sup> Force Kane's attack stalled on the bridge after coming under heavy Gendarmerie fire. Brig Gen James Farrell, then a young lieutenant commanding a platoon in Force Kane, recalled that 'at some stage an order came to withdraw and vehicles commence reversing or turning on the road. It is not an operation that recommends itself in the face of an enemy'.<sup>258</sup>

At last light, the forward platoon was withdrawn into a new defensive position. The new position was 250 x 120 yards. Firing continued during the night with small arms and mortars.<sup>259</sup>

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<sup>247</sup> TNA, FO 371/154886, Salisbury to London (No. 1321), 1925, 13 September 1961.

<sup>248</sup> MA, ACC, 2016/24, 'A' Coy radio log.

<sup>249</sup> Pte Thomas Flynn, interview with IRG, 1 April 2021.

<sup>250</sup> MA, ACC, 2016/24, 'A' Coy radio log.

<sup>251</sup> MA, ACC, 2016/24, 'A' Coy radio log.

<sup>252</sup> MA, ACC, 2016/24, 'A' Coy radio log.

<sup>253</sup> NAI, TSCH/3/S161371, Boland to Cremin, telegram 319, 15 September 1961.

<sup>254</sup> UNA, S/213/3/4, (A-2149) Linner to Narasimhan, 15 September 1961.

<sup>255</sup> UNA, S/213/3/4, (A-2143) Linner to Narasimhan, 1218Z, 14 September 1961.

<sup>256</sup> Lufira Bridge was of critical strategic importance as forces controlling it controlled communications between Elisabethville and Jadotville. It was made up of a road bridge and beside it a few hundred yards away a railway bridge. Strong contingents of Gendarmerie forces held both bridges.

<sup>257</sup> Brig Gen James Farrell (Retd), submission to IRG, 21 January 2021.

<sup>258</sup> Brig Gen James Farrell (Retd), submission to IRG, 21 January 2021.

<sup>259</sup> MA. Unit History, 35 Inf Bn, Annex B.

‘A’ Company informed HQ 35 Inf Bn at 2200hrs that the Gendarmerie would not hold talks ‘unless we capitulate’.<sup>260</sup>

Recalling the end of that day at Jadotville, Pte Michael Greene observed ‘After the first day’s fighting in Jadotville all the fear leaves you, you know, because you just, you are sort of resigned to the fact that you mightn’t come out of it.’<sup>261</sup>

### **14 September 1961**

Three journalists who interviewed Comdt Quinlan, John Ross, Desmond Fisher and Raymond Smith, reported that ‘A’ Company’s ‘position at that stage [14 September] was somewhat scattered. By principle of fire and movement [Quinlan] eventually got the Company concentrated and dug in.’<sup>262</sup> Perhaps Comdt Quinlan’s initial perimeter security was not as strong as later accounts have suggested, so he had to consolidate his position in response to the initial Gendarmerie attack. ‘We were too far out in the outer one, we were about four or five hundred yards away from the garage,’ was the memory of Pte Michael Greene.<sup>263</sup>

Pte James Tahaney remembered that ‘Pte Eddie Gormley and myself spent the night digging and filling sand bags and protected our ammunition in our trench to keep the machine gun supplied.’<sup>264</sup> Their new trench was ‘in a new position in an ant hill that covered the main road to Jadotville beside the Purfina garage.’ Sentries were posted and men spent two hours on and four hours off duty to get some rest.<sup>265</sup>

Despite these force protection actions, ‘A’ Company remained in grave danger by the morning of 14 September. Overnight they had kept guard and waited. Pte John Dreelan recalled how ‘the nights were probably the worst, because number 1, obvious, you couldn’t see anything, only the tracers and all like that coming in, and that was rather frightening alright, but we were well dug in, well protected and everyone equipped themselves well.’<sup>266</sup> The sounds of night time came from the bush, of insects and small animals, but when there was movement in the bush it stopped and there was silence and then ‘when the silence started you got the gun in both hands.’<sup>267</sup>

Close to dawn there was movement sighted in the distance out of the range of Irish weapons and the Gendarmerie attacked again at 0530hrs, opening fire with mortars and machine guns. They came up close to the Irish positions, and when they did, Cpl Tadhg Quinn recalled, ‘we were able to take them out.’<sup>268</sup> Comdt Quinlan later wrote:

In this attack the enemy moved as in open formation of one Coy strength and we engaged them as soon as fire could be brought to bear. When the first wave was broken up, the

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<sup>260</sup> MA, ACC, 2016/24, ‘A’ Coy radio log.

<sup>261</sup> Pte Michael Greene, interview with IRG, 22 April 2021.

<sup>262</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 35INFBN, 3/2, Message No. 659, 1 October 1961.

<sup>263</sup> Pte Michael Greene, interview with IRG, 22 April 2021.

<sup>264</sup> Submission by Pte James Tahaney to the IRG, January 2021.

<sup>265</sup> Pte Michael Tighe, interview with IRG, 19 February 2021.

<sup>266</sup> Pte John Dreelan, interview with IRG, 25 February 2021.

<sup>267</sup> Cpl Tadhg Quinn, interview with IRG, 21 January 2021.

<sup>268</sup> Cpl Tadhg Quinn, ‘War Stories: The Congo: Jadotville’ (RTE, 2007).

supporting infantry which was probably located behind the brow of the high ground did not come forwards.<sup>269</sup>

In Capt Noel Carey's words:

As the mortar fire intensified, we called up Sergeant Kelly with his 60mm mortar crew and with Corporal Foley giving directions, I was able to relay corrections to the mortar crew. After a few ranging rounds Sergeant Kelly ordered rapid fire. There was a flash and loud explosion and the enemy mortar fire ceased.<sup>270</sup>

Lt Joe Leech's account adds more detail:

Enemy formations threatening No 1 Pl area were broken up at distances of 1500 yards by Mortar and MG fire. Infiltration by small enemy groups to within 200 yards were destroyed by S[mall] A[rms] fire.<sup>271</sup>

At 0815 'A' Company told HQ 35 Inf Bn that 'A' Company could hold out for another twenty-four hours. Comdt Quinlan radioed HQ 35 Inf Bn and 'Requested permission to withdraw under cover of darkness tonight if he sees fit.'<sup>272</sup> Permission was granted.<sup>273</sup> The version of the 'A' Company radio log signed off as correct by Comdt Quinlan details at this time only a voice call between Comdt Quinlan and Lt Col McNamee in which Comdt Quinlan 'pointed out gravity of situation at Jado.'<sup>274</sup> Lt Col McNamee said that further reinforcements were arriving in Elisabethville, including heavy weapons support. Comdt Quinlan requested a strong force with heavy weapons be sent to relieve Force Kane and Lt Col McNamee said 'that he expected reinforcement at the bridge to breakthrough and would send further reinforcement if necessary.'<sup>275</sup>

From their trenches in Jadotville, 'A' Company could hear renewed fighting at Lufira Bridge. On the evening of 13 September Comdt Quinlan had, accordingly to Comdt Wheatley 'advised' Force Kane 'to stay put as he was involved in peace talks. Later OC A Coy realised that it was a ruse and asked Johnny Kane to attack at first light today.'<sup>276</sup>

At 0830hrs, Force Kane mounted an attack on the bridge with mortar and machine gun fire. An attacking infantry platoon and supporting section of armoured cars came under heavy fire from strong Katangese positions and withdrew. Comdt Kane informed his headquarters that he was launching a 'final attack. Must return to Elisabethville if not successful'.<sup>277</sup> Perhaps Comdt Kane was indicating that he had little confidence it would succeed and in his own mind had decided to withdraw from Lufira Bridge. It might also indicate that he was making decisions that should have been made by OC 35 Inf Bn.

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<sup>269</sup> Notebook entry by Comdt Pat Quinlan recorded in a memorandum by Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd), 'The Battle of Jadotville from Comdt Quinlan's notes', 20 January 2021.

<sup>270</sup> Capt Noel Carey submission to IRG, January 2021.

<sup>271</sup> Leech quoted in 'Battle of Jadotville – Master Copy - Final', memorandum by Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd), 1 February 2021.

<sup>272</sup> MA, PC, 58, 35 Inf Bn Radio Log. This entry appears only in the HQ version of the Radio Log.

<sup>273</sup> MA, PC, 58, 35 Inf Bn Radio Log. This entry appears only in the HQ version of the Radio Log.

<sup>274</sup> MA, ACC, 2016/24, 'A' Company Radio Log.

<sup>275</sup> MA, ACC, 2016/24, 'A' Company Radio Log.

<sup>276</sup> MA, PRCN, 73/1/7, Congo Journal, June-December 1961, Comdt Pearse Wheatley, Book I, 14 September 1961.

<sup>277</sup> MA, ACC, 2016/24, 'A' Company Radio Log.

The assault was unsuccessful and petered out by 1000hrs. By 1100hrs, with his ‘ammunition, food and men almost exhausted’ Comdt Kane ordered the column to return to Elisabethville. Force Kane radioed their return at 1313hrs; ‘failed to take Lufira Bridge’.<sup>278</sup> ‘It was reckoned that the enemy was a company plus in strength and well dug in, too strong a position for our force to take.’<sup>279</sup> While Lt Col McNamee was endeavouring to send further reinforcements to Lufira Bridge, Force Kane was back in Elisabethville at 1600hrs.<sup>280</sup>

Lufira Bridge remained the strategic lynchpin to events in Elisabethville and Jadotville. By holding it, the Katangese kept ‘A’ Company hostage at Jadotville, and caused the UN to redeploy scarce assets from Elisabethville.

Force Kane’s position was neatly summarised by Capt Basil Greer in a report to the Defence Force’s Chief of Staff Maj Gen Seán Collins-Powell:

The first attempt to relieve them by an Irish company was made at night and actually got onto the bridge but could not move the obstacles which consisted of two big road graders and bulldozer. They tried to tow them and used an 84 millimetre on them while the armoured cars gave covering fire but could not shift them. In the morning they did another recce but found themselves facing a company. They mortared and machine gunned the position inflicting heavy loss, and then withdrew after an air attack.<sup>281</sup>

The basis of this claim is a conversation with local men who stated that very heavy casualties had been inflicted by Force Kane on the Gendarmerie guarding the bridge. This could hardly be regarded as reliable information and might even be seen as an attempt to divert attention from Force Kane’s lack of success.<sup>282</sup> Inflicting such heavy casualties on the defending company, would indicate an opportunity to press home their attack and take the Katangese positions.

As news filtered in that Force Kane was unable to break through Lufira Bridge, ‘A’ Company heard a new sound and saw a new and unwelcome sight as a Katangese Air Force CM 170 Fouga Magister jet aircraft ‘came up out of the sun ... a black shadow and the screaming of the engines and at about 500 ft he broke out of the dive.’<sup>283</sup>

The Katangese sole operational Fouga Magister was armed with two 7.5mm blow-back operated machine guns and could carry two 500lb bombs, one under each wing. The guns carried 200 rounds each and rate of fire was 900rds/minute. The bombs were locally made and contact fused.<sup>284</sup> The pilot was most likely a Belgian, Jan van Resseghem, who was a very experienced ex-RAF and ex-Belgian

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<sup>278</sup> MA, box, ‘Jadotville Medals Queries’, 35 Inf Bn radio log.

<sup>279</sup> Brig Gen James Farrell (Retd), submission to IRG, 21 January 2021.

<sup>280</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 35INFBN, 35Inf Bn Unit Journal, 2/9, entry number 2, 14 September 1961.

<sup>281</sup> MA, PRCN, 16/1/83, Capt Greer to Maj Gen Collins-Powell, undated, but September 1961.

<sup>282</sup> MA, 35 Inf Bn, Unit History, Para 6 of Appendix C, p.106.

<sup>283</sup> Cpl Seán Foley, interview with IRG, 9 February 2021.

<sup>284</sup> Brig Gen Paul Fry, ‘An analysis of the weapons effects of air attacks by CM70 aircraft of Katangan Air Force against Irish troops at Jadotville, 13-17 September 1961’, p. 6, submitted to IRG February 2021.

Air Force pilot, employed to instruct the KAF pilots on the flight characteristics and operation of the Fouga Magister.<sup>285</sup>

On its first pass the Fouga's pilot surveyed the area. But on his second pass, Capt Noel Carey described what happened:

At 1200hrs, I heard the noise of a jet aircraft and suddenly in the bright sunshine I could see a plane flying along the valley in front of our positions. It wheeled around and slowly flew over us. Some of our platoon waved thinking it was a United Nations aircraft. It accelerated away and flew back towards Jadotville. Was it friendly or enemy, we did not know but we soon would have the answer? At approximately 1330hrs we saw the plane as it again flew along the valley and this time it climbed into the dazzling sun. There was a shout of "get down" and it suddenly swooped on the Purfina garage, strafing the building blowing out the windows and dropping two bombs on the courtyard of the garage causing large craters and loud explosions. The target was the petrol pumps and fuel tanks. This was a huge shock. The last thing I had anticipated was that we would be bombed from the air and we felt completely vulnerable in our trenches. It was a dreadful feeling leaving us very exposed. We had no idea if there were casualties and it was only by shouting from trenches that we heard no one was injured. Comdt Quinlan, who was everywhere, placed our two armoured cars to crisscross their Vickers machine gun fire as anti-aircraft guns. As we were recovering from the shock approximately an hour and a half later the Katangan Fouga Magister jet returned from the air base in Kolwezi and repeated the attack. This time the bombs fell in the bush beside the road. The armoured cars put up a barrage of fire but the jet was gone swooping away towards Jadotville.<sup>286</sup>

Pte James Tahaney and Pte Edward Gormley were injured during the air attack, Pte Tahaney being buried after his trench was hit and caved in. He was dug out by Sgt Monaghan. Treating Ptes Tahaney and Gormley at the first aid post medic Pte John Dreelan found that both men weren't frightened by their ordeal during the Fouga attack, 'they just looked at it as part of the job ... its incredible'.<sup>287</sup> Pte Frank McManus recalled that the jet aircraft was 'a frightener because you really didn't have any protection, you know, you had trenches and that, but there was nothing on top of the trenches, the only hope you had was to lie down and pray'.<sup>288</sup> Pte Leo Boland saw how as the jet aircraft put in its attacks it would be 'coming towards you and you could see the ground dancing with bullets coming up to you'.<sup>289</sup> He added that you could hear the jet aircraft coming, but you couldn't always see it coming: 'we didn't know what direction he was going to come in and whose trench was going to get it.'

On the afternoon of 14 September, 'A' Company was twice strafed and bombed by the Katangese Fouga Magister.<sup>290</sup> Pte Joe O'Kane recalled the jet's arrival and attacks:

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<sup>285</sup> Brig Gen Paul Fry, 'An analysis of the weapons effects of air attacks by CM70 aircraft of Katangan Air Force against Irish troops at Jadotville, 13-17 September 1961', p. 6 – 7, submitted to IRG February 2021.

<sup>286</sup> Capt Noel Carey, submission to IRG, January 2021. Pte Michael Tighe also mentioned this 'cone of fire' in his interview with the IRG on 19 February 2021.

<sup>287</sup> Pte John Dreelan, interview with IRG, 25 February 2021.

<sup>288</sup> Pte Frank McManus, interview with IRG, 18 February 2021.

<sup>289</sup> Pte Leo Boland, interview to IRG, 18 February 2021.

<sup>290</sup> Pte Leo Boland, interview to IRG, 18 February 2021.

he came in from the Jadotville side and he was heading for the Elisabethville area ... I was up on the ant hill and there were the two armoured cars in the same locality where I was and we could hear the jet coming in. The first couple of times whenever he came in, we didn't think enough about it ... but if I could get him coming in with the machine gun, but he'd be going too fast, but I fired a few, a couple of times at him coming in, but he got away on me, so he did, and he got away on the two armoured cars as well.<sup>291</sup>

In an act of defiance towards the attacker Pte Anthony 'Shinners' McNerney and Pte Paddy Gildea got up out of their trenches and fired at the Fouga with their Gustaf sub-machine guns.<sup>292</sup> Yet evidence suggested that the Fouga Magister was later (see below hit at least once close to the cockpit by 'A' Company fire with the result that on subsequent attacks the pilot flew higher and so his attacks became less accurate.<sup>293</sup>

A further reason for his attacks being inaccurate was that the machine guns on the Fouga Magister had been mounted 20mm too high on their mounts causing their trajectory to be elevated and the fall of shot to be long/over the target.<sup>294</sup> Former GOC Air Corps Brig Gen Paul Fry, who had flown similar models of the Fouga Magister when it was in Defence Forces service explained to the IRG that:

This would explain the inaccurate gunfire even though tracer was being used. Firing in bright sunshine can make tracers difficult to see from the cockpit. Time in the dive from rolling into the attack dive from 3000 feet to pulling out no lower than 500 feet was eight to ten seconds. So having rolled in, acquired the target, tracked and fired (and possibly observed the tracers) a very short time period exists during which to adjust the sight picture and open fire again. Further, the Fouga generated an unwelcome nose pitching movement when using the aileron controls to roll the aircraft and reposition the target in the sights. The time spent countering this and re-establishing a stable sight picture uses much valuable altitude in the attack dive.<sup>295</sup>

Taking the impact of 'A' Company's gunfire on the Fouga Magister and the error in the mounting of the Fouga Magister's machine guns together:

the effect of this one hit may well have altered the dynamics of all further attacks from the air using gunfire and directly contributed to saving lives. It undoubtedly forced the attacking aircraft to engage from the relative safety of a higher altitude. This higher altitude coupled with the latent mounting error of the guns further reduced accuracy.<sup>296</sup>

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<sup>291</sup> Pte Joe O'Kane, interview with IRG, 25 February 2021.

<sup>292</sup> Pte Michael Greene, interview with IRG, 22 April 2021. See John Greene, *Red Legs: One Irish Boy's African Adventure* (Exeter, 2012), pp 425-7.

<sup>293</sup> Brig Gen Paul Fry, interview with IRG, 2 February 2021.

<sup>294</sup> Brig Gen Paul Fry, interview with IRG, 2 February 2021.

<sup>295</sup> Brig Gen Paul Fry, 'An analysis of the weapons effects of air attacks by CM70 aircraft of Katangan Air Force against Irish troops at Jadotville, 13-17 September 1961', p. 10.

<sup>296</sup> Brig. Gen Paul Fry, 'An analysis of the weapons effects of air attacks by CM70 aircraft of Katangan Air Force against Irish troops at Jadotville, 13-17 September 1961', p. 11-12.

Brig Raja telexed Lt Gen MacEoin of his ‘horror’ at hearing of the air attack; adding that ‘A’ Company was also mortared he continued they were ‘holding out gallantly’.<sup>297</sup> Being strafed and bombed was:

probably the ultimate of all the shocks that we got because this was something that we had never trained for, we never knew what it was about. We never, you just imagine, we’re firing towards the front at an enemy coming towards us, but this bloody thing is coming from our rear and firing into our backs, so there was no way you were going to be safe from them.<sup>298</sup>

Shortly after the air attack, Comdt Quinlan was contacted by the Gendarmerie at Jadotville and asked to capitulate. At 1627hrs, ‘A’ Company reported to HQ 35 Inf Bn that the Gendarmerie has asked for ‘a decision’, with Comdt Quinlan awaiting instructions, requesting in Irish for reinforcements, and advised that the company was holding out to the last man.<sup>299</sup>

***‘We were told that he was dead’:<sup>300</sup> How the wives of ‘A’ Company supported each other and their families through the Battle of Jadotville.***

Headlines in the press in Ireland announced that there were fifty-seven Irish dead at Jadotville, with the remainder taken prisoner. It was ‘war propaganda of unbridled mendacity’.<sup>301</sup> Comdt Pearse Wheatley heard the same story and recorded in his journal that ‘I heard the BBC news at 1pm, the misinformation that there are 57 dead Irish in J’ville and it made me miserable to know that this will strike horror in to the ears of our people at home. We know of course that the total is three dead and none of those in J’ville.’<sup>302</sup> He wondered ‘where the rumours originate. Is it on part of Belgian psychological warfare, in which we Irish are babes-in-arms.’<sup>303</sup>

Capt Noel Carey recalled the impact of this propaganda in Ireland:

I can remember my own sister, Mary, telling me that she was called out of the class by the head teacher and told “we had very bad news for you, your brother Noel has been killed in the Congo”. And even at that time, obituary notices for all of us here, and those who have passed on, were actually in some of the newspapers. And that was a dreadful time for the families.<sup>304</sup>

Army Headquarters in Dublin sought news on the situation from the Irish Liaison Officer with ONUC in Leopoldville. Dublin explained that ‘many families here anxious because of news JADOTVILLE. Have failed to get through to Leopoldville, Brussels or Geneva. Radio and

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<sup>297</sup> UNA, S/840/3/4, Raja to MacEoin, 1545, 14 September 1961.

<sup>298</sup> Capt Noel Carey, interview with IRG, 21 January 2021.

<sup>299</sup> MA, box, ‘Jadotville Medal Queries’, 35 Inf Bn Radio Log.

<sup>300</sup> Collette Byrne, interview with IRG, 28 January 2021, recalling her childhood memories of how news of her father, CQMS Patrick Neville, being presumed dead in Jadotville was received.

<sup>301</sup> Conor Cruise O’Brien, *To Katanga and Back* (London, 1962), p. 259.

<sup>302</sup> MA, PRCN, 73/1/7, Congo Journal, June-December 1961, Comdt Pearse Wheatley, QN 35Bn ONUC, Book I, 16 September 1961.

<sup>303</sup> MA, PRCN, 73/1/7, Congo Journal, June-December 1961, Comdt Pearse Wheatley, QN 35Bn ONUC, Book II, 2 October 1961.

<sup>304</sup> Capt Noel Carey, speech at the presentation of An Bonn Jadotville, 2 December 2017.



television report Irish troops killed. Could you give us any information?<sup>305</sup> News was slow in arriving, and official support was sorely lacking for families fearful of what each day's news might bring. Kathleen Lafferty recalled her mother's worries about her husband Cpl John McAnaney:

She went to bed at night absolutely in fear, not knowing where he was, after being told these horror stories, like as I said, that there was people out there that were going to cut him up and eat him, and that he could come home in a bag and she wouldn't even have, she said to me "I wouldn't even have a body to bury, Kathleen, I wouldn't know who I was burying".<sup>306</sup>

In Athlone, home town of so many of the men of 'A' Company, wives, believing they had been newly widowed, planned funerals without bodies, and neighbours and relatives tried to support as best they could. CQMS Paddy Neville's daughter Collette remembered:

We were told that he was dead, and my mother, you could imagine, the house was like a wake house, there was loads of people in the house, and this chap, he was a soldier, now he wasn't sent from the barracks or anything, but he thought he was being nice, and he said to my mother, "I wouldn't worry about them, they'll all be buried together in one grave".<sup>307</sup>

When Danny Tiernan's mother received the incoming bad news from Jadotville

She just told us that she thought that some of the soldiers had been shot, and they had been killed in the action and that we weren't to worry, Dad's name wasn't among them and that the last letter she had from Dad he said they were all safe and they were all well.<sup>308</sup>

It was only later he realised that 'she was the one who was doing all the worrying.' John McCarton remembered a family story that his grandmother 'only received two messages from the Defence Forces' after Jadotville. This first was that 'your son, Pat McCarton, he was in battle, he's a prisoner of war, we don't know if he is still alive' and the second, received about four weeks later, was: 'he's in prison, we don't know how long he is going to be in for. They were the only two messages from the Defence Forces for my grandmother, and my grandmother had to relate them to my mother who was only the girlfriend at the time.' John added 'talk about a sledgehammer'.<sup>309</sup>

Cpl Joe Relihan's family received a letter from the Army to say they were captured but didn't know the situation. Nobody knew who was alive and who was dead:

The evening paper came out, and I can remember ladies, because there was a lot of army living around us, and I can remember the other ladies coming into my mum's kitchen and them all crying, and then the evening paper was put down on the table and everybody was

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<sup>305</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 35INFBN, 7/2, telex conversation between Lee and Rikhye, 2255, 14 September 1961.

<sup>306</sup> Kathleen Lafferty, describing a conversation with her mother about the lack of support she got from the Defence Forces when her father, Cpl John McAnaney, was in Katanga. Interview with IRG, 9 February 2021.

<sup>307</sup> Collette Byrne, interview with IRG, 28 January 2021, recalling her childhood memories of how news of her father, CQMS Patrick Neville, being presumed dead in Jadotville was received.

<sup>308</sup> Comdt Danny Tiernan (Retd), interview with IRG, 1 April 2021.

<sup>309</sup> Sgt John McCarton (Retd), interview with IRG, 20 April 2021.

searching it for everybody's name, looking for their names ... and they were all thinking that they were dead, that they were gone, that they were dead.<sup>310</sup>

Liam Roche, son of Cpl Christy Roche recalled:

I was only a child when my dad went to the Congo, but I do, it's like yesterday, I can remember all the neighbours gathering in the house with my mum and our next door neighbour Paddy O'Connor, he even brought in a wreath, because my dad was supposed to be dead, and they were talking about a memorial Mass, and what they were going to do, and my mum of course being comforted by everyone there. I was only three, but I still remember it.<sup>311</sup>

On Assumption Road in Athlone, Joe Relihan remembered that there were twenty-seven army families on the street and 'all the women on the street were out saying the rosary' after news broke in Athlone that 'A' Company had been captured.<sup>312</sup> There was little if any support from the Defence Forces, but in Athlone Comdt Pat Quinlan's wife Carmel and Lt Joe Leech's wife Lola let families know if they heard any news from Jadotville and Comdt Quinlan's young son Leo brought news by bike to many families, an action many family members remember to this day.<sup>313</sup> In one tape back to Ireland CS Jack Prendergast thanked Carmel Quinlan from the men of 'A' Company: 'Our heartfelt thanks, you are one in a million.'<sup>314</sup> Sgt Frank Gilsenan added his thanks to Mrs Quinlan 'for visitations and messages even though she was in trouble herself.'<sup>315</sup>

Lt Cmdr John Leech (Retd), remembering how his mother Lola Leech tried to keep families in Athlone informed of what was happening in Jadotville, recalled that:

During the siege of Jadotville ... there were media reports coming through, coming through the BBC World Service, coming through the Voice of America, coming through wherever, and some of them were misinformed, you know the famous one where they were overrun and at that stage the soldiers' families and wives in Athlone, they were really in a terrible state. And when my mum discovered that it was not the case she went down to the terraces in Athlone, down to St Kieran's Terrace, Assumption Road where a lot of the soldiers, their families lived, and she explained to them what was going on. She said some of the wives they were hysterical, I mean they were hysterical, they thought they lost their husbands. She found it very difficult. Now we have systems, the Defence Forces have very good systems for support to deal with matters like that, but she was down the streets at night dealing with the wives of the soldiers of the platoon but also of the company because obviously word went round pretty fast. So that really did scar her for life.<sup>316</sup>

Lola Leech, comforted the wives and families of 'A' Company in Athlone in the absence of official action by the Department of Defence and the Defence Forces to look after their needs. As well

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<sup>310</sup> Joe Relihan, interview with IRG, 22 April 2021.

<sup>311</sup> Liam Roche, interview with IRG, 20 April 2021.

<sup>312</sup> Joe Relihan, interview with IRG, 22 April 2021.

<sup>313</sup> IRG interviews with veterans and families of deceased veterans.

<sup>314</sup> Digitised tape recording of messages from Jadotville, kindly sent by Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd) to the IRG, February 2021.

<sup>315</sup> Digitised tape recording of messages from Jadotville, kindly sent by Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd) to the IRG, February 2021.

<sup>316</sup> Lt Cmdr Joe Leech, interview with IRG, 23 February 2021. 'Hysterical' was the word used by Lola Leech.

as information on Jadotville from media sources, Mrs Leech was acting on information passed to her unofficially by friends of her and her husband Lt Joe Leech within the Defence Forces based on what they had received through official channels. In an age of instant media, the contrast with how news was sent from Congo and Katanga could not be more striking. Often it took two to three days for information from Jadotville to filter through to the UN Secretariat in New York or the Defence Forces Liaison Officer in Leopoldville. When it did arrive, it was often partial, incorrect, out of date and superseded by events.

Sgt Martin McCabe's daughter Grace Grouden remembered that her father's going to the Congo was part of Army life, but Jadotville came as 'a terrible shock to us all'.<sup>317</sup> Communication was bad from Congo and Grace recalled, as did so many 'A' Company family members, Comdt Pat Quinlan's son Leo cycling to Assumption Road in Athlone with the latest news from Jadotville and Katanga. Their house was the first in the terrace of houses on the road and depending on the time of day the McCabe family would pass the news down the road. These were informal community networks, outside the Defence Forces, that were created by the families of the men of 'A' Company for and amongst each other.

The wives of the men of 'A' Company ensured through informal channels that accurate news was spread and much needed support was given to those who needed it most. These women bore, almost alone and without official support, the brunt of the domestic impact in Ireland of the Battle of Jadotville. Capt Noel Carey emphasised to the Independent Review Group that the role of the wives of 'A' Company has yet to be effectively researched, documented, and acknowledged.<sup>318</sup> They used their own initiative to form a team of frontline care givers, comforters and helpers, providing essential support and filling the enormous gap in the Defence Forces and the Department of Defence's understanding of how they should support the families of soldiers serving overseas:

These women were left at home, they were the ones minding the families, and they were the ones that had to keep it all together, when the soldiers came home, yes, they got this horrible treatment from their comrades and from the government and the Department of Defence across the board, but it was the wives and their children that had to deal with it after that, and in some cases are still dealing with it.<sup>319</sup>

The 1960s Defence Forces was unable to provide the adequate support infrastructure required to reach out to families. Wives and mothers undertook that role. In return they continued to be ignored by the Defence Forces:

It was the women, and that's what hurts me, that we were never included in anything, with regards [to] decisions towards what's happening ... it's one thing I find the Forces don't do.<sup>320</sup>

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<sup>317</sup> Grace Grouden, interview with IRG, 20 April 2021.

<sup>318</sup> Capt Noel Carey, interview with the IRG, 19 January 2021.

<sup>319</sup> Kathleen Lafferty, interview with IRG, 9 February 2021.

<sup>320</sup> Kathleen Lafferty, interview with IRG, 9 February 2021.

### **14 September: Evening**

Comdt Quinlan reported to Elisabethville that he was ‘quite secure in his present position but was still under fire’.<sup>321</sup>

During any lulls in the fighting, Comdt Quinlan worked his way around ‘A’ Company’s positions checking on his men, looking at range cards, and offering advice and support. Pte Frank McManus remembered Comdt Quinlan during the battle: ‘He never stopped, I have never in my life met an officer like him, he was fantastic, he was fantastic, and he was round the trenches and he was down, giving advice and asking you questions. He was great.’<sup>322</sup> Capt Noel Carey considered that it was Comdt Quinlan’s ‘influence alone which got us, brought us, you know, the morale had just slumped at that stage, and it was him and his drive that got us to kind of get up [and] keep it going.’<sup>323</sup> ‘He called us “his men” and we would have went to hell and back for Pat Quinlan’, was how Cpl John Gorman put his and his ‘A’ Company comrades’ strong loyalty to their commander.<sup>324</sup>

Also visiting the trenches was Chaplain Father Joseph Fagan whose continual presence throughout the battle was a great source of support and comfort to many. He was to Pte Noel Stanley, ‘one of the bravest men I know’. Pte Stanley remembered that the morning the attack started Fr Fagan walked out and amidst the fire gave all members of ‘A’ Company general absolution.<sup>325</sup> While many of the men were religious, not all had been at Mass on the morning of the first attack and not all sought out the services of the company chaplain or recalled his visits. Recalling Father Fagan, Cpl Seán Tiernan remembered his visits from trench to trench and that ‘I couldn’t see any fear in him, maybe he thought the Lord was saving him.’<sup>326</sup> Cpl Tiernan recalled being scared, but not wanting to show it. When Lt Tom Quinlan told him kindly ‘don’t be afraid because there is help on the way,’ Cpl Tiernan replied ‘I said “I am afraid of nothing”, “Good”, he [Quinlan] said, and at the same time, excuse my language, but I was shitting myself, but I couldn’t let him know that ... you kept a brave face out even though you were full of fear.’<sup>327</sup>

‘A’ Company’s cook, Cpl William ‘Bobby’ Allen was another favourite figure around the trenches, and his arrival was always anticipated and raised morale. Cpl Allen’s abilities to get hold of, adapt and stretch food supplies were well known throughout ‘A’ Company. At Jadotville, Cpl Allen’s supplies of fresh food were limited and dwindled quickly. During the battle, he fed men from powdered foodstuffs from ration packs and went from trench to trench with tea for the soldiers. ‘A’ Company personnel were always fed in some form or another by Cpl Allen. His ‘Jadotville Stew’, while perhaps not a favourite of many, was viewed as a life-saving creation of ever-dwindling rations. Cpl Allen’s tea and what the soldiers called ‘dog biscuits’, cream-cracker type biscuits made of flour, salt and water and based on Royal Navy ‘hard tack’, were all that was left for most in ‘A’ Company by 17 September. These were a standard item in military ration packs, and they still are in some countries today. As water supplies dwindled to nothing, and men began to

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<sup>321</sup> NAI, DFA, 305/384/31, report by Brendan Nolan, 19 September 1961.

<sup>322</sup> Pte Frank McManus, interview to IRG, 18 February 2021.

<sup>323</sup> Capt Noel Carey, interview with IRG, 21 January 2021.

<sup>324</sup> Cpl John Gorman, interview with IRG, 19 January 2021.

<sup>325</sup> Pte Noel Stanley, interview with IRG, 21 January 2021.

<sup>326</sup> Cpl Seán Tiernan, interview with IRG, 20 April 2021.

<sup>327</sup> Cpl Seán Tiernan, interview with IRG, 20 April 2021.

dehydrate and the skin in their mouths and lips dry and crack, it was impossible to eat the ‘dog biscuits’ as they needed liquid to make them edible.

By the afternoon of 14 September Gendarmerie forces had moved up quite close to the Irish positions. Cpl Seán Tiernan saw them attack and it was ‘very hard to tell because it was scrubland ... no, elephant grass, there could be ten, twenty, thirty, I don’t know.’<sup>328</sup> Lt Noel Carey saw that the Katangese had ‘infiltrated into the villas between the platoons, started sniping at Support and No 1 Platoons. With Capt Liam Donnelly directing, CS Jack Prendergast and Sgt John Monaghan, with a section of men, counterattacked the snipers and firing an 84mm antitank gun and small arms cleared the villa during this attack.’<sup>329</sup> One of the men in the section was Sgt Martin McCabe who ‘was involved in giving the orders to take that position out’ and ‘was to stand behind the Vickers, start off by shooting straight up in the air, and then eventually get up behind it and riddle the windows to keep their heads down and so he did that and then as soon as that was accomplished the order was given to the second lad to get up with the recoilless rifle and pop a shot in between the two windows.’<sup>330</sup>

From the location of No 3 Platoon Cpl Seán Foley could look southwards towards a small stream across scrubland. The stream was about 300 yards away and ‘we could hear them down at the stream ... and they used to mass there and if fire was directed at that area you’d hear them groaning anyway, so they must have been either resting after getting shot earlier or after getting shot freshly, but we never saw anybody carry them out.’<sup>331</sup>

In Elisabethville, British Consul Denzil Dunnett speculated that the increasingly isolated and worn down ‘A’ Company ‘might now suffer a worse tragedy at the hands of the Katangese and if this happened the UN would not hesitate to proceed to more extreme measures including the disarming of the Gendarmerie and the introduction of the ANC.’<sup>332</sup> Conor Cruise O’Brien had already explained to Tshombe and his Finance Minister Jean-Baptiste Kibwe through Dunnett, that there would be ‘serious consequences’ for the Katangese leadership if the attacks continued against ‘A’ Company.<sup>333</sup>

After discussing options, on the evening of 14 September, Sector B agreed a plan to send a helicopter loaded with water and ammunition to ‘A’ Company to enable it to hold out while a stronger Force Kane II was assembled. Comdt Quinlan was first told of this plan by HQ 35 Inf Bn at 1822hrs on 14 September and Katanga Command put plans together overnight.

On the evening of 14 September, Comdt Quinlan called his officers to a conference. They reported that morale remained high despite the Fouga Magister attack, that Sgt Walter Hegarty had received shrapnel wounds from an exploding mortar shell, that Pte John Manning had been shot in the right shoulder during a counterattack on the Gendarmerie led by Capt Donnelly, and that Pte Ready was shot in the leg (13 September). Pte Noel Stanley recalled being beside Pte Manning

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<sup>328</sup> Cpl Seán Tiernan, interview with IRG, 20 April 2021.

<sup>329</sup> Capt Noel Carey, submission to IRG, 21 January 2021.

<sup>330</sup> Declan McCabe, son of Sgt Martin McCabe, interview with IRG, 11 February 2021.

<sup>331</sup> Cpl Seán Foley, interview with IRG, 9 February 2021.

<sup>332</sup> TNA, FO 1100/1, rough notes by Dunnett of situation on 14 September 1961.

<sup>333</sup> UNA, S/840/2/5, teleprinter message, undated, but 14 September 1961. But O’Brien was bluffing; ONUC did not have the means to undertake this option, even if it was, as appears to have been the case, seriously considering it as a possibility.

when he was shot, and that CS Jack Prendergast ‘threw two grenades in on top of them [the Gendarmerie] and cleared them out.’<sup>334</sup> While Pte Manning’s wound was not as serious as Pte Ready’s, medic Pte John Dreelan remembered that these wounds were ‘unsettling’.<sup>335</sup>

Comdt Quinlan told his officers that HQ 35 Inf Bn continued to urge ‘A’ Company to hold out. The mayor of Jadotville had spoken to Comdt Quinlan by phone asking for a cease fire which was agreed to. However, a request to send an ambulance into ‘A’ Company’s area to retrieve casualties was rejected by Comdt Quinlan ‘as he suspected a trap’.<sup>336</sup> Comdt Quinlan had already been called upon by the Jadotville authorities to surrender and rumours were circulating that a mob from Jadotville might be sent to attack ‘A’ Company.<sup>337</sup> At 1700hrs, a car was stopped at an ‘A’ Company roadblock and two armed mercenaries in civilian attire, Peter Van Der Veegen and Paul Pechan, were arrested and taken prisoner.<sup>338</sup>

During the 14 and 15 September, the Gendarmerie attempted eight to ten separate attacks on ‘A’ Company positions and were repulsed by means of coordinated fires from the Armoured Cars, mortars, Vickers machine guns, Bren Guns and small arms fire.<sup>339</sup>

The situation in Jadotville was now a more pressing concern to ONUC HQ than that in Elisabethville. In the laconic words of the British ambassador to the United Nations, Sir Patrick Dean, the position facing ‘A’ Company ‘still seems difficult’.<sup>340</sup> In the early hours of 15 September, Col Maitra (COS Sector B) and Comdt Seán Barrett began to draw up a plan to send a combined Irish and Gurkha force ‘to pull the Coy out from Jadotville’.<sup>341</sup> The plan was to be assessed at a conference in Elisabethville later that day.

ONUC forces had been on the offensive and the defensive in Elisabethville since 0400 on 13 September. Operation Morthor had led to serious fighting in the city. It was, as OC 35 Inf Bn Lt Col Hugh McNamee wrote back to Ireland, ‘war in every sense’, he continued ‘even though the strain is heavy, our men are wonderful, and their courage is superb’. Lt Col McNamee recounted that Tpr Patrick Mullins, Cpl Michael Nolan and Tpr Edward Gaffney had been killed in action during the fighting.<sup>342</sup> Despite an extensive search, Tpr Mullins remains missing in action.

The events of Operation Morthor were, as Lt Col McNamee’s son Brig Gen Liam MacNamee put it:

very severe on those people involved, and in fact very severe on the whole battalion to be honest. They were thrown into a very complex military and political situation. My father found himself having to deal with, obviously, Conor Cruise O’Brien and the other key players in the UN, as well as speaking to the Force Commander in Leopoldville.<sup>343</sup>

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<sup>334</sup> Pte Noel Stanley, interview with IRG, 21 January 2021.

<sup>335</sup> Pte John Dreelan, interview with IRG, 25 February 2021.

<sup>336</sup> Submission by Capt Noel Carey to the IRG.

<sup>337</sup> MA, PRCN, 58, ‘A’ Company radio log.

<sup>338</sup> Submission by Capt Noel Carey to the IRG.

<sup>339</sup> MA, Unit History, 35 Inf Bn.

<sup>340</sup> TNA, FO 371/154885, (No. 1401) Dean to Foreign Office, 15 September 1961.

<sup>341</sup> UNA, S/822/4/4, ‘Aide Memoire Op Morthor’ undated.

<sup>342</sup> Lt Col Hugh McNamee to his wife Molly written during the fighting in Elisabethville, September 1961. Read to IRG by Brig Gen Liam MacNamee, 12 January 2021 and included in Brig Gen MacNamee’s submission to the IRG.

<sup>343</sup> Brig Gen Liam MacNamee, interview with IRG, 12 January 2021.

A ‘cool and calm individual’, Lt Col Hugh McNamee had to quickly learn who to depend on; individuals react differently to events and, as his son put it, ‘some stand up, others don’t ... he soon found out who he could depend on.’<sup>344</sup>

A consequence of Operation Morthor was the initial attack on ‘A’ Company’s position in Jadotville. However, some 600 kilometres to the north of Elisabethville, the impact of Operation Morthor was also felt on the Defence Forces unit, 1 Infantry Group at Kamina Airbase. On the afternoon of 14 September, a Gendarmerie company, led by two mercenaries, supported by armoured cars and mortars, launched an attack on the Lupula Barrier at Kamina Base 2. The attack was repulsed, and the situation was reported to be under control at 1750hrs. Further Gendarmerie attacks on 1 Infantry Group positions at Kamina were repulsed at 0930hrs and at 1800hrs on 15 September. An Irish platoon dislodged the Katangese at first light on 16 September.<sup>345</sup> In the succinct words of Capt Basil Greer:

Kamina was subjected to one main attack by a company group supported by armoured cars. This was met by a Swedish Company initially who knocked out the armoured cars and beat off the attack. They were reinforced by an Irish platoon with FNs and light automatics and mortars, and when the attack came on again the added firepower was devastating. The mortars hit their ammunition truck and their medium machine gun and they ran for it. Minor infiltration occurred in other parts of the base but they were easily driven off. The 1 Inf Gp was reinforced within 24 hours by two companies of Swedes and a troop of Malay ferrets, [Ferret scout car, a British manufactured armoured fighting vehicle] and followed next day by part of the Jhat battalion Indian.<sup>346</sup>

One might argue that Kamina was a more vital asset to ONUC and the UN than Jadotville. ONUC HQ could not afford to lose the international airport and rail links at Kamina for strategic and logistical reasons, it could afford to lose Jadotville.<sup>347</sup>

### ***15 September 1961***

With fighting at Elisabethville, Kamina, and Jadotville, and under pressure from the American, British, French, Russian and Belgian governments, Dag Hammarskjöld decided on 15 September to remain in Congo to attempt to negotiate a settlement with Tshombe.

Despite the ‘lack of SITREPs from J’ville’<sup>348</sup> Comdt Quinlan remained in touch with Elisabethville, though communications were degraded in hours of darkness on account of atmospherics. He recommended another attempt at Lufira Bridge and sought urgent reinforcements from HQ 35 Inf Bn. At 0622hrs on 15 September, he informed Lt Col McNamee that his ‘position [was] desperate [...] send reinforcements immediately and 60mm mortar smoke’. By 0705hrs, Comdt Quinlan was bordering on despair: ‘in the name of God send reinforcements now. Promises of such are NOT sufficient’.<sup>349</sup> At 0745hrs, in a ‘voice conversation’, Comdt Quinlan was ordered by

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<sup>344</sup> Brig Gen Liam MacNamee, interview with IRG, 12 January 2021.

<sup>345</sup> MA, Unit History, 1 Inf Gp.

<sup>346</sup> MA, PRCN, 16/1/83, Greer to Collins-Powell, undated, but September 1961.

<sup>347</sup> A point made to the IRG by Comdt James McCafferty DSM (Retd), 26 January 2021.

<sup>348</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 1INFGP, 2/23, No. 597, 15 September 1961.

<sup>349</sup> MA, ACC, 2016/24, ‘A’ Company radio log, 0715hrs, 15 September 1961.

Lt Col McNamee 'NOT to surrender unless instructed from here'; 'A' Company said they would hold out.<sup>350</sup> Whereas the order not to surrender is recorded in the 35 Inf Bn HQ Company log, the order is not recorded in the 'A' Company version of the radio log.

Sector B Commander Col Jonas Waern knew that there were two DC3s at Elisabethville airport 'ready for air dropping or any other mission' and considered using them for a supply drop to Jadotville.<sup>351</sup> His plan for the relief of Jadotville took shape through 15 September. He sought permission from Brig Raja to resupply 'A' Company by aircraft or helicopter, and simultaneously undertake a road relief from Elisabethville. Col Waern had been responsible for the initial withdrawal of the stronger Force Mide from Jadotville in early September which led to its replacement by 'A' Company. He had a vested personal interest in ensuring 'A' Company returned safely from Jadotville.

Comdt Quinlan recorded in his own later notes that:

Friday morning opened similar to Thursday with what appeared then as an effort by the enemy to organise groups to get into assault positions, but again they were deterred by very heavy and accurate LA fire. Firing continued all day and in the evening a number of enemy of about two Platoons strength were seen in the Garage area (about 400 yards to our front).<sup>352</sup>

Another attack on 'A' Company's positions by the Fouga Magister came at 0730hrs on 15 September. Lt Col McNamee made contact with Comdt Quinlan immediately after this attack and reported to Lt Gen MacEoin: 'I spoke to Quinlan 0740. He was bombed and strafed this AM. Few casualties. He captured 2 Belgian Officers last night. No reinforcements yet. Plans to co-ordinate breakout in hand.'<sup>353</sup> Comdt Quinlan's notes record the response 'A' Company gave the Fouga Magister:

We had prepared a reception for the jet in the form of a barrage of small arms fire and MMG fire from the Armoured Cars. When the jet came in low it ran into our "wall of fire" which scored hits on the Jet. From then on, the Jet attacked at high altitude which made it somewhat ineffective.<sup>354</sup>

Brig Gen Paul Fry, commenting on this response concluded that:

The Irish troops were not formally trained in anti-aircraft gunnery theory or techniques which were to be key in Jadotville. That they adapted their infantry training and knowledge

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<sup>350</sup> MA, box, 'Jadotville Medal Queries', 35 Inf Bn radio log, 0745hrs, 15 September 1961.

<sup>351</sup> UNA, S/822/4/2, 'RO' to HQ Katanga Command, 0800, 15 September 1961.

<sup>352</sup> Submission by Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd) to IRG, 21 December, 2020, 'The Battle of Jadotville – Congo, 1961', p. 34.

<sup>353</sup> UNA, S/840/3/4, Lt Col McNamee to Lt Gen MacEoin, 0741, 15 September 1961. 'A' Company was going to be taken out of Jadotville, whether Lt Gen MacEoin had formally sanctioned the move or not. As explained above, on 13 September, the Force Commander had been very much opposed to withdrawing 'A' Company.

<sup>354</sup> Submission by Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd) to IRG, 21 December, 2020, 'The Battle of Jadotville – Congo, 1961', p. 34.



and scored a hit on a fast-moving agile attacking jet is a remarkable feat of arms on their part.<sup>355</sup>

He concluded:

That the troops of 'A' Company remained in their prepared positions throughout these attacks over four days and returned fire on all occasions is a testament to their determination and courage. None of them had ever seen an air attack let alone been subjected to a sustained series of attacks from the air by a jet aircraft. Great credit is due to all personnel for standing their ground and keeping their concentration on their shooting while at the same time repelling ground attacks by superior forces.

On the morning of 15 September, Lt Gen MacEoin changed his view and sent an urgent message to Brig Raja and Lt Col McNamee that 'must be got to Quinlan':

From General MacEoin for Quinlan. We all here admire and commend you and your men on your gallant stand. The whole UN force, our own people and in fact the world are watching the outcome of your brave efforts. Inform all under your command that help is near and that in the meantime you have already earned for yourselves the name of heroes.<sup>356</sup>

An Associated Press report again announced that 'Radio Free Katanga' was broadcasting that 'A' Company had surrendered after suffering 57 dead. The survivors, the station said, would be held as hostages. Frank Aiken was aware of Comdt Quinlan's position, having received reports from Lt Gen MacEoin. Lt Gen MacEoin recorded in his diary "'57 Killed in Jadotville'"<sup>357</sup> ONUC Elisabethville informed Lt Gen MacEoin that 'We have no news of Jadotville. We are trying very hard to get in touch with them.'<sup>358</sup>

In a response to a question from HQ 35 Inf Bn at 1313hrs if the company could break out after last light and that it will be met at the Lufira Bridge, 'A' Company gave reasons why this could not be achieved including that there were significant Gendarmerie forces between Jadotville and Lufira Bridge.<sup>359</sup>

Throughout the afternoon of 15 September, communications were maintained with 'A' Company, and they advised HQ 35 Inf Bn at 1550hrs that five personnel were injured.

The afternoon of 15 September saw the Gendarmerie open up with small arms and machine gun fire on 'A' Company and the Fouga Magister returned to bomb and strafe 'A' Company positions. Katanga Command reported to Leopoldville that 'A' Company 'do not have much ammunition and food. Arrangements have been made to drop ammunition and supplies by a DC3.'<sup>360</sup>

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<sup>355</sup> Brig Gen Paul Fry (Retd), 'An analysis of the weapons effects of air attacks by CM70 aircraft of Katangan Air Force against Irish troops at Jadotville, 13-17 September 1961', p. 11-12.

<sup>356</sup> UNA, S/840/2/7, Lt Gen MacEoin to Brig Raja and Lt Col MacNamee, no time noted, 15 September 1961.

<sup>357</sup> MA, PRCN, 1/2/17, Lt Gen MacEoin Diary, entry for 15 September 1961.

<sup>358</sup> UNA, S/840/3/4, teletype sitrep for Elisabethville, 1600B, 15 September 1961.

<sup>359</sup> MA, box, 'Jadotville Medals Queries', 35 Inf Bn Radio Log.

<sup>360</sup> UNA, S/840/2/5, (O-2339) HQ Katanga Command to ONUC HQ Leopoldville, 1940Z, 15 September 1961.

While the position in Elisabethville remained quiet but unstable, fighting continued at Kamina. The expected Malayan forces with Ferret scout cars arrived on the morning of 15 September and the Katangese Fouga Magister jet continued to attack ONUC's Sector C forces at the base in the same manner as it had done in Jadotville. At Kamina, the 1 Infantry Group put in place similar perimeter defence tactics as at Jadotville, this large base obliged Lt Col John O'Donovan to deploy his personnel in dispersed, mutually supporting, defence positions. Lt Gen MacEoin directed ONUC forces at Kamina to 'take aggressive action' against Gendarmerie attacking with mortars and to 'report situation every two hours'.<sup>361</sup> HQ ONUC in Leopoldville hoped to send reinforcements to Kamina to secure the base.<sup>362</sup> On 15 September, the balance of the Swedish Company and a company of Indian Jats arrived at Kamina, increasing the total ONUC forces to two Irish Companies, one Swedish Company and one Indian Company. Attacks by the Fouga Magister continued against ONUC troops dug in at Kamina until 21 September.

Dr Conor Cruise O'Brien, British Consul Denzil Dunnett and Katangese Finance Minister Jean-Baptiste Kibwe remained in discussions in Elisabethville, trying to find a solution to the situation in Jadotville. Minister Kibwe was 'to try calling off Jadotville aggression' and went to find Tshombe with this in mind.<sup>363</sup> 'Pray that they will succeed' wrote Lt Col Hugh McNamee.<sup>364</sup> Some hours later, Leopoldville asked Katanga Command 'What is present situation in Jadotville?'<sup>365</sup> The Defence Forces ONUC Liaison Officer in Leopoldville Lt Col Ferdia Lee also sent an 'Urgent Priority Message' to Elisabethville at 1800hrs, for news about casualties in Jadotville. Lt Col Lee initially replied to Dublin: 'Still no report. Will inform you immediately. Comms are still very irregular. Likewise, Kamina nothing further'.<sup>366</sup> Then at 2240hrs, he told Defence Force Headquarters in Dublin that 'Jadotville [was] still holding out'.<sup>367</sup>

On the evening of 15 September, Comdt Quinlan called a conference at 'A' Company HQ. A further attempt at relieving 'A' Company was to be made. Capt Noel Carey recorded that 'water however was now a problem and we were trying desperately to conserve what we had. Food was also scarce. All platoon commanders reported that morale was still high but that fatigue was now a problem'.<sup>368</sup>

During the night of 15 September and the morning of 16 September, 'A' Company observed large Gendarmerie convoys moving towards Lufira Bridge, and engaged the convoys with mortar and Vickers machine guns mounted on the armoured cars.<sup>369</sup>

The plan to pull 'A' Company out of Jadotville with a combined Irish and Gurkha force received approval at 0020hrs on 16 September.<sup>370</sup> They would advance by road from Elisabethville to

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<sup>361</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 1INFGP, 2/23, UN Leopoldville to Cdr FCSA, 1230hrs, 15 September 1961.

<sup>362</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 1INFGP, 2/23, Leopoldville to Kamina, 1550hrs, 15 September 1961.

<sup>363</sup> MA, ACC, 2016/24, 'A' Company radio log.

<sup>364</sup> Lt Col Hugh McNamee to his wife written during the fighting in Elisabethville, September 1961. Read to IRG by Brig Gen Liam McNamee, 12 January 2021.

<sup>365</sup> UNA, S/822/4/3, (OPS 1484) ONUC LEO to HQ Katanga Command, 1704Z, 15 September 1961.

<sup>366</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 35INFBN, 3/2.

<sup>367</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 35INFBN, 7/2, Lt Col Lee to Director, Plans and Operations, Dublin (No. 604), 2240 15 September 1961.

<sup>368</sup> Capt Noel Carey, submission to IRG, January 2021.

<sup>369</sup> MA, Unit History, 35 Inf Bn.

<sup>370</sup> Comdt Pearse Wheatley felt that 'Force Kane II' was delayed leaving Elisabethville 'because of the upset arising from' the ambushing at Radio College the night before of a patrol led by Comdt Pat Cahalane MA, PRCN, 73/1/7, Congo Journal, June-December 1961, Book I, 15 September 1961.

Lufira Bridge. At Lufira Bridge they would attack the defending Gendarmerie company-strength force by a flanking movement, remove the barriers on the Bridge and advance to Jadotville to assist the breakout of 'A' Company. Col Waern explained that the Gendarmerie were

capable of pitting more troops against Company in Jadotville than against all the forces in Elisabethville. Resupply of Company by means available is not guaranteed. If they are not resupplied or relieved, they may be wiped out. This risk must be considered against possible losses in Elisabethville with reduced strength. Possible reinforcements to Elisabethville could offset depletion in strength. *Success of this operation would be a great boost to UN operations. Failure to relieve this company would be a crippling blow to UN.* Reinforcements, more ammunition supplies transport armoured cars from outside Sector B are a must if we are to succeed.<sup>371</sup>

The 'Commander stressed need for this column to be strong and self-sufficient' and ultimately Col Waern's plans fell through on these grounds as there was not enough transport available.<sup>372</sup> The simple truth was, as Cruise O'Brien knew and told Denzil Dunnett, leading British Council in Elisabethville, 'It is not clear how UN reinforcements would get here [Jadotville].'<sup>373</sup> Yet at the same time Cruise O'Brien told Lt Col McNamee 'to tell his Company to hold and not capitulate.'<sup>374</sup>

### **16 September 1961**

Lt Gen MacEoin's message of 15 September was received in Jadotville at 0635hrs on 16 September. 'A' Company immediately responded at 0645hrs 'Many thanks to Force Commander and in Irish: We will stand to the last man but send reinforcements now and strong. Send water'.<sup>375</sup> The second sentence in the message telegram has been variously recorded as 'fight to last man'<sup>376</sup> and 'hold till last man', but the point was clearly made.<sup>377</sup>

Looking back, Pte John Dreelan, a medic with 'A' Company recalled that Comdt Quinlan's presence and actions had a huge positive impact on his men and that as a result he

didn't see anyone frightened, because they had this instilled into them, that, and they hadn't seen action with him before, but I don't know what he was doing, but the thing was that he appeared invincible, he's going to get us out of here and that's it, and we'll all be saved.<sup>378</sup>

Col Joseph P. Emphy, OC Western Command passed a message to Comdt Quinlan that he was 'Proud of your gallant stand. You are constantly in our prayers'.<sup>379</sup> At 0900hrs on the morning of 16 September, Dublin received a telex from Leopoldville that there were 20 dead in Jadotville and

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<sup>371</sup> Col Waern to Brig Raja, 15 September 1961, quoted in Rose Doyle with Leo Quinlan, *Heroes of Jadotville. The soldier's story* (Dublin, 2006), p. 93.

<sup>372</sup> UNA, S/822/4/4, 'Aide Memoire Op Morthor', undated.

<sup>373</sup> TNA, FO 1100/1, telegram to Leopoldville (No. 31216), 16 September 1961.

<sup>374</sup> MA, Unit History, 35th Bn, appendix a, p. 16. Note of 2345, 15 September 1961.

<sup>375</sup> MA, box, 'Jadotville Medals Queries', 35 Inf Bn radio log. See also UNA, S/822/4/3, 35 Inf Bn to MacEoin, 0900B, 16 September 1961.

<sup>376</sup> UNA, S/822/4/4, 'Aide Memoire Op Morthor' undated.

<sup>377</sup> UNA, S/840/3/4, (Secret I-1034), HQ Katanga Command to ONUC HQ Leopoldville, sitrep 151600B to 160800B, 16 September 1961.

<sup>378</sup> Pte John Dreelan, interview with IRG, 25 February 2021.

<sup>379</sup> UNA, S/840/2/7, (FC 540) Lt Gen MacEoin to Lt Col McNamee, 16 September 1961.

5 wounded. Reinforcements were 'being parachuted in today [...] Food and ammunition dropped by helicopter yesterday [...] Company strongly holding out.'<sup>380</sup>

At almost the same time, at 0927hrs, the promised helicopter-load of water and ammunition arrived at 'A' Company's position at Jadotville, and white markers were laid to show the landing zone. The helicopter pilot was Lt Bjhrne (Norway) and the co-pilot was Warrant Officer Eric Thors (Sweden). There were heavy exchanges of fire at 'A' Company's position for over two hours after the helicopter arrived. 'A' Company also came under heavy attack by Gendarmerie 'endeavouring to pass through' 'A' Company lines to Lufira Bridge to meet Force Kane II. Force Kane II's departure from Elisabethville had been leaked and broadcast on the BBC World Service.<sup>381</sup> There were continuous exchanges of fire throughout 16 September, with A' Company responding from their dwindling supply of ammunition. Pte Michael Tighe described how

I went up and down the sights of the Bren and squeezing the trigger and hoping that they disappeared. And like they didn't make open targets of themselves, they were well led and they were well trained. People have the idea that we were fighting people with bows and arrows: no way.<sup>382</sup>

Force Kane II departed Elisabethville at 0650hrs on 16 September. Comprising one Irish company and one Gurkha company, carried in local single-decker buses, along with 81mm mortars, engineers and equipment, and protected by four Irish armoured cars, they began their advance to Lufira Bridge. 'Another suicidal trip', noted Lt Jim Condon.<sup>383</sup> The Irish contingent was 'B' Company, 35 Inf Bn, and the Indian contingent 'B' Company of the 3/1 Gurkha Rifles, under the command of Major Mangla. Progress was very slow and at 0745hrs only six kilometres outside Elisabethville, the convoy was attacked by the Katangese Fouga Magister jet. Force Kane II arrived south of Lufira Bridge at 1000hrs, having been attacked by the jet 15 miles and 7 miles from the bridge.

Radio traffic between 'A' Company and Force Kane II shows just how difficult the position was for Force Kane II, and for 'A' Company in Jadotville. Comdt Kane asked Comdt Quinlan 'can you break out?' Comdt Quinlan replied 'No, we have no transport'. Comdt Kane responded, 'can you break out on foot we will meet you at the Bridge', to which Comdt Quinlan replied 'Bridge about 20 miles, men exhausted, we do not know force between here and Bridge, unable to take all ammo and supplies, this would be suicide. Only hope remain here, you reach us.' Comdt Quinlan emphasised to Comdt Kane that his 'force must get through'.<sup>384</sup>

Because of the attack by Force Kane I the area had been heavily reinforced by well dug-in Gendarmerie. Force Kane II laid down 81mm mortar and machine gun fire onto Katangese positions on the high ground behind the bridge, and a force of Gurkhas tried to outflank the Katangese by crossing the river downstream from Lufira Bridge by the

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<sup>380</sup> NAI, DFA, 305/384/31/I, (239) Dublin to PMUN, 1230, 16 September 1961.

<sup>381</sup> UNA, S/822/4/3, (13/B/59), RO to HQ Katanga Command, 1500, 16 September 1961.

<sup>382</sup> Pte Michael Tighe, interview with IRG, 19 February 2021.

<sup>383</sup> MA, PC 346, Lt Jim Condon, diary entry, 15 September 1961.

<sup>384</sup> MA, ACC, 2016/24, 'A' Coy radio log.

nearby railway bridge. The Katangese response was to blow up the railway bridge. Force Kane II was in trouble.

At Jadotville, Comdt Quinlan was worried that he could not hear firing from Lufira Bridge and asked Elisabethville to clarify the situation. Elisabethville responded ‘the reinforcements were hit from the air. They are heading in your direction now. They are not across the bridge yet.’<sup>385</sup> With the possibility of a ceasefire in the air in Jadotville, Comdt Quinlan again asked Elisabethville had Force Kane II managed to break through. They had not; after heavy fighting Force Kane II was forced to withdraw. While an unconfirmed report spoke of 100 to 150 Gendarmerie killed at the Lufira Bridge, it is difficult to envisage how this would have been achieved given the defensive posture of the Gendarmerie. The Gurkhas, who had expressed displeasure with the way Force Kane II was being led, suffered five killed in action and twelve wounded in action, the Irish four wounded in action.<sup>386</sup>

ONUC Katanga Command sent a sober message to Leopoldville: ‘we have lost the battle of the bridge roadblock on way to Jadotville after very heavy fighting. Five UN personnel dead. We have issued orders for the withdrawal of reinforcement companies.’<sup>387</sup> The Katangese had sought a ceasefire with ‘A’ Company in Jadotville, and with negotiations underway, further offensive operations at Lufira Bridge were considered counterproductive. The Katangese strategy had worked. Comdt Quinlan was at this stage only told that Force Kane II was instructed to ‘consolidate present position’.<sup>388</sup> He did not know that it was withdrawing back to Elisabethville. Lt Gen MacEoin, in a teletype conversation with Elisabethville, unemotionally said he was ‘very sorry to hear the attack failed. We will be glad to get anything ... any news of Jadotville.’ Elisabethville could only respond ‘thank you very much. We have nothing for you at present.’<sup>389</sup>

At 1905hrs, Force Kane II was ordered to return to Elisabethville by HQ 35 Inf Bn and began the sixty-mile return trip to Elisabethville.<sup>390</sup> The Government Information Bureau in Dublin announced that the Department of Defence were in direct communication with ONUC Leopoldville, and that ‘A’ Company was holding out and ‘putting up [an] excellent fight. Elisabethville has been in touch by radio recently; supplies of ammunition and food got in by helicopter this morning; a further relieving force has been sent. The relieving column which was held up yesterday still trying to fight a crossing at the broken bridge near Jadotville.’<sup>391</sup> Dublin did not yet know that Force Kane II had failed in its task.

The high-level players in Katanga were now taking significant decisions. On 16 September, Cruise O’Brien offered to meet Tshombe to arrange a Katanga-wide ceasefire. Dag Hammarskjöld overruled him and decided that he himself must meet Tshombe somewhere outside Congo to arrange a ceasefire. Three days into the fighting in Katanga’s capital, Force Commander Lt Gen MacEoin left for Elisabethville. He flew in the aircraft that would ultimately carry

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<sup>385</sup> Lt Col McNamee to Comdt Quinlan, quoted in Rose Doyle with Leo Quinlan, *Heroes of Jadotville. The soldier's story* (Dublin, 2006), p. 119.

<sup>386</sup> Brig Gen James Farrell (Retd), submission to IRG, 21 January 2021.

<sup>387</sup> UNA, S/840/2/5, (O-1601) HQ Katanga Command, Elisabethville to ONUC HQ, Leopoldville, 1605Z, 16 September 1961. <sup>388</sup> Lt Col McNamee to Comdt Quinlan, quoted in Rose Doyle with Leo Quinlan, *Heroes of Jadotville. The soldier's story* (Dublin, 2006), p. 121, 1737, 16 September 1961.

<sup>389</sup> UNA, S/840/2/5, undated fragment of teleprinter message.

<sup>390</sup> MA, box, ‘Jadotville Medals Queries’, 35 Inf Bn Radio Log.

<sup>391</sup> NAI, DT/3/S16137I/61, GIB Statement, 6.30pm, 16 September 1961.

Hammar skjöld on his fatal flight to Ndola to attempt to meet Tshombe. In Dublin, Minister for External Affairs Frank Aiken TD left for Brussels, and onwards to Leopoldville, where he would arrive on 17 September with plans to meet Dag Hammar skjöld. Frank Aiken then planned to travel onwards to Elisabethville, and even to Jadotville.

At 1930hrs Comdt Quinlan radioed Elisabethville that during the afternoon, accompanied by Fr Joe Fagan and Lt Lars Fröberg (Swedish Liaison Officer / Interpreter), he had negotiated a ceasefire with the mayor of Jadotville after the mayor had requested a ceasefire. This would enable the resupply of 'A' Company with food and water. He added 'we have NOT, repeat NOT surrendered.'<sup>392</sup> The terms of the ceasefire were that:

1. All firing was to cease.
2. A cordon was to be set up in a "no man's land" and the area was to be patrolled by Katangan police and Irish troops.
3. The Fouga was to be grounded.
4. All Katangan troops to return to barracks.
5. Water and power were to be restored to 'A' Company.
6. Casualties were to be evacuated.<sup>393</sup>

Lt Col McNamee replied 'Comhghairdeas Pat. Tá dóchas mor againn as Aiken. Tá sé as ar a bealach. Tá Johnny tugaithe slán. [Congratulations Pat. We place great trust in Aiken. He is on his way. Johnny is safe].<sup>394</sup> Speaking in Irish to Cruise O'Brien, Lt Col McNamee said that he had received 'extraordinary and very good news from Jadotville'.<sup>395</sup> The Gendarmerie had thrown out their mercenary commanders, and were fraternising with 'A' Company. Comdt Quinlan and the Jadotville Chief of Police were on a joint tour of the town to proclaim the new position.

A message from 'A' Company to HQ 35 Inf Bn at 2255hrs, reported that there was 'ferocious fighting today', '150 in total reported dead.' Up to 2000 in all.' This is not confirmed.<sup>396</sup>

Conor Cruise O'Brien told Lt Gen MacEoin at 2315hrs that night that 'it is the best possible news that could happen in Katanga'.<sup>397</sup> In Capt Noel Carey's words:

For the first time in four days, we could safely leave our trenches and greet each other, we could tell of our experiences and take photographs. Our lads actually played football with the Katangan police on the roadway beside Purfina garage.<sup>398</sup>

And for Pte Frank McManus, hearing of the ceasefire, 'I can tell you, I'm not a great man for praying, but I got down on my knees for that one.'<sup>399</sup>

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<sup>392</sup> Comdt Quinlan to Lt Col McNamee, 1930, 16 September 1961, quoted in Rose Doyle with Leo Quinlan, *Heroes of Jadotville. The soldier's story* (Dublin, 2006), p. 129.

<sup>393</sup> Capt Noel Carey, submission to IRG, January 2021.

<sup>394</sup> MA, ACC, 2016/24, 'A' Company radio log.

<sup>395</sup> UNA, S/840/2/5, undated fragment of teleprinter message.

<sup>396</sup> MA, box, 'Jadotville Medals Queries', 35 Inf Bn Radio Log.

<sup>397</sup> UNA, S/840/2/5, undated fragment of teleprinter message.

<sup>398</sup> Capt Noel Carey, submission to IRG, January 2021.

<sup>399</sup> Pte Frank McManus, interview with IRG, 18 February 2021.

After the casualties inflicted on them by 'A' Company, the Gendarmerie morale appeared to be breaking down. Comdt Quinlan thought that 'the white officers had to shoot some of their own troops to get them to continue the attack in some areas.'<sup>400</sup> Having successfully negotiated a ceasefire, Comdt Quinlan knew that if the Katangese in Jadotville realised that Force Kane II had withdrawn and that Lufira Bridge was secure in Katangese hands, the local ceasefire arrangement in Jadotville would crumble. The failure of Force Kane II to cross Lufira Bridge effectively turned the tables on 'A' Company. In another section of his report to Chief of Staff Maj Gen Seán Collins-Powell, Capt Basil Greer explained that:

The second attempt to relieve Jadotville by Irish and Gurkha companies found the enemy in new positions about 1000 yards in front of the bridge where they were astride the road and along the railway embankment from which they could pour flanking fire. The Irish attacked frontally while the Gurkhas went into the Bush to outflank. They were heavily outnumbered and subjected to constant air attack. On a straight road with only buses as transport they were sitting ducks and it was decided to withdraw. On the withdrawal, they were ambushed and had to fight their way through, suffering severe casualties. This fight had the effect of impressing the Jadotville attackers into looking for a truce, and on the following day when they realized the attack on the bridge was not going on. They changed their minds with the resultant capture.<sup>401</sup>

Lt Jim Condon, 'B' Company 35 Inf Bn, who was on Force Kane II wrote a chilling account of the ambushing of Force Kane II:

All gay and laughs – ignorance is bliss. This was the second run for 4, 5 and 6 plns and sp pln, the others were aware of what was in store for them – bombed at 0930, 1100, 1230, 1420, 1620, (4 Gurkhas killed, a Crossroads, bus riddled) left X roads at 1700 for home. No org in convoy, vehicles passing each other out. No control – jet due again at 1800 – all on look out – at 1815hrs convoy stopped pulled into side of road – firing started at head of convoy – sprayed ambush area (near Seven Sources) – silence - waiting - darkness dropped – silence.<sup>402</sup>

Lt Condon was on one of the buses returning to Elisabethville standing beside the driver:

Drv Pte Brown shaky – I was beside him – started going forward and saw the two red lights they were the 1st car in convoy, shot up and stuck in middle of road. I pushed the drv to put the boot down as I positioned the men in the bus for fighting pos, firing opened up, driver went down – bus swayed and slowed – panic – I saw the drv down and steering wheel rolling – I put my hand on the wheel straightened the bus, other hand on accelerator, guided her through – drv in my way – thank God she kept going – drv resumed seat – on to Jado Junct – no casualties – arrived at Jado Junct explosion under bus – stopped – got out – chaos on right – 2 trucks crashed into each other – bombs and energas and dets scatted all over road – 4x casualties in Mick Shannon's bus – drv of bus jammed in cabin

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<sup>400</sup> Submission by Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd) to IRG, 21 December. 2020, 'The Battle of Jadotville – Congo, 1961', p. 38.

<sup>401</sup> MA, PRCN, 16/1/83, Greer to Collins-Powell, undated, but September 1961.

<sup>402</sup> MA, PC 346, diary entry 16 September 1961.

– requested Indian officer to take convoy on to airport and Sabena – arrived Sabena air of peace and security water and tea and rest T.G.

Lt Condon was enraged with how Force Kane II was organized and led. His diary contains further explicit criticism of the operation:

Comdt Kane IC Operation and Comdt Alo McMahon both showed complete disregard for the air superiority – failed to hold command over the Force – they treated it like a day out at home in Ireland with troops – all principles of military teaching thrown out the window – words fail me – men’s lives expendable or were not considered?

He described how he and his fellow officers were unhappy about the way they were being treated by Comdt Kane and his colleagues in Operations section

cribbed amongst ourselves – sound logical argument on the lack of orders, the suicidal missions, penny packets, patrols, no ops map etc. ... Junior officers are called impertinent if they seek clear orders from the Ops Comdt Kane and Capt Stewart. Patrols are got up and sent out without any proper briefing.

Brig Gen James Farrell succinctly called Force Kane II ‘a mess’.<sup>403</sup> Pte Tom Gunn recalled the prevalent view within ‘A’ Company, that Force Kane II was ‘a half-hearted effort’.<sup>404</sup> In a radio message to Elisabethville at 2100hrs, Comdt Quinlan gave no indication that he knew that Force Kane II had left Lufira Bridge. Only then did he receive the news from Elisabethville that ‘the greater part of the force is back’.<sup>405</sup> In Jadotville, Comdt Quinlan told his officers that Force Kane II had withdrawn and was not at Lufira Bridge observing the ceasefire. They were shocked and immediately increased their vigilance. As Capt Noel Carey recalled, ‘the outlook did not look good’.<sup>406</sup> He expanded this point:

Our reaction was of shock and disbelief that we were left totally deserted for the second time. Battalion headquarters sent a message to Comdt Quinlan to hold on as jets would arrive in Elisabethville soon (in fact it took them two months to arrive). We could not tell our men that night as they were fully sure that we had won the battle. All spent a sleepless night. Tom Quinlan and myself realized our position was precarious and the advantage had swung to the Katangan forces, estimated to be nearly 2,000 troops. Our position was now hazardous to say the least.

Dag Hammarskjöld believed that the ceasefire would hold in Jadotville. One of his hopes in going to negotiate with Tshombe directly concerned ‘A’ Company. Historian Maurin Picard explained that:

Informé du piège dans lequel est tombée une compagnie de Casques bleus irlandais à Jadotville ... il va bientôt se sentir obligé d’aller négocier ce cessez-feu lui-même et sauver

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<sup>403</sup> Brig Gen James Farrell (Retd), interview with IRG, 21 January 2021.

<sup>404</sup> Pte Tom Gunn, interview with IRG, 28 January 2021.

<sup>405</sup> Lt Col McNamee to Comdt Quinlan, undated, quoted in Rose Doyle with Leo Quinlan, *Heroes of Jadotville. The soldier's story* (Dublin, 2006), p. 129.

<sup>406</sup> Quoted in Rose Doyle with Leo Quinlan, *Heroes of Jadotville. The soldier's story* (Dublin, 2006), p. 130.



la vie des 156 infortunés irlandais [Informed of the trap into which a company of Irish peacekeepers at Jadotville had fallen ... he [Dag Hammarskjöld] will soon feel he has to negotiate the ceasefire himself and save the lives of these 156 unfortunate Irish.]<sup>407</sup>

### **17 September 1961**

#### *Ceasefire Undermined*

On the morning of 17 September Comdt Quinlan saw that, contrary to the previous day's ceasefire terms, Gendarmerie were again surrounding his position. He had been looking for a formal written ceasefire agreement and feared that if he was attacked again there would be a massacre of his men. The verbally agreed ceasefire of 16 September in Jadotville was undermined with the withdrawal by Force Kane II from the Lufira Bridge and its return to Elisabethville. 'A' Company was now totally isolated.

'A' Company's position took a turn for the worse early on 17 September. The Katangese recovered momentum and resolve, as additional Gendarmerie troops – perhaps troops that had been at the Lufira Bridge defending it against Force Kane II, were now released from that task and were seen to be moving into position around 'A' Company's ready to attack.<sup>408</sup> The Gendarmerie commander in Jadotville, Henri Maurice Lasimone, later told Conor Cruise O'Brien that he was in Jadotville under the command of Roger Falques, who was in Elisabethville, and that Falques rushed fresh troops to Jadotville to secure victory on 17 September.<sup>409</sup>

Cruise O'Brien's understanding was that the troops who had sought a ceasefire and who had fraternised with 'A' Company on 16 September had been shot as mutineers, and their mercenary commanders rushed in fresh troops to Jadotville to restore the pressure on 'A' Company.

The ceasefire in Jadotville collapsed through 17 September; some suspected it had been a deception all along.

#### *Deterioration of Logistical Assets*

According to the 35 Inf Bn's radio log, Comdt Quinlan advised HQ 35 Inf Bn at 0805hrs that if the water was not turned on shortly 'I will have to give in within 24 hours.' He said that the greatest problem 'at present is water'.<sup>410</sup> A conversation recorded in 'A' Company's radio log as taking place at 0815hrs with the battalion's Operation Officer Comdt Mick Heffernan makes no mention of 'giving up in 24 hours', but refers to protests to the Mayor, no water despite ceasefire promise and helicopters.<sup>411</sup> Advising that he was short of money, at 0856hrs Comdt Quinlan requested a transfer to his account in Jadotville and advised that he will send the 'helicopter back for 'cigs etc when things quieten down here'.<sup>412</sup> In a voice conversation at 0910hrs, Capt Stewart informed 'A' Company that three UN jets would be in Elisabethville later on 17 September. Capt Stewart requested 'A' Company to advise the Mayor of Jadotville and Gendarmerie commanders in the town that the Katangese jet would be shot down.<sup>413</sup>

<sup>407</sup> Maurin Picard, *Il sont tué Monsieur H.* (Paris, 2019), p. 308.

<sup>408</sup> Submission by Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd) to the IRG, 21 December. 2020, 'The Battle of Jadotville – Congo, 1961', p. 41.

<sup>409</sup> TNA, FO 371/167304, Dunnett report on *To Katanga and Back* para. 38, 7 December 1962.

<sup>410</sup> MA, PC 58, 35 Inf Bn radio log, entry for 0805, 17 September 1961.

<sup>411</sup> MA, ACC, 2016/24, A Company radio log, entry for 0815, 17 September 1961.

<sup>412</sup> MA, PC 58, 35 Inf Bn radio log, entry for 0856, 17 September 1961.

<sup>413</sup> MA, ACC, 2016/24, A Company radio log, entry for 0910, 17 September 1961.

Then, at 1000, in Capt Noel Carey's words, Comdt Quinlan

decided to go into Jadotville with our Swedish interpreter Lt Lars Fröberg<sup>414</sup> to see if he could get the water restored. On entering the town, he went into a local bar which was crowded with mercenaries. When they saw him, the shout went up, "Major irlandais", and all present stood up and saluted him. They showed him their wounds and eventually he returned with some crates of minerals. We had reduced the numbers standing to in the trenches but it was noticeable that Katanga troops were encroaching into no man's land and no water had been restored. The Fouga jet was still operating despite the agreement. We were becoming more and more concerned for our safety.<sup>415</sup>

*'We are almost hostages'*

On return from the centre of Jadotville, at 1155hrs Comdt Quinlan advised HQ 35 Inf Bn that there was a big change in the situation: the ceasefire was at the point of collapse. He asked about the three jets, requested food and water, and requested information on the political situation. He also asked 'what time is it possible to break through', advised that 'we are almost hostages' and requested 'instructions immediately'.<sup>416</sup>

35 Inf Bn passed the message to Sector B who at 1240hrs informed Katanga Command of the changed situation in Jadotville and repeated Comdt Quinlan's message that 'A' Company were 'more or less hostages'.<sup>417</sup>

At 1306hrs the text of a message from Comdt Quinlan to HQ 35 Inf Bn requested a decision before 1400hrs on the message sent at 1155hrs quoted above, again requesting 'instructions immediately'. The message added 'situation here outside my control. We are being offered accommodation in hotel with personal arms at 1600hrs. This is of course as hostages. We have no food or water in the situation we have at the moment. Decision Aiken and MacEoin.'<sup>418</sup>

HQ 35 Inf Bn advised 'A' Company at 1332hrs that Lt Gen MacEoin was now in Elisabethville and had received 'A' Company's message of 1306hrs.<sup>419</sup> It is not clear if Ireland's Minister for External Affairs Frank Aiken, who had arrived in Leopoldville, knew at this stage of the turn events had taken in Jadotville.

However, it is clear that Lt Gen MacEoin was now from at least 1332 on 17 September aware that the ceasefire had disintegrated in Jadotville and that 'A' Company had been 'offered accommodation in hotel with personal arms this is of course as hostages'. There is no record of

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<sup>414</sup> Lt Lars Fröberg served with the Swedish Army's XII and XIV Battalions in ONUC. Being fluent in French, he was attached to the 35 Inf Bn as an interpreter.

<sup>415</sup> Capt Noel Carey, 'Info Brief' to IRG, 31 December 2020.

<sup>416</sup> MA, ACC, 2016/24, 'A' Company radio log, entry for 1155, 17 September 1961.

<sup>417</sup> UNA, S/766/9/10, HQ Sector B (Major Barrett) to HQ Katanga Command, giving messages from Jadotville, 1240B, 17 September 1961.

<sup>418</sup> MA, ACC, 2016/24, 'A' Company radio log, entry for 1306hrs, 17 September 1961.

<sup>419</sup> MA, PC 58, 35 BN radio log, entry for 1332hrs, 17 September 1961. The same entry appears in the version of the 'A' Coy radio log on MA, ACC, 2016/24, at 1332.

Lt Gen MacEoin, or Brig Raja issuing instructions to Lt Col MacNamee on how to address 'A' Company's evolving situation in Jadotville.

During the afternoon of 17 September, a series of messages passed between Comdt Quinlan and Lt Col McNamee which showed a considerable lack of understanding from Elisabethville of 'A' Company's position and absolute anger and frustration from Jadotville at 35 Inf Bn HQ's inability to provide 'A' Company with support.

Comdt Quinlan told Lt Col McNamee that 'A' Company was now 'surrounded by a few thousand Gendarmerie'. Only a promise from Tshombe would be enough to help Comdt Quinlan and his men. 'A' Company had fought hard for five days against increasing Gendarmerie, and without adequate supplies of food and water. They had requested a ceasefire on 16 September and now, a day later, it was broken because the Katangese knew that with Lufira Bridge in Gendarmerie hands 'A' Company were isolated and powerless.

Transmitted between 1415hrs and 1700hrs these messages, translated here from Irish as required, were:<sup>420</sup>

- At 1415hrs - HQ 35 Inf Bn to 'A' Company: 'are you prisoners' and advised that another crow [helicopter] is 'arriving here this afternoon'.<sup>421</sup>
  - There was no response from 'A' Company to this request.
- At 1535hrs - 'A' Company to HQ 35 Inf Bn: 'There are no UN at the bridge and there is a few thousand FCA around us now. The bet on a ceasefire was broken when the UN was not at the bridge. If another "crow"<sup>422</sup> comes today, we are finished. They are around us on all sides. Get promise from Tshombe about our care.<sup>423</sup>
  - 'A' Company's log includes the following at the end of this message 'we are not to blame. Someone must make a high [important] settlement now'.<sup>424</sup>
- At 1555hrs - Comdt Quinlan to HQ 35 Inf Bn: 'Let it be known to the world that we didn't give in. Four days of fighting and threats of all sorts. They requested a ceasefire on the conditions sent to you last night. They broke the conditions. There are up to 2,000 FCA [Gendarmerie] and paras around me now. I can't do anymore without food or water and the men are exhausted. The spirit of the men is great. This is God's will.'<sup>425</sup>
- At 1600hrs (1618hrs 'A' Company Log) - HQ 35 Inf Bn (Lt Col McNamee) to 'A' Company: You have stood your ground for a week. They are terrified of you. Perhaps they may fire on you but I don't think they have the courage to rush [attack] you. There are high settlements to be done. Soon there will be big support going to the bridge. The crows [UN jets] will be with us at first light. Send the other crow [helicopter] back.<sup>426</sup>

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<sup>420</sup> MA, ACC, 2016/24, 'A' Company radio log.

<sup>421</sup> MA, ACC, 2016/24, 'A' Company radio log, entry for 1415, 17 September 1961.

<sup>422</sup> The codeword 'crow' was used for both a helicopter and a jet. In this case it refers to a jet.

<sup>423</sup> MA, PC 58, 35 Inf Bn Radio Log.

<sup>424</sup> MA, ACC, 2016/24, 'A' Company radio log, entry for 1500, 17 September 1961.

<sup>425</sup> MA, ACC, 2016/24, 'A' Company radio log.

<sup>426</sup> MA, PC 58, 35 Inf Bn Radio Log.

- At 1650hrs (1715hrs 'A' Company Log) - Comdt Quinlan to HQ 35 Inf Bn: You don't understand the question. The crow [helicopter] can't go back. Help is too late now. I am trying to keep talks going. We are not in a defensible position now. I am trying to save my men. No food, no water.<sup>427</sup>
  - 'A' Company's log includes the following at the end of this message: 'McKeown decision now.'<sup>428</sup>
- In a message prepared in Jadotville at 1718hrs and sent at 1740hrs, 'A' Company advised HQ 35 Inf Bn: 'We have to go to the Hotel. Personal weapons with us. There is no defense position there. We have no option now except "high talk" [high level talks]. Aiken, McKeown decision now.'<sup>429</sup>

#### *Meeting with Minster Munongo*

While these messages were being sent on the afternoon of 17 September, Katangese Interior Minister Godefroid Munongo travelled from Elisabethville to Jadotville. He arrived in or about 1700hrs. At Munongo's request, Comdt Quinlan met him at his hotel. Comdt Quinlan was accompanied by Capt Donnelly, Lt Fröberg and Chaplain Fr Fagan. Munongo demanded 'A' Company's immediate surrender. They must lay down their weapons, store their support weapons and move to a local hotel. They could keep their side arms.<sup>430</sup> Comdt Quinlan 'protested that this demand was unacceptable as there was a ceasefire in operation', but Munongo 'made it clear that there was no alternative.'<sup>431</sup> Munongo gave a final ultimatum to Comdt Quinlan that 'A' Company had to lay down its weapons or be annihilated. Comdt Quinlan was given two hours to make up his mind.<sup>432</sup>

#### *Company Conference*

Comdt Quinlan and his colleagues returned to 'A' Company's positions. He then held what Capt Noel Carey called 'the most memorable conference held so far at our HQ.'<sup>433</sup> Present with Comdt Quinlan were Capt Dermot Byrne, Capt Liam Donnelly, Capt Tom McGuinn, Comdt Joe Clune, Lt Joe Leech, Lt Tom Quinlan, Lt Noel Carey, Lt Kevin Knightly, Father Joe Fagan and Lt Lars Fröberg. During a 'very tense' meeting Comdt Quinlan congratulated all officers, NCOs and men on their actions, and told the ten officers that the Katangans had proposed new terms and it was 'obvious that it was a demand for our surrender.' All had a chance to speak. The platoon commanders wanted to fight on, but some others felt that 'A' Company had done its duty. Comdt Quinlan reviewed the weapons situation and the possibility of a breakout. Lt Knightly explained that both armoured cars could not fire their Vickers machine gun as the locks were damaged having fired almost 10,000 rounds each. It was simply impossible to travel in an exhausted state through hostile territory to Lufira Bridge, fight across the strongly defended bridge and then without any support to fight back to Elisabethville.

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<sup>427</sup> MA, PC 58, 35 Inf Bn Radio Log (Capt Melinn, Signal Officer).

<sup>428</sup> MA, ACC, 2016/24, 'A' Company radio log, entry for 1715, 17 September 1961.

<sup>429</sup> MA, ACC, 2016/24, 'A' Company radio log, entry for 1740, 17 September 1961.

<sup>430</sup> MA, Unit History, 35 Inf Bn, Annex B, para 32, p. 7.

<sup>431</sup> MA, Unit History, 35 Inf Bn, Annex B, para 32, p. 7.

<sup>432</sup> Capt Noel Carey, 'Info Brief to IRG', 31 December 2020.

<sup>433</sup> Capt Noel Carey, *The Congo: A personal perspective*, pp23-4. This paragraph is based on Capt Carey's memoirs.

To review the context, ‘A’ Company was exhausted after five days’ action under fire. They had five casualties. Water was almost non-existent. Food and ammunition were low. A break-out would be suicidal without transport. Two abortive efforts had been made to relieve ‘A’ Company and it would take a week or more for another effort. ‘A’ Company could not hold on in Jadotville without suffering severe casualties.

‘A’ Company Chaplain Fr Joseph Fagan most likely felt that it was best not to fight on for the sake of the men. In the view of Brig Gen Chris Moore (Retd), a friend of Father Fagan’s, it is likely that Fr Fagan ‘would have strongly advised’ Comdt Quinlan to surrender with the argument ‘look, what’s to be achieved, these men have families back home, some of these men have children, young children back home, you have no right to sacrifice their lives, your job is to preserve life if you can.’<sup>434</sup> Or put another way, ‘do you fight stupidly for this word “honour” or do sort of say right, let’s go away and fight another day.’<sup>435</sup>

### *Surrender*

Arguments were made to Comdt Quinlan not to surrender. Comdt Quinlan returned, without any of his officers, to Jadotville to sign Munongo’s terms. He had received no instructions from HQ 35 Inf Bn, from Brig Raja, or from Lt Gen MacEoin and acted on his own initiative. With no feasible military option and with the welfare of his men in mind, Comdt Quinlan signed surrender terms with Munongo on the late afternoon or early evening of 17 September. The signed documents, the text of which are reproduced below, were dated, but they contain no time of signature.

The terms of the surrender were:

Jadotville  
17 September 1961

I Commandant Patrick Quinlan officer commanding Irish United Nations troops in Jadotville do hereby agree to the terms of surrender of Minister Munongo because - The Irish force is here in a peaceful police role and any further action would result in the loss of African and Irish lives. I also wish to state that my troops fought only in self defence having been fired on while attending mass on the morning of 13 September at 0740 hours. It is also agreed that the Irish troops will have their arms stored at the location of the Irish troops accommodation. In the absence of orders from higher authority I take the responsibility for this decision.

Munongo      Quinlan<sup>436</sup>

On Munongo’s part:

By this the Minister for the Interior of the state of Katanga demands the surrender of the Irish soldiers and that they deposit their weapons<sup>437</sup> into the hands of the Katangese forces. In return the Minister representing the Chief of State of Katanga assures the Irish

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<sup>434</sup> Brig Gen Chris Moore (Retd), interview with IRG, 21 January 2021.

<sup>435</sup> Comdt James McCafferty (Retd), interview with IRG, 26 January 2021.

<sup>436</sup> MA, PRCN, 304, terms signed by Minister Munongo and Comdt Quinlan, original documents.

<sup>437</sup> Underlined in original surrender document.

soldiers that their lives will be safeguarded and that adversity will not happen to any of them. The essential condition is to put the weapons into the hands of our forces.

Jadotville, 17/IX/61  
Munongo      Quinlan

PS: the weapons in question will be guarded by us of course.

Munongo guaranteed 'A' Company's safety 'on pain of death to anyone who attempted to injure us.'<sup>438</sup> Comdt Quinlan had agreed to surrender, and that 'A' Company could stay in Jadotville, and the company's weapons would be deposited locally and guarded by the Gendarmerie.

Comdt Quinlan felt that 'the only option open to me was to accept these terms as further action would have resulted in the complete annihilation of my men.'<sup>439</sup> In his report contained in the Unit History, Comdt Quinlan states that Munongo 'agreed that we keep our arms stored with us in the hotel. This was written into the terms of the agreement. But this and many other promises were broken immediately after we laid down our arms'.<sup>440</sup>

Comdt Pearse Wheatley wrote in his journal the suggestion, which the Independent Review Group has not seen elsewhere, that Munongo told Quinlan 'that Mr Aiken was to arrive in Jadotville to confer with him', though Comdt Wheatley added: 'This we do not believe'.<sup>441</sup>

In a letter home to Ireland in October 1961, Lt Joe Leech stated that Comdt Quinlan 'should not be blamed as he received NO directions whatsoever from E'ville...I suppose that you know the surrender was a complete surprise to us; a ceasefire was arranged with the dismantling of heavy weapons and withdrawal to the old positions as terms.....Quinlan, now don't mention this, signed the ceasefire without consulting the officers and though we all agreed at the time, with an incompetent shower like ONU it was probably the best thing to do'. Lt Leech also speculated that there 'may be a court of inquiry yet – we may demand one'.<sup>442</sup> It is evident that Lt Joe Leech may have held a somewhat different interpretation of what transpired at the conference on 17 September prior to the surrender, as conveyed by Capt Noel Carey.

It was a highly charged evening for 'A' Company in Jadotville. Some officers, such as Lt Kevin Knightly, wished to fight on and engage in a fighting breakout from Jadotville with Lt Noel Carey's platoon and Lt Tom Quinlan's platoon supported by an armoured car.<sup>443</sup> After discussions between the officers they realised this would be a disloyal act to their comrades and that their action would not stand a chance of success.

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<sup>438</sup> Submission by Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd) to IRG, 21 December. 2020, 'The Battle of Jadotville – Congo, 1961', p. 68. See also MA, Unit History, 35 Inf Bn, Annex B, para 32, p. 7.

<sup>439</sup> Submission by Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd) to IRG, 21 December. 2020, 'The Battle of Jadotville – Congo, 1961', p. 43.

<sup>440</sup> MA, 35 Inf Bn Unit History, p. 99.

<sup>441</sup> MA, PRCN, 73/1/7, Congo Journal, June-December 1961, Comdt Pearse Wheatley, Book II, 18 September 1961.

<sup>442</sup> Col J.A.O. Leech private papers, Lt Leech to Lola Leech, 29 October 1961.

<sup>443</sup> Capt Noel Carey, *The Congo: A personal perspective*, p. 24. Comdt James McCafferty, comment to the IRG, 26 January 2021. A point also made by Lt Col. Seán Hennessy of the 35 Inf Bn Arm'd Car Gp to the IRG, 30 March 2021.



This and following page show the original texts of the 'surrender documents' signed by Comdt Pat Quinlan and Katanga's Interior Minister Godefroid Munongo on 18 September 1961 (MA PRCN 304).

Par la présente le Ministre de l'Intérieur de l'Etat du Katanga demande aux soldats irlandais de se rendre et de déposer leurs armes entre les mains des forces katangaises. En retour le Ministre représentant le Chef de l'Etat Katangais tient à assurer les soldats irlandais que leur vie sera sauvegardée et que malheur ni arrivera à aucun d'eux. La condition sine qua non est de remettre les armes entre les mains dites forces.

Jactotik, le 17/IX/61

P.S. des armes en question seront gardés en lieu sûr.

MUNONGO

Padraig Seáinéalbaín CP022  
163  
atc 3000 A



TADOTVILLE

17 September 1961

G. Comdr Patrick Amula - Officer Commanding  
 Gairil United Nations Troops - Tadotville  
 do hereby agree to the terms of surrender  
 of Minister Monongo because -  
 The Gairil force is here in a peaceful  
 police role and any further action  
 would result in the loss of African  
 and Gairil lives.

I also wish to state that my troops  
 fought only in self defence having  
 been fired on while attending mass  
 on the morning of 13 Sept 1961 at 07:40 hrs

It is also agreed that the Gairil  
 troops will have their arms stored  
 at the location of the Gairil troops accomodatio

In the absence of orders from  
 higher authority I take the responsibility  
 for this decision.

*[Signature]*  
 M. Monongo  
 Ministre de l'Intérieur

*[Signature]*  
 Camp 27  
 Officer in Charge  
 Zaedatari O. V. U.



*Ceasefire Negotiations - Katanga*

That afternoon, just before 1600Z<sup>444</sup> (1800 Jadotville local time), Dag Hammarskjöld left Leopoldville for Ndola to try to advance ceasefire negotiations for a truce across Katanga. As hostages of the Katangese, 'A' Company were now of considerable value as a leverage in the eventual ceasefire negotiations that were to take place between Dag Hammarskjöld and Tshombe.

Elisabethville is two hours ahead of Leopoldville and shortly after Dag Hammarskjöld's plan was airborne, at 1830hrs local time [1630hrs in Elisabethville] Lt Gen MacEoin reported from Elisabethville that

it now appears the garrison at Jadotville has been overwhelmed by vastly superior forces. I shall tell you about casualties later ... we have very little information as to what exactly has taken place since 1400hrs yesterday but it would appear that the Coy has been hopelessly outnumbered. ... the Coy has acquitted itself well during the week in a difficult situation.<sup>445</sup>

Lt Gen MacEoin was downbeat and accepting of the position in Jadotville.

Chief of ONUC Military Operations Lt Col G.S. Paul reported more positively that 'A' Company had downed arms 'after a heroic stand'<sup>446</sup> and he added that 'the fact that casualties are slight is a consolation. The Company has acquitted itself well during the week in a difficult situation'. Opinion in ONUC on Comdt Quinlan's defence of his position was much more positive than that of the ONUC Force Commander: 'Company did very well – they fought for 4 days with NO food, water, ammunition, or hoped for reinforcement'.<sup>447</sup>

Frank Aiken told reporter Noel Conway in Leopoldville on Sunday 17 September, that Comdt Quinlan and 'A' Company had 'held an "open camp" post under siege for almost a week'.<sup>448</sup> The Minister felt 'their bearing under bombardment was exemplary'.

*Are you deserting your men?*

At 1900hrs came the unkindest response to the developing news from Jadotville from HQ 35 Inf Bn. The message advised 'A' Company that talks had been agreed between Lt Gen MacEoin and Tshombe. The message concluded: 'Bhuil tú ag tréigint na fir'. [Are you deserting the men.]<sup>449</sup>

Some said Lt Col McNamee's message had been confused in translation between Irish and English; others suspected it had a personal context as relations between the two officers were difficult. Brig Gen Patrick Purcell, then a lieutenant in Signals Platoon, 35 Inf Bn, remembered the message coming through on an army message pad for despatch: 'some things you never forget'.<sup>450</sup>

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<sup>444</sup> Greenwich Mean Time.

<sup>445</sup> NAI, DT3/S161371/61, GIB press release, 2150, 17 September 1961.

<sup>446</sup> UNA, S/791/22/2, report by Paul to Linner and Lt Gen MacEoin, 18 September 1961.

<sup>447</sup> UNA, S/822/4/4, 'Aide Memoire Op Morthor', undated.

<sup>448</sup> *Irish Times*, 18 September 1961.

<sup>449</sup> MA, ACC, 2016/24, 'A' Company radio log, entry for 1800, 17 September 1961. Recorded in 35 Inf Bn Radio Log at 1900hrs. <sup>450</sup> Brig Gen Patrick Purcell, interview with IRG, 26 January 2021.

At 1930hrs, HQ 35 Inf Bn asked 'A' Company: 'an bhfuil tú gan suíomh area i gconai? [are you always without a location area]'.<sup>451</sup> This message, which is somewhat difficult to decipher, is not in the Battalion's Radio Log.

Comdt Quinlan sent a justifiably hurt reply at 2000hrs to 35 Inf Bn's 1900hrs message:

the last sentence of your message was not nice of you. We were surrounded for eight days with fierce fighting for four days. There was no food for two days, nor sleep for four days. There was no water. Is it worth your while to kill the men without cause? I frequently requested instructions today but I did not get them.

*HQ 35 Inf Bn informed of surrender*

However, it was not until this message of 2000hrs, sent some hours after the actual surrender documents were signed by Comdt Quinlan and Munongo, that Comdt Quinlan indicated to HQ 35 Inf Bn that he had surrendered. The message continued:

I have surrendered honourably to Munongo. We keep our arms in hotel. Regret this was necessary.<sup>452</sup>

Nevertheless, the news of 'A' Company's surrender was regarded in HQ 35 Inf Bn as a 'disaster'. Brig Gen Patrick Purcell recalled that the Battalion Adjutant, Comdt Eddie Condon, 'was in the Comcen at the time ... he was reading the message as it was being written down by the operator and he just rushed out of the Comcen crying.'<sup>453</sup>

In response and despite their earlier messages, 'A' Company received the following complimentary message from HQ 35 Inf Bn at 2024hrs: 'Rinne sibh go rí mhaith. Tá gach onóir coghaidh tuilte agaibh. Gach beannacht oraibh to léir.'<sup>454</sup> [You did extremely well. You have earned every military honour. All blessings on you all.].

At 2120hrs, Comdt Quinlan advised HQ 35 Inf Bn that 'A' Company were remaining in Jadotville with a combined guard of 'A' Company personnel and Gendarmerie. Referring to the surrender, he implied that it was a 'cause of heartbreak' for him, and that there was no other option except 'death by fighting or disease'. Comdt Quinlan also requested information on the political and military situation.<sup>455</sup>

A message from OC Western Command, relayed through HQ 35 Inf Bn, was recorded in 'A' Company's radio log at 2200hrs: 'Proud of your gallant stand. You are constantly in our prayers and thoughts'.<sup>456</sup>

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<sup>451</sup> MA, ACC, 2016/24, 'A' Company radio log, entry for 1930, 17 September 1961.

<sup>452</sup> MA, ACC, 2016/24, 35 Inf Bn Radio Log, entry for 2000hrs, 17 September 1961.

<sup>453</sup> Brig Gen Patrick Purcell, interview with IRG, 26 January 2021.

<sup>454</sup> MA, PC 58, 35 Inf Bn radio log, entry for 2024, 15 September 1961. The 'A' Company radio log entry for same message, received at 2040hrs, omits the word 'rí'.

<sup>455</sup> MA, PC 58, 35 Inf Bn Radio Log, entry for 2120hrs, 17 September 1961.

<sup>456</sup> MA, ACC, 2016/24, 'A' Company radio log, entry for 2000hrs, 17 September 1961.

At 2226hrs, HQ 35 Inf Bn advised 'A' Company that it had sent information to Sector B regarding the 'géilleadh' [surrender], praising all company personnel for the 'seaseamh glórmhar a dhein tú' [glorious stand they did]. HQ 35 Inf Bn also stated that 'Tshombe, Hammarskjöld etc' are talking in Ndola, 'the situation is not clear'.<sup>457</sup>

To put these developments of the evening of 17 September into context, two days previously during the course of a 'voice conversation' at 0745hrs on 15 September, Comdt Quinlan was ordered by Lt Col McNamee 'NOT' to surrender unless instructed from here'; 'A Coy said they would hold out'.<sup>458</sup> This order is recorded in the 35 Inf Bn's radio log but is not recorded in 'A' Company's radio log. The Independent Review Group has not seen any record of Comdt Quinlan seeking permission from HQ 35 Inf Bn to enter into a surrender, or reporting when he actually signed surrender documents in the afternoon or evening of 17 September, in the Battalion Unit Journal, the Battalion Radio Log or 'A' Company's Radio Log.

Through HQ 35 Inf Bn, Comdt Quinlan had sought orders from Lt Gen MacEoin, but none were forthcoming. In vain, he had called for high level talks involving Minister Frank Aiken and Lt Gen MacEoin.

It is unlikely that Minister Aiken would have intervened on behalf of 'A' Company because he believed firmly that once Irish soldiers deployed with the UN, they were under the command of the UN and were not the political responsibility of the Irish government.

*A message for Radio Éireann*

The following entry in the HQ 35 Inf Bn radio log at 0045hrs on 18 September, was in response to a request from 'A' Company in Jadotville:

Comdt Quinlan to Radio Eireann: Please assure our dear ones at home that all members of A Coy and Armd Car Gp at Jadotville are well and in high spirits. The four slightly wounded men are in absolutely no danger. The men fought a gallant fight - self defence against overwhelming odds. Cease fire agreed to save loss of life. Families are NOT to worry. Safety of all is assured. Our thoughts and prayers are with you at home. We know your prayers saved our lives. Will have love letters home soon. God Bless you.<sup>459</sup>

At 0800hrs on 18 September, Lt Col McNamee along with Comdt Kane and Comdt Condon conducted a voice conversation with Comdt Quinlan and Capt Donnelly in Jadotville. According to 'A' Company's radio log, Comdt Quinlan 'explained the present position of A Coy and how it came about and asked to have messages sent home with ref to safety, health etc'.<sup>460</sup> The battalion's radio log records that this is 'the last transmission made by A Coy from Jadotville'.<sup>461</sup>

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<sup>457</sup> MA, PC 58, 35 Inf Bn radio log, 15 September 1961. Recorded in 'A' Company radio log as 2226hrs, received at 2325hrs.

<sup>458</sup> MA, PC 58, 35 Inf Bn radio log, 0745hrs, 15 September 1961.

<sup>459</sup> MA, PC 58, 35 Inf Bn radio log, 18 September 1961. The use of the term 'cease fire' is incorrect, if understandable, in this message as Comdt Quinlan had signed a surrender on 17 September 1961.

<sup>460</sup> MA, ACC, 2016/24, 'A' Company radio log.

<sup>461</sup> MA, PC 58, 35 Inf Bn radio log, 18 September 1961.

‘A’ Company’s radio log records the following at 0900hrs: ‘ordered to close down, dismantle set. A Coy off the air. Unable to inform HQ because of communications’.<sup>462</sup>

### *Analysis*

Interviewed by the Independent Review Group in his role as Chair of a Study Group on the Jadotville Affair (April 2004), Col Enda Breslin, concluded that ‘when you run out of water, there is absolutely no other option ... you can last forever till the last man, but if you have no water you cannot continue.’<sup>463</sup> Recalling how he felt at this point of the battle, Pte Michael Tighe said he was ‘delirious from lack of sleep, and from lack of food and water.’<sup>464</sup> Having been in combat since 13 September, Pte Tighe crawled out of his trench and lay on the parapet and, exhausted, fell asleep until he was awoken by Sgt Walter Hegarty telling him they were to stack arms.

Many in ‘A’ Company felt that they had in fact won the battle and that Comdt Quinlan had negotiated a ceasefire, not a surrender. Pte Tadhg Quinn sternly told the Independent Review Group ‘Comdt Quinlan did not surrender: there was a peace agreement signed.’<sup>465</sup> There was dissension in ‘A’ Company at the prospects of a surrender. Some officers and men wanted to fight on.<sup>466</sup> Even though ‘A’ Company still had a small amount of ammunition left, this was not a viable option. Others simply ‘couldn’t believe it. I thought that these fellows had so much of a hammering got from us that they’ll not come back.’<sup>467</sup> However,

we have to take what comes. That’s how we felt about it. Whatever comes, that’s going to be us. So I wasn’t happy, no, and how would you be, we were let down. And I couldn’t believe that our own soldiers in Elisabethville couldn’t get through that bridge.<sup>468</sup>

‘Nobody really wanted to lay down their arms’, recalled Pte Thomas Flynn, ‘we seemed to get conned into it ... it wasn’t straightforward.’<sup>469</sup> Pte Michael Greene felt that ‘I don’t think Comdt Quinlan would have given in that easy if he thought what happened was going to happen.’<sup>470</sup> This was echoed by Pte Paddy Hogan: ‘we felt that Comdt Quinlan was tricked into this.’<sup>471</sup> Yet there was also ‘relief ... that it was sort of over ... not where you want to be, but that was the actuality of it.’<sup>472</sup> Before this ‘A’ Company had their weapons, but when they handed over their equipment to the Katangese Pte John Shanagher said he ‘felt naked without his weapon.’<sup>473</sup>

Having analysed Col Breslin’s Study Group on the Jadotville Affair (April 2004), and in a subsequent submission to the Deputy Chief of Staff in July 2004, Col Chris Moore concluded that ‘A’ Company had:

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<sup>462</sup> MA, ACC, 2016/24, ‘A’ Company radio log.

<sup>463</sup> Col Enda Breslin (Retd), interview with IRG, 13 April 2021.

<sup>464</sup> Pte Michael Tighe, interview with IRG, 19 February 2021.

<sup>465</sup> Cpl Tadhg Quinn, interview with IRG, 21 January 2021.

<sup>466</sup> A point made strongly to the IRG by many interviewees.

<sup>467</sup> Pte James Tahaney, interview with IRG, 28 January 2021.

<sup>468</sup> Pte James Tahaney, interview with IRG, 28 January 2021.

<sup>469</sup> Pte Thomas Flynn, interview with IRG, 1 April 2021. Pte Flynn was prepared to fight on.

<sup>470</sup> Pte Michael Greene, interview with IRG, 22 April 2021.

<sup>471</sup> Pte Paddy Hogan, interview with IRG, 18 February 2021.

<sup>472</sup> Pte Thomas Flynn, interview with IRG, 1 April 2021.

<sup>473</sup> Pte John Shanagher, interview with IRG, 4 February 2021.

fought ferociously for four days. No help, either military or political, could be expected. It is difficult to see how Comdt Quinlan had any other viable course of action available to him ... Given the circumstances Comdt Quinlan and his Coy did all that was humanly possible. The decision to surrender was the correct one; in fact it was the only decision possible other than needlessly sacrificing the lives of the men under his command.<sup>474</sup>

‘There was no way out of it’ said Cpl Billy Keane on ‘A’ Company’s surrender.<sup>475</sup> It took the Defence Forces forty-three years to arrive at this conclusion. It was a very slow learning curve and one which was to cause, as a consequence, unspeakable pain and suffering to many in ‘A’ Company. Comdt Quinlan really had no alternative. In ‘A’ Company veteran Pte Paddy Hogan’s words:

Pat Quinlan brought back 156 people from Africa. On a decision from him he could have said “no, we’ll fight on”. He hadn’t the ammunition, he hadn’t the authority, he hadn’t the back up from his leaders in the headquarters, and a good number of them people, I won’t mention anyone in particular, but a good number of them were leaders, were Irish Army officers, high-ranking ones, and they neglected that man and left him wide open ... the blame for surrender was put on his shoulders when his superior officers in Leopoldville or Elisabethville didn’t bother their backsides to help him out. They left him out on a limb.<sup>476</sup>

Brig Gen Moore (Retd) made an extremely important point about the Defence Forces and the ONUC reaction to Comdt Quinlan’s actions on 17 and 18 September:

The idea of surrendering, to a military man, is kind of an anathema, the idea that an Irish Company would surrender, you know, I think proper leadership would have, maybe, taken the whole matter, thrashed it out there and then, but they weren’t capable of doing that at the particular time.<sup>477</sup>

Comdt Quinlan had no option in the actions he undertook, he executed his orders until he could hold out no longer ‘and then he saved his troops ... that is the responsibility of every commander, to do his job.’<sup>478</sup> These actions were simply not understood in the 1960s Defence Forces, above all it seems not to have been understood that ‘there is absolutely never a need to sacrifice the men under your command for some greater good, so called.’<sup>479</sup> Perhaps this attitude existed in Dublin because of the ethos of blood sacrifice instilled in many Irish people of the time via the contemporary teaching of the 1916 Rising, perhaps it was the attitude of an immature military unused to reacting to the exigencies of combat.

Lt Jim Condon later attempted to put the surrender in context:

There are varying views of the surrender of the coy. Since we have no battle honours, or military tradition in our young army, it makes no difference to us at home that they

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<sup>474</sup> Col Chris Moore, ‘The Jadotville Affair’, 6 July 2004.

<sup>475</sup> Cpl Billy Keane, interview with IRG, 6 May 2021.

<sup>476</sup> Pte Paddy Hogan, interview to IRG, 18 February 2021.

<sup>477</sup> Brig Gen Chris Moore (Retd), interview with IRG, 21 January 2021.

<sup>478</sup> Brig Gen Chris Moore (Retd), interview with IRG, 21 January 2021.

<sup>479</sup> Brig Gen Chris Moore (Retd), interview with IRG, 21 January 2021.

surrendered. They are alive which is what matters. The Jadotville whites will be remembered in Africa. They assisted and aided the black race to kill white men, their turn will come shortly.<sup>480</sup>

After destroying their weapons as best they could, at 1000hrs on the morning of 18 September 1961, 'A' Company were bussed into Jadotville. They paraded through the town and Comdt Quinlan had the men look their best, to show 'we might have run out of ammunition but there was a bit of fight left in us.'<sup>481</sup> Nevertheless, there was what Capt Noel Carey later referred to as:

the shock, the disappointment ... the dejection, the shame, the hurt, the question why should it happen, after all we had gone through, why did they not break through, why did they not get through to us? And, of course, at that time we didn't realise what had happened at the bridge.<sup>482</sup>

Lt Carey continued that the big question was 'What now? What are they going to do to us? Don't forget the visions of Niamba were still there all the time.' Senior Katangese officers investigated 'A' Company's positions after 18 September looking for where 'A' Company had buried its dead, they found none, and this heightened expectations that in captivity 'A' Company might have a hard time given the casualties they had inflicted on the Katangese.

### ***Ceasefires in Elisabethville and Kamina***

In Elisabethville there was no ceasefire, but an uneasy calm, with occasional sniping and shooting. At Kamina air base, the 1 Inf Gp was 'subjected to occasional GROUND ATTACK by small COY SIZE FORCES. In addition, stray MORTAR BOMBS landed in the AREA now and again. It is also subjected to attack by FOUGA FIGHTER but the boys are doing well there and there is no great danger.'<sup>483</sup> The main fighting had been at the barrier to the base where one company of Gendarmerie with mortars and machine guns faced ONUC forces.<sup>484</sup>

The Fouga Magister had been used with considerable effect by the Katangese. Capt Greer wrote to Maj Gen Collins-Powell that 'biggest blow suffered was the intervention of the Fouga jet - which cost us Jadotville, nearly wrecked our air support and made the men feel defenceless.'<sup>485</sup> But, Capt Greer concluded:

The troops after the initial shock had worn off have steadied remarkably and our much-despised NCOs have risen wonderfully in leadership. Now even the youngest soldier will hold his fire until the best opportunity arises. The bad marksmanship of the Katangese has also helped to give our men confidence.<sup>486</sup>

A Katanga-wide ceasefire came into effect on 21 September at one minute past midnight.

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<sup>480</sup> MA, PC 346, diary entry, 29 October 1961.

<sup>481</sup> Pte Tom Gunn, interview with IRG, 28 January 2021.

<sup>482</sup> Capt Noel Carey, interview with IRG, 19 January 2021.

<sup>483</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 35INFBN, 7/2, telex conversation, Dublin-Leopoldville (Message No. 614) 1745, 17 September 1961.

<sup>484</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 1INFGP, 2/23, radio message, Roundabout to Base, undated.

<sup>485</sup> MA, PRCN, 16/1/83, Capt Greer to Maj Gen Collins-Powell, undated, but September 1961.

<sup>486</sup> MA, PRCN, 16/1/83, Capt Greer to Maj Gen Collins-Powell, undated, but September 1961.

From Elisabethville Lt Gen MacEoin wrote to Lt Col O'Donovan at Kamina congratulating him for the actions of 1 Inf Gp. His letter and Lt Col O'Donovan's response are important in that they contextualise the position of 'A' Company at Jadotville and show that Comdt Quinlan's perimeter defence, while well planned and executed, was not in any sense unique or a one-off. Lt Gen MacEoin informed Lt Col O'Donovan that

I first would like to congratulate you on the excellent work you have done with the Irish group at Kamina in the past 10 days or so. We are all loud in our praise of the excellent spirit and determination shown by all ranks in your Group.

I shall be grateful if you will convey to all ranks my appreciation and congratulations on a job excellently done. Please convey to the other contingents the same appreciation and congratulations. Please accept my admiration of your excellent efforts.<sup>487</sup>

Lt Col O'Donovan replied that:

- a. Number 1 and Number 2 bases are completely in UN hands.
- b. The airport is perfectly secure. The fact that some aircraft were fired upon may have given the impression that the airport was not secure, but in fact these aircraft were fired upon in the vicinity of the barrier 8 to 10 miles from here. All pilots have been instructed not to approach from this direction.
- c. Gendarmerie attacks were confined solely to two points in number two base - the barrier and the farm area. These attacks were repulsed with heavy losses to the Gendarmerie. We have put two armoured cars - Saracen - out of action, captured three mortars, machine gun and some rifles also a truckload of mortar ammunition which was burnt out.
- d. This morning I had a meeting with the Gendarmerie battalion commander. I gave him in writing that only four unarmed men would be allowed. These men were not allowed in the vicinity of our defences.
- e. Number two base is firmly in our hands - it has been evacuated of all civilians.
- f. Kilubi was successfully evacuated by helicopter on the night of 19/20 as I felt that our troops served no useful purpose there in view of the fact that the Gendarmerie has cut the power line.
- g. The supply position is fairly satisfactory, but I would appreciate some 60 millimetre and 81 millimetre mortar ammunition also 84 mm anti tank gun ammunition.

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<sup>487</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, IINFGP, 2/5, Lt Gen MacEoin to Lt Col O'Donovan, 22 September 1961.

h. Damage. A large number of houses in No 2 Base have been damaged by mortar and Bazooka fire and much glass has been broken. All glass in Control Tower at Airport has been blown in by blast from building.

i. Morale is excellent among all ranks as it is felt we have achieved a victory over the Gendarmerie. Morale insofar as the Gendarmerie is concerned appears to be very low. I have this on my personal observation of them and on the lack of determination in their attacks. No white officers have been observed with Gendarmerie except on one occasion when one white was observed wearing mufti.

As regards sitreps I have reported incidents as they occurred as I did not want to bother you with many sitreps containing information of no importance. Thanks again for your letter which is most appreciated just now<sup>488</sup>

The content of both letters shows a significant point of comparison with the position of 'A' Company at Jadotville. The 1 Inf Gp with their Swedish counterparts had held off a stronger force than at Jadotville, but while comparisons are perhaps invidious here, the point to be made is the significant perimeter defence tactics adopted by both Lt Col O'Donovan and Comdt Quinlan. Lt Col O'Donovan circulated to his two Company Commanders and to all 'Contingent Commanders' an extract from MacEoin's letter:

I firstly would like to congratulate you on the excellent work you have done with the Irish Group at KAMINA during the past ten days or so. We are loud in our praise of the excellent spirit and determination shown by all ranks in your Group ... I shall be grateful if you will convey to all ranks my appreciation and congratulations on a job excellently done. Please convey to the other Contingents the same appreciation and congratulations.<sup>489</sup>

In total between 13 and 21 September between 35 to 40 Gendarmerie were killed and 48 wounded in the fighting in Kamina.<sup>490</sup> The 1 Inf Gp had suffered three cases of battle exhaustion.<sup>491</sup>

In Elisabethville, Lt Col McNamee was having problems. He later told Lt Gen MacEoin that 'for a while in September there was an atmosphere of despondency mainly due to the large number of prisoners lost.' Once it became known that the prisoners were well, 'worries diminished.'<sup>492</sup> But a sign of this negativity can be seen in Lt Col McNamee telling a Battalion Commander's conference on 27 September that there was now a 'dreadful laxity' within the Battalion. There had been a major fire in B Coy's lines, three men had been found asleep at their posts, B Coy trenches were very poorly constructed, and 0600hrs reveille was not being kept by all. B Coy, now taking over important Elisabethville infrastructure point, 'the Tunnel', a road underpass beneath a major railway line, was told 'chances must not be taken and a most alert watch must be maintained', B, C and HQ Company trenches were to be improved immediately, one officer per Company was to

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<sup>488</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 1INFGP, 2/5, Lt Col O'Donovan to Lt Gen MacEoin, 22 September 1961.

<sup>489</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 1INFGP, O'Donovan to all commanders at Kamina, 23 September 1961.

<sup>490</sup> UNA, S840/2/6, ONUC Kamina to HQ Katanga Command, Elisabethville, 1205Z 6 October 1961.

<sup>491</sup> MA, COS, 594, 'Report on Irish Contingent in Congo', Director of Plans and Operations, 9 October 1961.

<sup>492</sup> MA, COS, 594, Lt Col McNamee to Lt Gen MacEoin, 21 October 1961.



sleep in men's lines, and each tent was to have its trench 'properly constructed'.<sup>493</sup> Lt Col McNamee concluded that these were 'not measures hastily taken because of the recent turn of events, they are taken because the 35 Inf Bn is not going to be caught napping'.<sup>494</sup> He was planning to remove the 35 Inf Bn from Elisabethville and was on the verge of recommending to Brig Raja that the 35 Inf Bn replace the 1 Inf Gp at Kamina.<sup>495</sup> The 1 Inf Gp moved from Kamina to Nyunzu on 10 October. The 35 Inf Bn remained in Elisabethville.

### ***Jadotville and Kolwezi: 'A' Company in captivity***

On 18 September 'A' Company was lodged, under Gendarmerie guard, at the Hotel Europe in Jadotville under 'protective custody'.<sup>496</sup> Hotel Europe was a disused premises and facilities were limited. By the afternoon of 18 September, those men in 'A' Company with hidden transistor radios might already have picked up the breaking news that Secretary-General Hammarskjöld had been killed shortly after midnight when his plane crashed on approach to Ndola airfield.

Lt Col McNamee informed Lt Gen MacEoin, of 'A' Company's position in Jadotville. Lt Gen MacEoin passed the information on to Defence Forces HQ in Dublin, that:

the Jadotville Company is reported to be well housed and it appears is being well treated. They have been allowed to retain light arms without ammunition.<sup>497</sup> There is no increase in casualties already reported. It is still five; three wounded and two shell-shocked; but many of the men show signs of the strain of what they have been through since they went to Jadotville.<sup>498</sup>

In his diary for 19 September, Lt Gen MacEoin tersely recorded privately 'News Jadotville surrendered'.<sup>499</sup> The following day he wrote on the next page 'held telex conversations with E'ville'. There are no further references to Jadotville in his diary until the 25 October 1961, the day 'A' Company were finally released from captivity.

During their early days in captivity, 'A' Company's mail was allowed in uncensored. Later the mail was censored and much of it was confiscated. On Saturday, 23 September, the UN prisoners twenty-five Irish and six Italians taken in Elisabethville joined 'A' Company in Jadotville.<sup>500</sup>

Representatives from the International Red Cross visited 'A' Company in Jadotville on 26 September and found them 'all in good health hand in high spirits'.<sup>501</sup> At the Hotel Europe in the Cité Minière in Jadotville they were guarded by about a platoon of Gendarmerie under the command of Adjutant Thomas Simbi.<sup>502</sup> Most had beds, but twenty-one of the 191 prisoners (who

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<sup>493</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 35INFBN, 2/8, minutes of conference, 27 September 1961. A further point was that the mess was now to close at 2130 and on 2 October it was deemed an offence to have alcohol in tents.

<sup>494</sup> Ibid.

<sup>495</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 35INFBN, 2/8, minutes of conference, 2 October 1961.

<sup>496</sup> Pte John Shanagher, interview with IRG, 4 February 2021.

<sup>497</sup> This was untrue.

<sup>498</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 35INFBN, 3/2, Lt Gen MacEoin to Liaison Officer to Plans and Ops Dublin, 1133Z 18 September 1961.

<sup>499</sup> MA, PRCN, 1/2/17, Lt Gen MacEoin diary, entry for 19 September 1961.

<sup>500</sup> MA, Unit History, 35 Inf Bn Annex B, p. 8.

<sup>501</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 35INFBN, 7/2, Sweeney to Army Press Officer, 30 September 1961.

<sup>502</sup> MA, PRCN, 0058, 'Conference held on Friday, 6th October 1961'. Details of facilities at Hotel Europe from translation of report by G. Hoffmann of the Red Cross attached to minute of 19 October 1961 from Irish Liaison Officer, Leopoldville to Director, Plans and Operations, Defence Forces Headquarters, Dublin.

also included two Swedes, one Norwegian and six Italians as well as Irish soldiers captured during the fighting in Elisabethville), slept on mattresses or on blankets on the floor. They had at their disposal eight baths, one shower and had use of the hotel toilets.

Personnel were kept occupied with PT, lectures, discussions, question-time and indoor games. 'A' Company was not permitted to drill or practice unarmed combat, and had no facilities for outdoor games, though volleyball was played.<sup>503</sup>

Comdt Quinlan told G. Hoffmann that 'the food is good and sufficient. The drinking water is equally satisfactory in quality and quantity.'<sup>504</sup> They also had cigarettes, beer and canteen articles and could 'play in the open air between the hotel buildings on restricted terrain'. According to Quinlan 'the treatment is very correct.'<sup>505</sup>

This upbeat view was confirmed by a group of journalists who met 'A' Company in late September in Jadotville and found that they were 'in good health are being well treated.' Yet they were

very lonely and would give anything to get home. Their thoughts are now of rejoining their families ... of getting back to Ireland again ... [text unclear]. We had a recording of 'Tipperary' sung by them for the press. The latter gathered the impression of a feeling of hopelessness among them. It was a new experience to meet prisoners of war.<sup>506</sup>

Over a week later, on 5 October, Col Andreas Kjellgren, a Swedish officer in the ceasefire observer group, visited 'A' Company and found them being 'well treated and get[ting] good food. Their arms have been taken from them by Gendarmes. The five wounded Irishmen have recovered. Spirit is high.'<sup>507</sup> It was, to Pte Frank McManus 'unbelievable the morale of them boys through that period of time.'<sup>508</sup> The unit kept together as a force, there were sports, PT, and competitions such as boxing matches.

Comdt Quinlan recalled a visit by Tshombe asking 'how we were being treated and I replied that we had no complaint with regard to the food or our treatment by the guards. I protested very vigorously against the breaking of not only the verbal promises but also the written guarantees of the surrender. He refused to discuss the matter and turned his back in a sneering attitude'.<sup>509</sup>

Yet the future and what it might bring, dwelt on soldiers' minds in captivity. Pte Tom Gunn remembered 'the thing hanging over us: would they have reprisals on account of the numbers they lost, d'you know.'<sup>510</sup> Comdt Quinlan's role was a significant factor here keeping the unit in a positive frame of mind. He made sure the platoons were kept together and not separated by the Katangese, 'he always insisted there was unity.'<sup>511</sup> One of his tactics was that 'everyone had to be

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<sup>503</sup> MA, Unit History, 35 Inf Bn Annex B, p. 8.

<sup>504</sup> G. Hoffmann was a Red Cross official.

<sup>505</sup> Ibid.

<sup>506</sup> MA, PRCN, 73/1/7, Congo Journal, June-December 1961, Comdt Pearse Wheatley, Book II, 30 September 1961.

<sup>507</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 35INFBN, 7/2, Irish Liaison Officer, Leopoldville to Director, Plans and Operations, Dublin, 5 October 1961. Comdt John Kane was to have accompanied Col Kjellgren on this and another visit but this fell through.

<sup>508</sup> Pte Frank McManus, interview with IRG, 18 February 2021.

<sup>509</sup> MA, Unit History, 35 Inf Bn Annex B, p. 9.

<sup>510</sup> Pte Tom Gunn, interview with IRG, 28 January 2021.

<sup>511</sup> Cpl Seán Tiernan, interview with IRG, 20 April 1961.

moving, a mixture of walking around in the area and playing a few games.<sup>512</sup> Comdt Quinlan went around the men checking all was okay, asking if they had heard were there problems at home and ‘he never stopped ... and morale, he’d say “this is not going to last”, he’d call you by your first name, Tacher, my nickname, Tacher, “this is going to end” he says, you know, “we’ll be out of here”’.<sup>513</sup> Cpl Seán Tiernan remembered how his platoon commander Lt Tom Quinlan also played a role keeping morale up in captivity saying ‘we’ll be out of here in a couple of weeks, we’ll be back in Ireland, don’t worry about nothing, he was positive all the time.’<sup>514</sup> Comdt Quinlan also had to put a stop to talk of trying to break out of the camp.

Though the European population of Jadotville were reasonably friendly toward ‘A’ Company while they were held at the Hotel Europe, disquieting news was picked up by the UN as regards the Gendarmes actual intentions, they ‘intended to kill the Irish prisoners’, but Minister Munongo told the senior Gendarmerie and police officers in the town ‘that they are responsible by their heads for the life of the prisoners.’<sup>515</sup> This was perhaps not surprising as UN intelligence staff picked up further information that ‘the Irish seem to have fought very gallantly at JADOTVILLE. They seem to have killed about 150 Gendarmes, among them probably seven Europeans.’<sup>516</sup> Conscious of Gendarmerie intentions, ‘A’ Company posted sentries on the perimeter of their camp so that ‘at least our throats weren’t going to be cut in the middle of the night without some form of alarm being sounded.’<sup>517</sup> There was much wisdom in this as, Comdt Pearse Wheatley noted ‘Nobody realises more than we do how dangerous is the position of our men held prisoner by Tshombe. I don’t think the Africans would hesitate in killing them off if they were put to it.’<sup>518</sup> Comdt Quinlan told the International Red Cross that he and his men were ‘tip top and rearing to go’, and asked that press reporting was contradicted in the ‘strongest terms’ ‘that Gendarmerie could have wiped out A Coy at any time. Evidence to the contrary’.<sup>519</sup>

Visiting HQ 35 Inf Bn, Capt Basil Greer reported to Dublin that the 35 Inf Bn was ‘in good spirits but anxious about [their] comrades in Jadotville.’<sup>520</sup> There was a definite sense of ‘aftermath’ to the situation in Katanga. On 3 October, 35 Inf Bn company commanders were to have their reports on Operation Morthor submitted to Battalion Intelligence Officer and Second-in-Command Comdt John Kane. Close on a week later, these had not all come in as the Battalion commander’s conference recorded they were to be submitted ‘immediately.’<sup>521</sup>

After being held captive in Jadotville, the UN prisoners including ‘A’ Company were moved to Kolwezi on 11 October. That was ‘a different ball game.’<sup>522</sup> ‘When we were in Jadotville everything was pretty normal,’ but then when ‘A’ Company were moved to Kolwezi, instead of going to their

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<sup>512</sup> Pte Mick Dunne, interview with IRG, 21 February 2021.

<sup>513</sup> Pte Frank McManus, interview with IRG, 18 February 2021.

<sup>514</sup> Cpl Seán Tiernan, interview with IRG, 20 April 1961.

<sup>515</sup> UNA, S/816/16/2, Liarommatis to O’Brien and Chief of Staff, 4 October 1961.

<sup>516</sup> UNA, S/822/4/5, HQ, Katanga Command to ONUC Leo O2331 (undated), 5 October 1961. Report by Kjellgren. Also sent as 02371, Kjellgren to Khiari, MacEoin, 0535Z, 6 October 1961. ‘about 150’ appears as ‘at least 150’ in Major Bhalla’s report of 6-7 October 1961.

<sup>517</sup> Pte Michael Tighe, interview with IRG, 19 February 2021. Pte Tighe stood guard with a hurley, the only weapon at his disposal.

<sup>518</sup> MA, PRCN, 73/1/7, Congo Journal, June-December 1961, Comdt Pearse Wheatley, 35Bn ONUC, Book II, 9 October 1961.

<sup>519</sup> UNA, S/840/2/6, Lt Col McNamee to Irish Liaison Officer Leopoldville, 5 October 1961, 1745Z.

<sup>520</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 35INFBN, 3/2, Capt Greer to Plans and Ops, Dublin NO. 658), 1 or 2 October 1961.

<sup>521</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 35INFBN, 2/8, Battalion Commander’s conference, 7 October 1961.

<sup>522</sup> Pte Michael Tighe, interview with IRG, 19 February 2021.

new compound right away ‘A’ Company was taken on a journey round local villages, where villagers shouted and screamed at them.<sup>523</sup> The women ‘obviously had relatives who were killed at Jadotville’ and they ‘were the ones who were volatile, they were calling for blood ... they were making signs of cutting your throat, and cutting your genitals off to make earrings out of them or whatever, and eat your hearts and livers.’<sup>524</sup>

One of the few comments that Cpl Seán Kerr made about his six months in Congo was that that day in Kolwezi ‘the women were worse than the men, they sharpened their teeth in front of us.’<sup>525</sup> Pte Paul Malone had no difficulty working out ‘the threats of what they were going to do to us given a chance ... they were quite obscene, gestures, the people guarding the bus were terrified.’<sup>526</sup> So too was ‘A’ Company’s interpreter who when asked what the locals were shouting replied ‘what they said wasn’t good.’<sup>527</sup> ‘They were looking for revenge because a lot of their husbands, or maybe sons, had been killed during the battle’, recalled Pte John Dreelan. He felt that this was probably a more frightening episode than any during the battle itself.<sup>528</sup> It seemed so in a letter written by Lt Joe Leech:

The ‘ladies’ were by far the most hostile! The burden of their chat was that they had no meat for 10 days thanks to ONU and now they had. They intimated that they would castrate us and eat our testicles, cut off the tops of our heads, frankly I was not a little relieved when a Flemish civil servant prevailed on our escort to take us back to Kolwezi.<sup>529</sup>

In Kolwezi camp, the men were ‘very forcibly booted into the compound’, lined up in three rows and told to empty out their kits.<sup>530</sup> ‘The searches used to be terrible’ in captivity recalled Pte Billy Keane.<sup>531</sup> When contraband items were found, some men were beaten up. The first was Cpl Jack Peppard, for having two rounds of ammunition, which he had received as a souvenir from the two mercenaries ‘A’ Company had captured. The Gendarmerie ‘made a football out of him.’<sup>532</sup> ‘A’ Company ‘went to make a move’, but Comdt Quinlan prevented this fearing ‘they would all be killed.’<sup>533</sup> Cpl John Gorman recalled that on seeing what was happening to Pte Peppard, Comdt Quinlan intervened and grabbed one of the sentries ‘and shook the shit out of him ... and the other sentries were all standing around with their mouths open, he said “You don’t touch my men”’.<sup>534</sup>

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<sup>523</sup> Cpl Seán Foley, interview with IRG, 9 February 2021.

<sup>524</sup> Cpl Seán Foley, interview with IRG, 9 February 2021.

<sup>525</sup> Deborah Kerr-Flanagan, interview with IRG, 28 January 2021. This was one of the few memories of his time in Congo Cpl Kerr told his daughter.

<sup>526</sup> Pte Paul Malone, interview with IRG, 2 February 2021. Pte Michael Tighe told the IRG that he had heard, but could not verify, that ‘A’ Company were to be killed in bunches of twenty, their bodies dismembered, and their genitals stuffed in their mouths and that this had not happened because the local burgomaster had been educated in Dublin. But he could not verify this story. Pte Leo Boland recalled seeing a white Mercedes type car arrive during the demonstration and he realised that the man driving it was held some authority as his presence caused the situation to calm down. The convoy started up again and ‘A’ Company departed.

<sup>527</sup> Pte Leo Boland, interview with IRG, 18 February 2021.

<sup>528</sup> Pte John Dreelan, interview with IRG, 25 February 2021.

<sup>529</sup> Col J.A.O. Leech, private papers, letter to Lola Leech, 29 October 1961.

<sup>530</sup> Pte Michael Tighe, interview with IRG, 19 February 2021.

<sup>531</sup> Pte Billy Keane, interview with IRG, 6 May 2021.

<sup>532</sup> Pte Michael Tighe, interview with IRG, 19 February 2021.

<sup>533</sup> Pte Paddy Hogan, interview with IRG, 19 February 2021.

<sup>534</sup> Pte John Gorman, interview with IRG, 19 January 2021.

When asked about the conditions in captivity, Pte Paul Malone said the Gendarmerie had no respect for them and replied ‘Did you get the smack of the butt of a rifle in the chest? ... count yourself lucky, it’s a sore one.’<sup>535</sup> The likelihood was that the Gendarmerie were not going to kill ‘A’ Company, but ‘fear was still there’, there was ‘the gestures’ the Gendarmerie would make at personnel from ‘A’ Company, ‘what they were going to do with the bits and pieces, that sort of thing.’<sup>536</sup> ‘They were rough times’, said Pte Billy Keane of his time in captivity in Jadotville and Kolwezi.<sup>537</sup>

Back in Ireland families waited for news and worried. ‘Me mother had a path bate to the church, so she had, praying for us’ recalled Pte Michael Greene.<sup>538</sup> Maureen Molloy remembered how a telegram concerning her father ‘took a whole street out’:

One of my brothers was playing on the street and someone came up on a bicycle and they knew straight away it was a telegram. And all mammy had known through the time that they were captured was what she had either heard on the radio or saw in the paper or housewife talk from house to house, not like today’s communication. So that was an awful shock to her, and he said she couldn’t even open it and she had to sit for a while and neighbours came in and family was all around because they weren’t instantly told who was alive and who wasn’t, it was only through the paper, some of the cuttings I have. So that was a big impact on the next few days. And obviously it was a good telegram, it was short and sharp, that he was safe and well.<sup>539</sup>

Deborah Kerr-Flanagan recalled vividly to the Independent Review Group that when the Red Cross letter came, she saw her ‘mother at the kitchen table crying and crying and crying and I knew something was wrong and I knew that perhaps Dad would never come back to us.’<sup>540</sup> These letters were a lifeline between Ireland and Katanga. In one of his final letters to his wife Peggy before he returned to Ireland, Deborah’s father, Cpl Seán Kerr wrote to his wife: ‘I would like to thank you for keeping up regular correspondence, Love, for it carried me through some rough times, thank you again, Darling.’<sup>541</sup>

Mary Gilsenan remembered how during the Battle of Jadotville and afterwards while ‘A’ Company was in captivity that whenever the postman called at her house, the first on Saint Ruth’s Park in Athlone, her mother, May, would read aloud any letters she received from her husband Sgt Frank Gilsenan in the presence of the postman.<sup>542</sup> This way the postman could then pass on from May Gilsenan the information she received from her husband to the other Defence Forces families living on the road. This enabled a further flow of news and new information about ‘A’ Company to get across to a wider group of people.

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<sup>535</sup> Pte Paul Malone, interview with IRG, 2 February 2021.

<sup>536</sup> Cpl Tadhg Quinn, interview with IRG, 21 January 2021.

<sup>537</sup> Pte Billy Keane, interview with IRG, 6 May 2021.

<sup>538</sup> Pte Michael Greene, interview with IRG, 22 April 2021.

<sup>539</sup> Maureen Molloy, 18 February 2021. Maureen Molloy gave the telegram to the National Museum of Ireland who lost it.

<sup>540</sup> Deborah Kerr-Flanagan, interview with IRG, 28 January 2021.

<sup>541</sup> Letter from Cpl Seán Kerr to Peggy Kerr, 27 Nov. 1961. Read to the IRG by his daughter Deborah Kerr-Flanagan, 28 January 2021.

<sup>542</sup> Mary Gilsenan, phone conversation with IRG, 21 June 2021.

News from Katanga remained scarce. Mary walked daily to the gates of Custume Barracks in Athlone, taking her two youngest siblings with her in their pram, to see if there was any more news available from Katanga. Seeking further information, the local women used meet in her mother's house to write to the UN and to Irish government departments seeking further information on 'A' Company's situation.

Letters were so important as links between families and between husbands and their wives and children. Rosalinda Murphy remembered that when a letter from her father arrived home 'Mum would be eating the letter up, so happy to get the letter, you know, and she'd put it in her apron pocket, and it wouldn't move from there.'<sup>543</sup> Those few lines contained the most important news: 'They were safe and they were well, and not to worry about them, he would be constantly telling her not to worry, we're grand, don't heed what you're hearing or reading in the papers or whatever.'<sup>544</sup>

Tapes sent back and forth between 'A' Company in captivity and their loved ones and families in Ireland provided another close link. 'A' Company, while anxious to send their love to wives, girlfriends and families back in Ireland, they also wished to deliver the collective message that they were in good spirits:

I want to tell all the boys and the children and fathers and the mothers of the men here in Jadotville not to worry about us, don't weep for us, just hold your heads high, because I can assure you that Ireland never had finer braver men than your men who are out here with us in Jadotville. Well keep your chins up, that's the best way you can help us now. Keep smiling and thank God that we are all alive. We'll be home soon, please God, so don't worry.<sup>545</sup>

These tapes allowed smaller snippets of local news and the odd jovial reprimand to be sent to 'A' Company. In a short message to Pte Jimmy McCourt, Peggy Galvin got all her hopes across along with a small rap on the knuckles:

This is Peggy Galvin speaking, hello, ... I'm looking forward to seeing you at Christmas when you come up our way which I hope you will do I'm glad to see you are not doing anything reckless like straining yourself writing however I hope you are doing alright keep an eye on Sean MacEntee won't you ... I'm sure you often think of the County Hall and all the good old time cheerio and God bless.<sup>546</sup>

And for Cpl Seán MacEntee, from his wife Joan, there was a message filled with heartfelt loss and longing that comes alive from the page sixty years later:

Hello Seán, this is Joan speaking, hope you are keeping well. I believe there was a tape from Jadotville in Athlone the other night why don't you get the same from the Mullingar boys? Are you getting any letters from me? I am sending a letter every other day. I only

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<sup>543</sup> Rosalinda Murphy, interview with IRG, 4 May 2021.

<sup>544</sup> Comdt Danny Tiernan (Retd), interview with IRG, 1 April 2021.

<sup>545</sup> Digitised tape recording of messages from Jadotville, kindly sent by Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd) to the IRG, February 2021.

<sup>546</sup> MA, 435, 'Jadotville relatives' recording', digital audio file.

got one from you. I have got a few photos off the papers. You look very well, thank God. I was delighted when I heard your message from Jadotville over Radio Éireann on Monday. It was good to hear your voice again it brought you nearer to me for a few more moments. I sent a lot of requests to 'Dateline Dublin' did you hear any of them yet, let me know if you did? Won't you? Love from all the children to their dad. This is all. From Joan, with all my love, God Bless.<sup>547</sup>

A film of 'A' Company in captivity was later shown in Columb Barracks in Mullingar, with each giving a small greeting to their families and loved ones. Rosalinda Murphy saw her father's face on the screen and, she remembered, 'I ran up to the screen and "I told you Daddy wasn't dead, I told you Daddy wasn't dead, there he is" because he was alive as anything on this screen.'<sup>548</sup>

### ***Reports on the Battle of Jadotville***

Scattered evidence of what had happened on the Katangese side during the fighting was picked up by UN sources. Major [Henri] Lasimone, Operations Officer during Jadotville, later defected to the UN, and explained that operations in Jadotville were directed by himself and a French officer Major Michel de Clary. 'Almost all of the actual fighting had he said been done by Europeans more than 100 of whom took part in the hostilities.'<sup>549</sup> A source described as 'a friendly African' told 'A' Company that:

all whites in Jadotville excepting [one] Irish and one Scot took part in fighting, without white leadership Gendarmerie could not have dislodged Irish Coy and repulsed reinforcement at area Bridge. These white officers are working in Union Minière ... 30 Coffins were prepared by Union Minière at Jadotville ... Gendarmerie strength at Jadotville has been increased considerably.<sup>550</sup>

The Irish and the Scot were Charles Kearney, originally from Wexford, and Terry Barber, both known to 35 Inf Bn officers, who reported to the UN that '30 whites killed in fighting' and that during it 'all male whites' in Union Minière had been armed with LAs.<sup>551</sup> Charles Kearney later reported that '15 Gendarmerie including 1 French Algerian white officer [were] killed during hostilities. The bodies of five Gendarmerie were taken out of the bush on 5 October. Many wounded (about 50) have died in hospital.'<sup>552</sup> Brig Raja and Cruise O'Brien informed Lt Gen MacEoin that 'all offensive operations had been carried out by Europeans.'<sup>553</sup> They added that an Italian mercenary, Lt Billotti was killed at Jadotville and that Comdt Quinlan had 'stated that he had seen five Europeans in civilian clothes fighting and that one European officer shot two Gendarmes who refused to fight.'<sup>554</sup>

The Irish prisoners 'believe several whites were killed in the fighting.' Commenting on Katangese casualties, Cpl Seán Tiernan said that he 'didn't like to see black people being killed, but I had no

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<sup>547</sup> MA, 435, 'Jadotville relatives' recording', digital audio file.

<sup>548</sup> Rosalinda Murphy, interview with IRG, 4 May 2021.

<sup>549</sup> UNA, S/840/2/6, ELLEO 65 Cruise O'Brien to Linner and Lt Gen MacEoin, 22 October 1961.

<sup>550</sup> UNA, S/840/2/6, HQ Katanga Command to Leo, 2045Z, 7 October 1961.

<sup>551</sup> UNA, S/840/2/6, ONUC E'ville to ONUC Leo, ELLEO 993, 1505Z, 7 October 1961.

<sup>552</sup> UNA, S/840/2/6, unnumbered sitrep to 09/10 1600, 10 October 1961.

<sup>553</sup> MA, PRCN, 2019/3, Cruise O'Brien and Brig Raja to MacEoin, 23 October 1961.

<sup>554</sup> MA, PRCN, 2019/3, 'Report on Mercenaries and other forms of foreign intervention in Katanga', attached to Cruise O'Brien and Brig Raja to Lt Gen MacEoin, 23 October 1961.

mercy at all for mercenaries, I had no mercy for them, they were horrible people, horrible ... they were just using the Black Gendarmes.<sup>555</sup>

The debriefing of 'A' Company interpreter Lt Lars Fröberg provided one of the most comprehensive overall accounts of what happened at Jadotville:

In Jadotville, there are many GENDARMERIES; they are well armed such as FN rifles, MGs, heavy mortars 81mm. A Fouga jet plane also took part in the fighting. During the fight approximately 150 GENDARMERIES were killed and many wounded. Information received was that 7 White Officers were killed. But later an Irish officer saw 30 coffins being buried, and only whites are buried in coffins. One must assume that 30 white officers were killed. No casualties from own troops.<sup>556</sup>

However, a marginal note on Lt Fröberg's assessment reads 'NOT SO', but which specific part it refers to, or whether it refers to all of the account is unclear. Nevertheless, the Belgians in the town were certainly rattled by what had happened, reports now indicating that 'the Belgians in JADOTVILLE and E'VILLE are rumoured to have declared that they will adopt a scorched earth policy in the event of an attack.'<sup>557</sup> 35 Inf Bn heard that 'reports say (a) Whites fear Blacks (b) Blacks and Whites fear ANC.'<sup>558</sup> In contrast to the situation in August when 'A' Company had departed for Jadotville, 'large number[s] of European mercenaries and officers' were reported in Jadotville.<sup>559</sup> There were a possible thirty to forty 'Europeans running [the] Gendarmerie in Jadotville.'<sup>560</sup> Gendarmerie forces in total were now thought to number 1,000 to 1,200.<sup>561</sup> The Chief Geologist at the Union Minière Headquarters at Jadotville was 'controlling all movement of goods and persons through the town on behalf of the Gendarmerie.'<sup>562</sup> The company's workshops were said to have produced an armed bulldozer. A late November 1961 ONUC intelligence report on Jadotville concluded there were from 1,000 to 2,000 Gendarmerie in the town.<sup>563</sup> By 1962, ONUC's Katanga Command reported that 'UN has NO influence in Jadotville area.'<sup>564</sup>

### ***'A' Company Released***

A 35 Inf Bn staff conference on the 13 October discussed the forthcoming return of the 'POWs' on 16 October. The plans included a Guard of Honour of thirty other ranks, drawn from HQ Company and the Armoured Car Group, at the old airstrip where the handover was to take place, a reception at the Battalion's camp, and a reception for officers later at Conor Cruise O'Brien's official residence 'Les Roches'.<sup>565</sup>

A permanent ceasefire agreement was to come into effect in Katanga on 14 October. It provided for the exchange and release of prisoners. Cruise O'Brien told Comdt Pearse Wheatley that day

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<sup>555</sup> Cpl Seán Tiernan, interview with IRG, 20 April 1961.

<sup>556</sup> UNA, S/840/2/6, 'Report by 2/LT Fröberg of Swedish BN who was taken prisoner during September incident.'

<sup>557</sup> UNA, S/840/2/6, 'Summary of major events', 2-3 October 1961.

<sup>558</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 35INFBN, 2/8, Company Commander's Conference, 7 October 1961.

<sup>559</sup> UNA 'Summary of major events', 5-6 October 1961.

<sup>560</sup> UNA, S/840/2/6, ONUC EVILLE to ONUC LEO, ELLEO989, 0007Z, 6 October 1961.

<sup>561</sup> UNA, S/840/2/6, HQ Katanga Command to HQ ONUC Leopoldville, 1300Z, 7 October 1961.

<sup>562</sup> TNA, FO 371/155002, Dunnett to Leopoldville, 3 October 1961.

<sup>563</sup> UNA, S/840/2/6, 'Military Advisor's comments'.

<sup>564</sup> UNA, S/822/5/7, HQ Katanga Command to Gardiner, 17 February 1962.

<sup>565</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 35INFBN, 2/8, minutes of meeting of 13 October 1961.



that ‘in effect that we had given way in every direction to have our prisoners returned.’<sup>566</sup> He added ominously that ‘What UN will do afterward is nobody’s business.’

However, the prisoner exchange did not take place as planned on 16 October. ‘A’ Company were bused to Elisabethville and were kept in the sweltering heat all day on their busses. Men were not allowed to go to the toilet and there was no water or food. The release did not take place. For Pte Frank McManus when they turned the buses round ‘I couldn’t believe it ... I said to myself “we’ll never flipping last this”, but we did, we started to sing songs on the bus ... but it shattered me.’<sup>567</sup>

‘A’ Company returned to Kolwezi and captivity. They planned not to let this happen again. If a further release failed, and should they get the opportunity when being transported, they would take over the convoy. At a certain stretch of road on the outskirts of Elisabethville, Comdt Quinlan was to ‘stand up and wipe his forehead with his handkerchief’ and this was the signal.<sup>568</sup> Designated members of ‘A’ Company would engage the guards, one man would take on the driver, and the buses they were travelling in would, under ‘A’ Company drivers, attempt to run the accompanying jeeps of Gendarmerie off the road or ram them with the busses. Pte Joe O’Kane was a driver with ‘A’ Company and he was one of those who was picked to sit behind a driver and told the Independent Review Group ‘you can take your pick what was going to be done after that, but it never happened.’<sup>569</sup>

In the days between the unsuccessful release of the prisoners on 16 October and the eventual release on 25 October, on Lt Gen MacEoin’s orders, Lt Col McNamee sent a report on 35 Inf Bn’s morale to him, which in turn was sent to Dublin to Chief of Staff Maj Gen Collins-Powell. Lt Col McNamee reported that 35 Inf Bn’s morale remained ‘high in spite of many adverse factors, e.g. casualties, prisoners, poor living conditions, inferior tentage, absence of steel helmets and jungle boots, heavy duties, etc.’<sup>570</sup> The ‘atmosphere of despondency’ through September declined, as news improved of the prisoners, and Lt Col McNamee concluded ‘I feel there is NO need to worry about the morale of this unit.’

At that time, Lt Col McNamee made no attempt to single out any member of the 35 Inf Bn for acts worthy of recommendation for award, but he did say that ‘in every Op[eration] in which this unit has participated in, I’ve experienced the highest standards of enthusiastic co-operation from all ranks. Certain people had to be restrained from action above the call of duty. Adm personnel had to be prevented from participating in actions.’ But no individuals were singled out for special merit. Lt Gen MacEoin thought about travelling to Elisabethville in this period but left it to senior civilian ONUC officials Sture Linner and Mahmoud Khiari to go instead in connection with the ceasefire and prisoner release.<sup>571</sup>

In the run up to the exchange of prisoners on 25 October, an Irish ONUC Liaison Officer reported again that ‘the fact that A Coy personnel were still held prisoner was obviously a source of worry and strain.’ The Liaison Officer added that since his visit ‘the return of this Coy has

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<sup>566</sup> MA, PRCN, 73/1/7, Congo Journal, June-December 1961, Comdt Pearse Wheatley, Book II, 14 October 1961.

<sup>567</sup> Pte Frank McManus, interview with IRG, 18 February 2021.

<sup>568</sup> Pte Michael Tighe, interview with IRG, 19 February 2021. Details confirmed by Pte Paddy Hogan on 18 February 2021.

<sup>569</sup> Pte Joe O’Kane, interview with IRG, 25 February 2021.

<sup>570</sup> MA, COS, 594, ‘Meanman 35 CB COIS’, Lt Col McNamee to Lt Gen MacEoin, 21 October 1961.

<sup>571</sup> MA, PRCN, 1/2/17, Lt Gen MacEoin Diary, entry for 21 October 1961.

taken place along with other prisoners, and there is little doubt that this will have a most beneficial effect.<sup>572</sup>

The context of 35 Inf Bn's 'Ceremonial Order No. 4' of 24 October was the exchange of prisoners at the old airstrip at Elisabethville at 1600hrs on 25 October 1961, the mission being to 'observe the occasion with due ceremony'. Lt Gen MacEoin noted in his diary that he had 'news of release of prisoners in E'ville'.<sup>573</sup> With Lt Col McNamee, Conor Cruise O'Brien attended the ceremony, and a later ceremony at 35 Inf Bn HQ. Not all personnel of 'A' Company wanted to shake his hand: 'when I seen Conor Cruise O'Brien coming in the fucking gate I wish I had a few bullets ... this fucker comes in to welcome us back and I don't know how he wasn't killed, I just don't know ... I'd say it was the worst experience of the whole time I was out there.'<sup>574</sup> Pte Mick Dunne's view on the Secretary-General's Special Representative in Katanga was one held by many in 'A' Company: 'he hung us out to dry.'<sup>575</sup>

The day after release Comdt Quinlan attended the 35 Inf Bn's commanding officer's conference for the first time since his departure for Jadotville close on two months earlier. The meeting discussed re-equipping 'A' Company. They received a mixture of No. 4 Lee Enfield rifles, FN automatic rifles, Gustaf sub-machine guns, as well as Bren guns, 84mm anti-tank guns and two 81mm mortars from B Coy. In early November, a Board of Survey was established to consider the losses of 'A' Company and the Purfield Group.<sup>576</sup> To the men receiving new weapons it was a significant moment. On his release Pte Frank McManus thought 'I'm back in the frame now.'<sup>577</sup> To Lt Noel Carey getting a weapon back was 'tremendous, like getting a limb back.'<sup>578</sup> Pte John Dreelan, a 35 Inf Bn HQ Company medic who volunteered to be attached to 'A' Company for their posting to Jadotville, opted to stay with 'A' Company because 'of their attitude, their bravery, the commander – the Commandant himself.'<sup>579</sup>

The conference also noted that all Company reports on Operation Morthor had been submitted, except that from 'A' Company. Comdt Quinlan was asked 'to have same in as soon as possible.' Comdt Quinlan, with Comdt Pat Cahalane, Lt Tommy Ryan, Sgt O'Driscoll and interpreter Michael Nolan, was also to have a report for Conor Cruise O'Brien 'on their contact with, and treatment by whites during captivity.'<sup>580</sup> This report was signed on 27 October 1961 by Lt Col McNamee.<sup>581</sup>

The following day, 28 October, Lt Col McNamee, Comdt Quinlan and 'A' Company Chaplain Father Fagan, were summoned to Leopoldville to meet ONUC Force Commander Lt Gen MacEoin.<sup>582</sup> Lt Jim Condon pondered in his diary that Comdt Quinlan 'will either come back

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<sup>572</sup> MA, COS, 594, 'Report on visit by LO to 35 Irish Bn at E'ville', Capt G. O'Sullivan, 24 October 1961.

<sup>573</sup> MA, PRCN, 1/2/17, Lt Gen MacEoin Diary, entry for 25 October 1961.

<sup>574</sup> Pte Frank McManus, interview with IRG, 18 February 2021.

<sup>575</sup> Pte Mick Dunne, interview with IRG, 21 February 2021.

<sup>576</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 35INFBN, 2/8, minutes of meeting, 2 Nov. 1961. The Purfield Group was a small group from 35 Inf Bn led by Capt Purfield which was captured near Gendarmerie Headquarters in Elisabethville on 17 October 1961 and briefly held in custody.

<sup>577</sup> Pte Frank McManus, interview to IRG, 18 February 2021.

<sup>578</sup> Capt Noel Carey, interview with IRG, 19 January 2021.

<sup>579</sup> Pte John Dreelan, interview with IRG, 25 February 2021.

<sup>580</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 35INFBN, 2/8, minutes of meeting, 26 October 1961.

<sup>581</sup> MA, PRCN, 0058, 'Attitude of white population in Jadotville'.

<sup>582</sup> MA, PRCN, 1/2/17, Lt Gen MacEoin Diary, entries for 28 and 29 October 1961.

promoted or a Cpl.<sup>583</sup> It was Lt Joe Leech's view that Comdt Quinlan 'should not be blamed as he received NO directions whatsoever from E'ville.'<sup>584</sup>

Lt Gen MacEoin was enraged at what had happened in Elisabethville in September. He sent a 'Top Secret' cable to UN Under Secretary for Special Political Affairs Ralph Bunche at the UN Secretariat that 'there were serious shortcomings at the command-and-control level', particularly during Operation Morthor. Lt Gen MacEoin particularly blamed the commander of Katanga Command Brig Raja for failing to co-operate with Col Jonas Waern, OC Sector B, who was commander of UN forces in Elisabethville, and for failing to take Col Waern's assessment of Gendarmerie numbers.<sup>585</sup> As part of ONUC's attempt to understand what had happened in Elisabethville, other Irish officers including Capt Arthur Magennis and Lt Michael Considine were also flown to Leopoldville for debriefing.

Gathering his thoughts, Lt Joe Leech wrote home to Ireland:

It's almost comic here the way scapegoats are being sought for the muddling of 'Operation Mortar' (sic). The Belgians and Katangese knew it was coming 3 days before thanks to Gen Raja passing telex messages in clear concerning the operation, then the civilians would not let the military carry out the entire operation on 28 August (Op Rumpunch) when it would have been successful, as was proved. Now as both the top brass and the frocks have been at fault they must find whipping boys further down the line! Both Quinlan and McNamee the Bn Comdr have flown to Leo to McKeown this morning – there may be interesting developments to that. The danger to Quinlan is two-fold viz his statement to the press even tho' he was misreported and the fact that he was tricked from a cease-fire with terms, into a complete surrender – that was tragic but he should not be blamed as he received NO directions whatsoever from E'ville. Then both the Indian and Irish commanders fumbled the Lufira Br. Tho' both the Irish and Ghurkha soldiers fought well. Also Waern the Swedish Brigadier, a fine fellow but not a brilliant soldier told Gen Raja that he was a coward! This was justifiable as Raja did not leave his office block once during the scrap and almost knocked down female sec on his way to the cellars if the jet was in the vicinity! A comedy of errors which was tragic for some [words indecipherable].<sup>586</sup>

The most significant report written by Comdt Quinlan in this period was his 31 October 1961 report to ONUC Force Commander Lt Gen MacEoin on 'A' Company's experiences in Jadotville from their departure from Elisabethville on 2 September 1961 to their release from captivity on 25 October 1961.<sup>587</sup> The report, written according to Comdt Quinlan, 'from memory in Leopoldville' when he and Lt Col McNamee were meeting Lt Gen MacEoin, was then sent by Maj K. O'Brien<sup>588</sup> to Maj Gen Collins-Powell in Dublin.<sup>589</sup> Comdt Quinlan's report submitted to

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<sup>583</sup> MA, PC 346, Lt Jim Condon, diary entry, 29 October 1961.

<sup>584</sup> Col J.A.O. Leech, private papers, letter to Lola Leech, 29 October 1961.

<sup>585</sup> MA, PRCN, 1/2/22, Lt Gen MacEoin to Bunche, 16 October 1961.

<sup>586</sup> Col J.A.O. Leech, private papers, letter to Lola Leech, date stamped 30 October 1961.

<sup>587</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 35INFBN, 3/5, Comdt Quinlan to Lt Gen MacEoin, 31 October 1961.

<sup>588</sup> Military Assistant to the Force Commander.

<sup>589</sup> MA, PRCN, 2016/01, Comdt Quinlan to Col Emphy, 2 January 1962.

Lt Gen MacEoin, was later included, with no changes in substance, as Annex B on the Battle of Jadotville in the 35 Inf Bn's Unit History<sup>590</sup>.

On 31 October 1961, 'A' Company took over duty at the 'Ant Hill Post' in Elisabethville.<sup>591</sup> 'C' Company 35 Inf Bn moved to Nyunzu to join with 'B' Company on 15 November. 'C' Company moved to Niemba on 3 December to relieve a Swedish Battalion. The 1 Infantry Group, which had left Kamina for Nyunzu on 11 October, had already returned to Ireland in stages between 20 and 24 November. The advance party of the 36 Inf Bn arrived in Elisabethville on 22 November 1961. The advance party of 35 Inf Bn of three officers and seventy other ranks left Elisabethville for Leopoldville on 29 November. It arrived in Dublin on the evening of 30 November.

On 29 November, Brig Raja presented the 35 Inf Bn with their UN service medal. On 2 December Brig Raja sent a letter to Lt Gen MacEoin, which was copied to Lt Col McNamee, which has since been much commented upon because of the way it singled out Lt Col McNamee and Comdt Quinlan:

No. 1004/7/GS<sup>592</sup>  
HQ Katanga Command  
Elisabethville.

*CONFIDENTIAL*

2 December, 1961

To:  
The Force Commander,  
ONUC,  
Leopoldville

Subject: *Appreciation of service – 35th Irish Battalion*

On the departure of the 35th Irish Battalion from Katanga Command I feel I would be failing in my duty if I did not express my appreciation as well as that of my staff and troops in Katanga, of the fine work done by this very fine battalion.

2. The 35th Irish Battalion has shown remarkable steadfastness and fortitude during the very difficult times that they have had to pass through during their stay in South Katanga. They have been a fine example of restraint coupled with soldierly qualities in keeping with the highest traditions of the United Nations.

3. I feel that the fine example given by this Battalion was in a very large measure due to the personal example, drive and soldierly qualities of Lieutenant Colonel McNamee, their commanding officer. Colonel McNamee has impressed me as being a fine gentleman with high soldierly qualities and possessing strong convictions and belief in the cause of the United Nations, which he has done his very best to uphold. This I feel contributed in no small way to the fine performance of this Battalion during their six months stay here.

4. I should like to make particular mention of Commandant Quinlan, who was in command of the company that had the misfortune to suffer so much at Jadotville. This officer needs little

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<sup>590</sup> MA, Unit History, 35 Inf Bn.

<sup>591</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 35INFBN, HQ Coy Unit Journal, 31 October 1961.

<sup>592</sup> MA, Unit History, 35 Inf Bn, p. 69.

commendation as his performance in maintaining the discipline and high morale of his men during a particularly difficult stage of Katanga operations speaks for itself. I have great personal admiration for the initiative, courage, drive and restraint of this officer and I believe that he could be held as an example for all soldiers.

5. I am sorry to lose the 35th Irish Battalion from my command, but I can draw satisfaction from the knowledge that they shall be replaced by another Irish battalion, which I am convinced will in every way live up to the standard created by their predecessors.

6. I trust that my feelings expressed in this letter will be conveyed to the appropriate authorities.

Signed K.A.S. Raja, Brigadier  
Commander, Katanga Command

NOO

The Commanding Officer,  
35th IRISH Battalion ELISABETHVILLE.

These words glossed over a point Comdt Pearse Wheatley confided to his Congo Journal:

We have done our share of the work here but the UN has not played its part. We were walked unknowingly into a shooting war on 13 Sept by hopeless intelligence; we had our troops risk their lives unnecessarily by having them travel in death-trap vehicles like these single decker buses and they had no helmets to protect them. Mentally we were totally unprepared for the turn which events have taken. There must be some lesson to be learned in there somewhere.<sup>593</sup>

He added damningly:

The Irish were in the forefront all the time – cockshots on the tunnel bridge and supreme cockshots in Jadotville – indeed they do a high proportion of running the gauntlet in making the daily forays through a very hostile city while the Indians, including the famous Gurkhas remained safely behind their sandbags. As a race I think we are too humble because we see others strutting about with medal ribboned chests and associate this with military know how.<sup>594</sup>

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<sup>593</sup> MA, PRCN, 73/1/7, Congo Journal, June-December 1961, Comdt Pearse Wheatley, Book II, 21 September 1961.

<sup>594</sup> Ibid., 24 September 1961.



19. APPRECIATION

The following is one letter of appreciation - there are other - written by Brig RAJA, OC KATANGA Comd on the departure of 35 Bn from the Congo.

No 1004/7/GS  
HQ Katanga Command  
Elisabethville.

CONFIDENTIAL

To:

2 December, 1961.

The Force Commander,  
ONUC  
LEOPOLDVILLE

Subject: APPRECIATION OF SERVICE - 35th IRISH BATTALION

On the departure of 35th IRISH Battalion from KATANGA Command I feel I would be failing in my duty if I did not express my appreciation as well as that of my staff and troops in KATANGA, of the fine work done by this very fine battalion.

2 The 35th IRISH Battalion has shown remarkable steadfastness and fortitude during the very difficult times that they have had to pass through during their stay in SOUTH KATANGA. They have been a fine example of restraint coupled with soldierly qualities in keeping with the highest traditions of the United Nations.

3 I feel that the fine example given by this battalion was in a very large measure due to the personal example, drive and soldierly qualities of Lieut Colonel McNAMEE, their commanding officer. Colonel Mc NAMEE has impressed me as being a fine gentleman with high soldierly qualities and possessing strong convictions and belief in the cause of the United Nations, which he has done his very best to uphold. This I feel contributed in no small way to the fine performance of this battalion during their six-months stay here.

4 I should like to make particular mention of Comdt QUINLAN, who was in command of the company that had the misfortune to suffer so much at JADOTVILLE. This officer needs little commendation as his performance in maintaining the discipline and high morale of his men during a particularly difficult stage of KATANGA Operations speaks for itself. I have great personal admiration for the initiative, courage, drive and restraint of this officer and I believe that he could be held as an example for all soldiers.

5. I am sorry to lose the 35th IRISH Battalion from my command, but I can draw satisfaction from the knowledge that they shall be replaced by another IRISH Battalion, which I am convinced will in every way live up to the standard created by their predecessors.

6 I trust that my feelings expressed in this letter will be conveyed to the appropriate authorities.

(Signed) KAS Raja BRIGADIER  
COMMANDER, KATANGA COMMAND.

(K A S RAJA).

NOO  
The Commanding Officer  
35th IRISH Battalion ELISABETHVILLE.

### ***Growing Tension within the 35 Inf Bn over Jadotville***

What was not recorded was the growing tension between ‘A’ Company and other elements in the 35 Inf Bn, particularly B Coy who had been part of both Force Mide and Force Kane. After examining the situation in 2004, Col Enda Breslin felt it was that:

You have ‘A’ Company then sort of stirring the pot and saying “listen, look at us” and the answer to that was “well you surrendered and you were prisoners and you are lucky to be alive, etc. etc., stop your whinging”.<sup>595</sup>

Initially all was normal, Lt Jim Condon wrote in his diary for 25 October 1961 that there was ‘Good news today, all prisoners back to the fold again’ and some days later ‘Met officers of A Coy back from Jadotville, they are all in good form.’ However

slowly the feeling turned, and it was hard to understand, we weren’t after doing anything wrong, we couldn’t understand why we were being, like there were rows starting out of nowhere, now it didn’t take much because everybody’s nerves were on edge and mine was for a long time after coming home.<sup>596</sup>

Recalling how ‘A’ Company were received back into the 35 Inf Bn, Sqn Sgt Des Keegan of the Armoured Car Group said simply:

not very well, and you know, and that would be the general feeling on that, and you know in hindsight we were wrong. But, they wouldn’t have been treated as heroes or anything like that, you know, they’d be seen as people who, to put it bluntly who surrendered or capitulated, initially, you know, until we got to know what the facts were.<sup>597</sup>

Lt Col Seán Hennessy concurred with this: ‘we had a feeling, rightly or wrongly that they shouldn’t have surrendered.’<sup>598</sup> There were ‘handkerchiefs being taken out and waved’,<sup>599</sup> there were ‘rows being picked for no reason, white feathers and Jadotville Jacks and all that sort of stuff.’<sup>600</sup>

One possible reason for the attitude towards ‘A’ Company emerges from a personal journal entry made by Comdt Pearse Wheatley while ‘A’ Company were in captivity:

Morale is top rate. One would think that A Coy and all our prisoners would effect the men, but not at all. Of course we have never had all the battalion together at once. Since the start, and [our?] A Coy are particular strangers to the remainder. The Bn is somewhat off balance with one third of its fighting strength missing.<sup>601</sup>

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<sup>595</sup> Col Enda Breslin (Retd), interview with IRG, 13 April 2021. Brig Gen Chris Moore (Retd) also made this point to the IRG on 21 January 2021.

<sup>596</sup> Pte Michael Tighe, interview with IRG, 19 February 2021.

<sup>597</sup> Sqn Sgt Des Keegan, interview with IRG, 9 February 2021.

<sup>598</sup> Lt Col Seán Hennessy, interview with IRG, 30 Mar. 2021.

<sup>599</sup> Pte Noel Stanley, interview with IRG, 21 January 2021.

<sup>600</sup> Pte Michael Tighe, interview with IRG, 19 February 2021.

<sup>601</sup> MA, PRCN, 73/1/7, Congo Journal, June-December 1961, Comdt Pearse Wheatley, Book I, 27 September 1961.

‘A’ Company being ‘particular strangers to the remainder’ is a very significant point to make regarding how ‘A’ Company were treated because of and after Jadotville.

The atmosphere within the 35 Inf Bn was becoming increasingly difficult. Lt Condon’s diary provides another insight into this unhealthy mood from the perspective of ‘B’ Company:

We are becoming great gossipers about each other, nothing much to do really, mutual admiration society growing. I refrain from dealing with the recognition for meritorious service awards. Some of them are so puerile that they don’t ring true. Maguire is in for one now this is favouritism, also Heffernan, also favoured S. is back to normal again and reliving his deeds of bravery, the armchair soldier.<sup>602</sup>

He added:

McQuillan blows up frequently when he hears some of our armchair soldiers talking about our small war and how they did this, that and the other thing, it is difficult to tolerate fools easily.

Lt Condon’s point about the attitude towards ‘meritorious service awards’ is interesting and revealing. It shows that there were those within 35 Inf Bn who saw no reason to take the question of awards seriously and wrote up ‘puerile’ recommendations for their personnel.

Within ‘A’ Company, Lt Joe Leech had a similar attitude. He wrote of how Comdt Quinlan ‘has just been in asking Bill D[onnelly] and myself what he should do about recommendations for Officers of the Coy at Jadot. He asked would we agree to an “all or no one” citation and we said yes, not because he wanted that answer (he did!) but for charity’s sake.’<sup>603</sup> Lt Leech later wrote that ‘I made out my platoon report on the action today and recommendations for NCOs and men, also special recommendations and cribs – it helped pass the time.’ Lt Leech and Comdt Quinlan had a different attitude each over decorations and awards. While Comdt Quinlan ‘was talking ‘about “civic receptions” and “people coming all the way from Connemara for it” – he also tried to make us recommend blokes for the Military Cross’, but Lt Leech and his fellow officers felt that ‘that it is the Irish VC and the standard should be exceedingly high and we have nominated a number for citations instead.’<sup>604</sup> This differing outlook shows that from the very aftermath of the Battle of Jadotville there were those who did not pay much attention to decorations, while there were others, such as Comdt Quinlan, who felt that awards and recognition were a very necessary part of the aftermath of the Battle of Jadotville. As this verbal discussion continued, others literally took matters into their own hands.

Cpl Seán Tiernan recalled being involved in fights over Jadotville until his platoon commander Lt Tom Quinlan told him ‘no more of this, cut it out right now, these are court martialling charges’ and after that ‘I just shunned it, I just walked away.’<sup>605</sup> Pte Mick Dunne remembered comments

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<sup>602</sup> MA, PC 346, Lt Jim Condon, diary entry, 31 October 1961.

<sup>603</sup> Lt J.A.O. Leech, private papers, letter to Lola Leech from mid-November 1961.

<sup>604</sup> Lt J.A.O. Leech, private papers, letter to Lola Leech from mid-November 1961.

<sup>605</sup> Cpl Seán Tiernan, interview with IRG, 20 April 2021.



on ‘A’ Company’s return to the 35 Inf Bn base at ‘The Farm’ in Elisabethville, ‘what do you f-ing think you’re coming in here, why didn’t you f-ing break out? And one or two butted in and said ‘you were in prison’ and ‘cowards’ and this kind of thing and I just laughed it off.’<sup>606</sup> He also remembered that this atmosphere did die down after a while, particularly once 35 Inf Bn went back into action in December 1961.

Tension rose again in Elisabethville in early December as the Gendarmerie set up roadblocks around the city and ONUC moved to remove them as the precursor to a larger operation aimed at locking down Elisabethville and bringing down Tshombe’s government. The repatriation of the 35 Inf Bn was deferred as a new round of UN operations began. Sqn Sgt Des Keegan recalled being with Cpl Jimmy Lucey during the fighting and said that he reckoned that after Jadotville Cpl Lucey was ‘mad for action as distinct to quietened down’ by his experience of the battle in Jadotville, ‘he was very aggressive’.<sup>607</sup>

During the December fighting, codenamed ‘Operation UNOKAT’ by Brig Raja, ‘A’ Company personnel were in action clearing the route to the old airport in Elisabethville, after which Lt Tom Quinlan and Sgt Walter Hegarty were recommended for decoration for their actions, and during the Battle of the Tunnel for which men from ‘A’ Company were later decorated. Comdt Pat Quinlan led a successful commando-style raid on the Socopetrol oil storage depot, his men destroying the facility with anti-tank weapons and leaving the storage tanks burning for days. The Socopetrol raid was important to raise morale in ‘A’ Company as it showed that “‘A’ Company wasn’t finished when it got released.”<sup>608</sup> And they had another motivation: “Those of A Coy (Jadotville) who remain would now like to stay on and finish off the Gendarmerie.”<sup>609</sup>

Comdt Pearse Wheatley’s Congo journal contains a contemporary account of the Socopetrol raid:

Yesterday we carried out a raid on the Gendarmerie petrol supplies held in a large depot on the north side of the city in huge tanks. Our patrol carried 84mm recoilless rifles (light anti-tank guns) and succeeded in setting one huge tank on fire. The flames and smoke billowed high into the sky and set fire to nearby tanks. A party set out later after nightfall to deal successfully with the tanks which were still intact. The clouds were low in the sky – indeed we had a heavy thunderstorm during the evening – and the clouds were reddened by the flame making twilight for miles around. In the rolling thunder claps one found it hard to distinguish the falling mortar shells. The work of the patrol did much return the morale breaking news of the newspapers [that 35th Bn were to remain in E’ville for the present].<sup>610</sup>

By 13 December 1961, the only units from the 35 Inf Bn remaining in Elisabethville, were HQ Company and elements of ‘A’ Company, as well as the Armd Car Gp. B Coy was in Nyunzu and C Coy was in Niemba. The entire 35 Inf Bn was repatriated to Ireland by 1153hrs on 25 December

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<sup>606</sup> Pte Michael Dunne, interview with IRG, 21 February 2021.

<sup>607</sup> Sqn Sgt Des Keegan, interview with IRG, 9 February 2021.

<sup>608</sup> Pte John Dreelan, interview with IRG, 25 February 2021.

<sup>609</sup> MA, PRCN, 73/1/7, Congo Journal, June-December 1961, Comdt Pearse Wheatley, ONUC, Book II, 8 December. 1961.

<sup>610</sup> MA, PRCN, 73/1/7, Congo Journal, June-December 1961, Comdt Pearse Wheatley, ONUC, Book II, 13 December. 1961.

1961. While there was some discussion with personnel from ‘A’ Company about Jadotville,<sup>611</sup> in general the feelings within the 35 Inf Bn between companies and individuals was left to fester. ‘A’ Company veterans ‘had the name the “Jadotville Jacks”, like that was a kind of a detrimental term used for them, “Jadotville Jacks” ... Pat Quinlan was known as “Jadotville Jack” himself ... overseas ball hops start ... and they are just added to, and added to by people who don’t know any better.’<sup>612</sup> The problem was that no one at senior command level within 35 Inf Bn or the Defence Forces was able to take control of this situation and ‘none of this was resolved at the time.’<sup>613</sup> The unresolved and difficult aftermath of the Battle of Jadotville and how ‘A’ Company were treated was left for over four decades before anyone in the Defence Forces faced up to the challenge of trying to understand what had happened in Jadotville from 13 to 18 September 1961 and its impact on each of the 156 personnel of ‘A’ Company.

‘There was never truer soldiers than what they were.’<sup>614</sup>

‘They were no cowards.’<sup>615</sup>

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<sup>611</sup> Sqn Sgt Des Keegan told the IRG of how in December 1961 before repatriation he spoke with Cpl Jimmy Lucey about his experiences in Jadotville and gained a greater understanding of what had happened to ‘A’ Company in the fighting there.

<sup>612</sup> Sqn Sgt Des Keegan, interview with IRG, 9 February 2021.

<sup>613</sup> Brig Gen Chris Moore (Retd), interview with IRG, 21 January 2021.

<sup>614</sup> Patricia Redmond, wife of Pte Jimmy Redmond, interview with IRG, 15 April 2021.

<sup>615</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 35INFBN, 7/6, *Sunday Independent*, 10 December 1961, article by Raymond Smith.



6. 13 September 1961. UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld arriving at Njili Airport, near Leopoldville, greeted by the Congolese Prime Minister, Cyrille Adoula and COS Armie Nationale Congolaise, Gen Joseph-Desiré Mobutu, they are on his right. Lt Gen MacEoin is behind and to his left. Dag Hammarskjöld was killed in a plane crash on 18 September 1961 while travelling to Ndola airport in northern Rhodesia for talks with the President of Katanga Moise Tshombé. (UN Multimedia.)



7. Lt Col Hugh McNamee OC 35 Inf Bn, Col Jonas Waern OC Sector B and Lt Col S.S. Maitra, Elisabethville 1961. (Comdt Art Magennis DSM personal collection.)





8. Comdt Pat Quinlan, Company Commander 'A' Company Group, 35 Inf Bn. (Comdt Leo Quinlan's private collection.)





9. 'A' Company, 35 Inf Bn, Elizabethville. (Comdt Leo Quinlan's private collection).

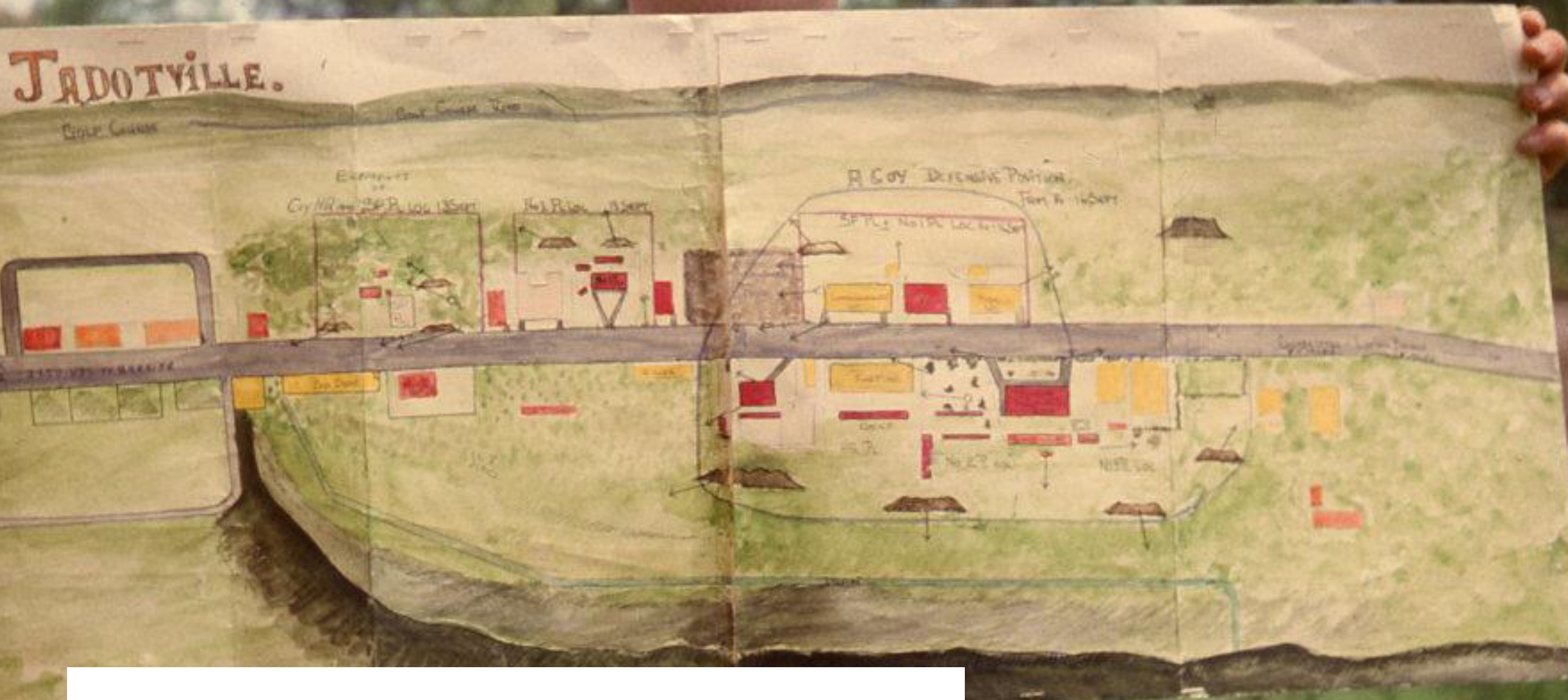




10. 'A' Company Officers, 35 Inf Bn, Elisabethville, July 1961. Front Left to Right: Comdt Pat Quinlan, Capt Dermot Byrne. Back Row Left to Right: Capt Tom McGuinn (Admin Officer), Comdt Joe Clune (Medical Officer) and Capt Kevin McCarthy. Standing Lt Noel Carey. Capt McCarthy was detached to HQ 35 Inf Bn (Welfare and Civil Affairs) (Comdt Leo Quinlan's private collection.)



# JADOTVILLE.



11. Lt Noel Carey's map of 'A' Company's Area of Operations, Jadotville, September 1961, drawn whilst in captivity. (Capt Noel Carey's private collection.)





12. Preparing a defence position. Right: Pte Michael Tighe. Jadotville, September 1961. (Comdt Leo Quinlan's private collection.)





13. Machine gun position. Jadotville, September 1961. (Comdt Leo Quinlan's private collection.)





14. Cpl John McManus (with 84mm anti-tank weapon), Pte Jim Feery. Jadotville, September 1961.  
(Comdt Leo Quinlan's private collection.)





15. Purfina Garage. Included are Sgt Tommy Kelly (left), Pte Billy Heffernan (second from left), CQMS Pat Neville (fourth from left), Capt Liam Donnelly (sixth from left with beret). Jadotville, September 1961. (John Gorman's private collection.)



16. Lt Joe Leech. Jadotville, September 1961. (Col Joe Leech's private collection.)





17. Comdt John Kane, Second-in-Command, 35 Inf Bn (back to camera) briefing Minister Frank Aiken TD, with Lt Col Hugh McNamee OC 35 Inf Bn and a Battalion Chaplain. Elisabethville, September 1961. (Col Seamus Condon Collection, Military Archives.)





18. 'A' Company personnel and Katangese Gendarmerie following Ceasefire preparing for Joint Patrol. Jadotville, September 1961. Comdt Pat Quinlan in blue jumper, Fr Joseph Fagan CF on left, Capt Thomas McGuinn on right with Gustaf. (Comdt Leo Quinlan's private collection.)





19. Mass, celebrated by Fr Joseph Fagan CF. Kolwezi Prison, Katanga, October 1961. (Comdt Leo Quinlan's private collection.)





20. Comdt Pat Quinlan, Company Commander, 'A' Company and Fr Joseph Fagan CF. (Comdt Leo Quinlan's private collection.)





21. Mobile Patrol. Left: CS Jack Prendergast, Comdt Pat Quinlan, Company Commander, 'A' Company pointing towards camera. (Comdt Leo Quinlan's private collection.)





22. Mobile Patrol. Left to Right: Comdt Pat Quinlan, (Sgmn Kavanagh) Pte Joe O'Kane, (Sgmn Tim Sullivan), Cpl Frank Williams. 'A' Company Group. (Comdt Leo Quinlan's private collection.)





23. 'A' Company, 35 Inf Bn Medal Parade. Comdt Quinlan, Sgmn Tim Sullivan, Cpl Frank Williams.  
(Comdt Leo Quinlan's private collection.)





24. 'A' Company. Left: Comdt Pat Quinlan, Company Commander. Elisabethville. (Comdt Leo Quinlan's private collection.)





25. Final departure of 'A' Company. Left: Lt Tom Quinlan. Elisabethville, December 1961.  
(Comdt Leo Quinlan's private collection.)



## Chapter 7

# Return to Ireland

### *Overview of Chapter 7*

This chapter addresses the following issues:

- Reception on return to Ireland, Hometowns, Main Body Returns,
- Spring 1962, Dáil Éireann 1962, Deployments with 37 Inf Bn and 38 Inf Bn,
- First anniversary of the Battle of Jadotville – September 1962,
- Jadotville 1963, sense of disquiet – Dáil Éireann March 1963, Reduction in press reports, donation of Christmas crib in Custume Barracks,
- The impact of the aftermath of the Battle of Jadotville on the men of ‘A’ Company and their families,
- How the Battle of Jadotville and ‘A’ Company’s experience were ‘swept under the carpet’,
- 1962,
- The 37 Inf Bn and 38 Inf Bn deploy to the Congo,
- Changing interest in Jadotville,
- Return to Jadotville 1963,
- A sense of disquiet Dáil Éireann March 1963,
- Declining press interest in Jadotville,
- ‘Those who applauded them turned their backs and instead of medals they got white feathers’.

### *‘A’ Company’s reception on their return to Ireland*

As part of the advance party of the returning 35 Inf Bn, the first elements of ‘A’ Company left the Congo on 29 November and arrived back in Ireland on 30 November 1961. On their arrival, the daily newspapers carried stories of the Battle of Jadotville in detail. The front page of the *Cork Examiner* announced the return of the ‘Fighting 35th’, describing Jadotville as a ‘heroic battle against overwhelming odds’.<sup>1</sup> ‘Jadotville men home’, proclaimed a banner headline on the front page of the *Irish Independent*. ‘Jadotville men met by Minister at airport’, read the sub-headline on the front page of the *Irish Press*.<sup>2</sup> Ptes Galvin, Roper, Conlon, Hughes and McMahan smiled at *Irish Independent* readers in a photograph captioned ‘Happy to be back’. The papers carried much detail on the fighting; Jadotville was ‘an heroic battle against overwhelming odds’.<sup>3</sup> The point was

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<sup>1</sup> *Cork Examiner*, 1 December 1961.

<sup>2</sup> *Irish Press*, 1 December 1961.

<sup>3</sup> *Irish Independent*, 1 December 1961.



clear: ‘embattled ‘A’ Company ... held out for nine days against a vastly superior force ... and were only duped into surrender.’<sup>4</sup>

The returning soldiers were met at Dublin Airport by Minister for Defence Gerald Bartley TD and Chief of Staff Maj Gen Seán Collins-Powell, as well as senior Defence Forces officers. Capt Liam Donnelly gave waiting reporters an account of the Jadotville fighting, praising his comrades for their ‘courage’ under ‘conditions in such heat and with a scarcity of water – conditions which were foreign to them.’<sup>5</sup> Pte John Manning, Support Platoon, ‘A’ Company, about to turn twenty, ascribed poor Katangese marksmanship to a flesh wound he received, pointing out ‘If I had got him at such close range he would have got more than a flesh wound.’<sup>6</sup> Maj Gen Collins-Powell praised the entire 35 Inf Bn for being ‘cool, calm and collected.’<sup>7</sup>

### ***Hometowns***

These initial returning elements of the 35 Inf Bn dispersed to their units across Ireland and personnel from ‘A’ Company were greeted on arrival in their hometowns across the country. There was ‘a big crowd’ at Galway railway station, including Col Ó Cearbhaill, OC 5 Brigade and Lt Col Ó Cearbhaill, OC 1 Inf Bn, to meet Cpls Seán Foley and Seán McDonagh and Ptes Matthew Quinlan, John Glennon, Thomas Flynn, Robert Orr and Terence McMahon.<sup>8</sup>

It was a different story when they returned to Renmore Barracks. It was between 2pm and 3pm and Pte Flynn saw that all the windows were open. There were white flags, towels and blankets out the windows ‘welcoming’ them back as ‘cowardly bastards and what have you’. There was ‘no welcome ... nobody ever mentioned anything ... no welcome, no one said you did a good job.’ Their battalion commander had met them at Galway Station, but he was not back in the barracks where a welcome back really mattered. There was no debriefing. In Renmore Barracks, Pte Flynn remembered that ‘the only night you heard it was Friday night when people got drunk’ and ‘A’ Company ‘copped abuse’ over Jadotville.<sup>9</sup>

There were small personal welcomes. Pte Seán Tiernan recalled how Lt Tom Joyce, who had trained him, ‘came up to me and shook hands with me and welcomed me back.’<sup>10</sup>

In Athlone there was a civic welcome for forty returned members of ‘A’ Company. The ‘Jadotville Heroes’ homecoming’ saw ‘a warm and affectionate greeting by their families, friends, the townspeople generally and a number of officers from Custume Barracks’, amongst whom was Lt Col Mortimer J. Buckley, former commander of the 32 Inf Bn, the first Defence Forces Congo battalion.<sup>11</sup> In a reception at the new dining hall at the barracks, Chairman of the Urban Council R.J. Faulkner greeted the men. He was accompanied by Col Joseph P. Emphy OC Western Command who told 35 Inf Bn personnel that the confidence he had in them on their departure in

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<sup>4</sup> *Irish Press*, 1 December 1961.

<sup>5</sup> *Irish Independent*, 1 December 1961.

<sup>6</sup> *Irish Press*, 1 December 1961.

<sup>7</sup> *Irish Independent*, 1 December 1961.

<sup>8</sup> *Irish Press*, 2 December 1961.

<sup>9</sup> Pte Thomas Flynn, interview with IRG, 1 April 2021.

<sup>10</sup> Cpl Seán Tiernan, interview with IRG, 20 April 2021.

<sup>11</sup> *Offaly Independent*, 9 December 1961.

June 1961 ‘had not been misplaced.’<sup>12</sup> Not everyone received a welcome home. When Pte Michael Greene got back to Athlone:

when we got back to barracks, the first thing we done was we handed in our kit, there was no money for us, it had not come through or something like that, we got into Seán Dowler’s car and went home. There was no like, we didn’t want, any reception party or anything.<sup>13</sup>

Over the following days, local and regional papers across Ireland carried the return of the 35 Inf Bn. The experiences of ‘A’ Company at Jadotville remained prominent in the stories. Cpl McDonagh of ‘A’ Company, pictured with his wife and eleven children, beamed back from the front page of the *Connacht Sentinel* of 5 December 1961, accompanying the story ‘Jadotville men back in Galway’. *The Leitrim Observer* printed the words of the song ‘The Guns of Jadotville’, telling readers that it was ‘composed for ‘A’ Company, 35th Battalion, while prisoners at Jadotville by a Swedish pilot who was with them.’<sup>14</sup>

Not all public opinion was positive. Cpl Seán Foley and a Defence Forces colleague were travelling by train from Galway to Nenagh when ‘this lady says “the cheek of you”, she says, “killing them poor blacks and all they had was bows and arrows”, and I said “I didn’t kill anyone with bows and arrows” I said, “I may have killed them with a big machine gun”, but I said “I have no regrets, I didn’t set out to kill anyone, I was a peacekeeper”. She says, “You should be ashamed of yourselves; may God forgive you”.’<sup>15</sup>

Others suffered on homecoming in perhaps unexpected ways. After meeting his parents and relations on his arrival back in the family home, Pte Frank McManus remembered that ‘when the hugs and kisses were over I sat down at the table and had a cup of tea and the fucking dog bit me.’<sup>16</sup>

The homecoming of the 35 Inf Bn saw a gulf develop between the returned soldiers, ‘A’ Company and all others, and the civilian Irish society they were reintegrating into. They were returning to a society where not only did so many of their military comrades not have overseas service experience, but civilian friends had no idea what military service, let alone overseas service with ONUC was about. Nor had they any idea of what life and society was like in Congo. Kathleen Lafferty told the Independent Review Group of a vivid memory of her father Cpl John McAnaney the day of his return from Katanga sitting in the front room of their house in Mullingar:

My Dad is sitting in a chair and of course all the adults are there and they are all asking him well “Did this happen?” or “Did that happen?” and “Is it true that such a one got shot” and you know, “Is it true that there was body bags” and is it true ... like the questions were horrendous, and I remember the shock on his face and how hurt he looked, and he was

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<sup>12</sup> *Irish Independent*, 2 December 1961.

<sup>13</sup> Pte Michael Greene, interview with IRG, 22 April 2021.

<sup>14</sup> *Leitrim Observer*, 9 December 1961.

<sup>15</sup> Cpl Seán Foley, interview to IRG, 9 February 2021.

<sup>16</sup> Pte Frank McManus, interview with IRG, 18 February 2021.

trying to answer their questions but I think it was too much for him. He was just, he was being bombarded, and at the same time you could see the hurt in his face.<sup>17</sup>

For others, this gap was reflected in a different way: introspection. Comdt Danny Tiernan (Retd) remembered how on Christmas Day 1961, when the presents were being opened and relations were joining in the festivities and having Christmas dinner, he noticed how his father, Sgt George Tiernan was unusually withdrawn: ‘Dad just sat in the corner, there didn’t seem to be any life in him, there didn’t seem to be any fun, because he loved playing with us.’<sup>18</sup> Having just returned from the Congo it took until new year 1962 for his father to really start playing with Danny and his brothers again. It was only after he had returned from a subsequent deployment with UNFICYP in Cyprus that Danny saw that real life had come back to his father.

### ***The main body of ‘A’ Company return to Ireland***

As Christmas Day 1961 approached the Irish media continued to run stories and carry photographs on ‘A’ Company and their experiences at Jadotville. When the main body of the 35 Inf Bn flew back into Dublin, Lt Col Hugh McNamee told an *Irish Press* reporter amongst the journalists who met them that ‘I could never hope to have better men than these in my command. Quite a number of my men have earned awards for gallantry, and I shall be recommending them for decorations.’<sup>19</sup>

Later Lt Col McNamee put it on record that ‘there were numerous examples of high morale, outstanding bravery, courage, and devotion to duty, by members of the unit during Sept-Dec. ’61.’<sup>20</sup> The December 1961 *Irish Press* account said Lt Col McNamee made special reference to ‘a soldier who stood up in the face of a strafing attack by a Fouga jet fighter to hold up a radio aerial.’<sup>21</sup> In the *Cork Examiner* Lt Col McNamee was reported as saying of the 35 Inf Bn: ‘the harder the fighting they got, the better they stood up to it, particularly the men who were involved in the fighting at Jadotville, who proved superb.’<sup>22</sup>

Comdt Pat Quinlan spoke of how ‘A’ Company had been ‘induced into Jadotville’ by Belgian interests seeking to take them hostage.<sup>23</sup> He paid tribute to his men: ‘during all the time in the Congo I never saw one of our men who wavered either in attack or defence.’<sup>24</sup>

They and the other personnel of 35 Inf Bn could look forward to 30 days leave. ‘A’ Company had acquitted itself well under fire and there was an assumption within ‘A’ Company that Comdt Quinlan would be decorated for his ‘qualities of leadership’ and that there were others at all levels within ‘A’ Company who would be likewise decorated.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Kathleen Lafferty, interview with IRG, 9 February 2021.

<sup>18</sup> Comdt Danny Tiernan (Retd), interview with IRG, 1 April 2021.

<sup>19</sup> *Irish Press*, 21 December 1961.

<sup>20</sup> MA, Unit History, 35INFBN, p. 29.

<sup>21</sup> *Irish Press*, 21 December 1961.

<sup>22</sup> *Cork Examiner*, 21 December 1961.

<sup>23</sup> *Irish Independent*, 23 December 1961.

<sup>24</sup> *Irish Press*, 23 December 1961.

<sup>25</sup> Capt Noel Carey, interview with IRG, 19 January 2021.

In a detailed retelling of the Battle of Jadotville, Comdt Quinlan said of when he signed the surrender he ‘would never like to feel the same way again. It was the first time, perhaps, that an Irish officer was faced with such responsibility and such a decision but under the circumstances it was the only one to take as the alternative facing me was the massacre of my men.’<sup>26</sup> Comdt Quinlan explained to journalists that he and his men were surrounded (the figure given was 4,000 Gendarmerie and para-commandos plus 600 mercenaries), had no water (‘without water you cannot keep going in the Congo’) and would be massacred if they did not fall in with Katangese demands made by Interior Minister Godefroid Munongo.

The *Irish Press* carried on its front page the headline ‘Irishmen had no choice at Jadotville.’<sup>27</sup> The *Evening Herald* editorialised that ‘the action of European civilians in Jadotville who asked for protection and then turned on the Irish Company should not be forgotten.’ The piece concluded, ‘the men of the 35th have earned a place in world history and in the affection of the country.’<sup>28</sup> The point made in this editorial was echoed by the *Connacht Sentinel* on 2 January 1962 ‘the Europeans they were ordered to protect were the leaders of the plot to destroy them. That is a lesson that will not easily be forgotten.’<sup>29</sup>

The *Connacht Sentinel* article concluded ‘The 35th Battalion has a quota of heroes who will soon be decorated. All its members showed martial qualities of the highest order and have brought honour to the country and the cause they have served so gallantly.’ This point was emphasised in a very particular way on the front page of the *Irish Times* in a photograph ‘Study of a UN Soldier’, the subject being Cpl Bobby Allen of ‘A’ Company, 35 Inf Bn. Jadotville was, *The Longford Leader* emphasised, ‘a golden page in Irish military history.’<sup>30</sup>

But again and again the slagging which had started in Elisabethville continued back in Ireland. It started again when men from ‘A’ Company returned from their one month’s leave in January 1962:

It was our own people, our own soldiers, that started slagging you know, in Custume Barracks. You’d go up the town for the pint and “Oh, Jaysus, would you look at the colour of him: yellow” ... It was desperate, you didn’t want to go out for a while.<sup>31</sup>

Pte Tom Gunn recalled:

I didn’t get any animosity or anything from them, but there was the odd old snide remark. It was when we came home [that] we got the real coward thing and there was a famous song out that time, I think it was Winifred Atwell, “Lay Down Your Arms and Surrender to Mine” and they would whistle that when there were passing you, you know.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> *Irish Independent*, 23 December 1961.

<sup>27</sup> *Irish Press*, 23 December 1961.

<sup>28</sup> *Evening Herald*, 25 December 1961.

<sup>29</sup> *Connacht Sentinel*, 2 January 1962.

<sup>30</sup> *The Longford Leader*, 6 January 1962.

<sup>31</sup> Pte Frank McManus, interview with IRG, 18 February 2021.

<sup>32</sup> Pte Tom Gunn, interview with IRG, 28 January 2021. The singing was also mentioned by Brig Gen James Farrell (Retd) during his interview with the IRG, 21 January 2021.

Pte Gunn continued that he had only returned a few days from the Congo when he ‘went into a bar in Mullingar and I ordered my pint ... and one of the wags in the corner said to the barman “I didn’t think you served cowards here”.’ Pte Gunn also recalled slugging in barracks canteens in Galway and Athlone which began after the members of ‘A’ Company returned from leave in early 1962. So did Pte James Tahaney: ‘Oh, that was a dirty word to talk about Jadotville, don’t talk about Jadotville, it’s a dirty word in the Army. Yeah, I found that.’<sup>33</sup> Pte Paul Malone remembered the same. ‘A’ Company returned to Ireland and were ‘hailed as heroes’ but after about two weeks ‘they turned ... we were cowards, and that was very hard to take, extremely hard to take.’<sup>34</sup> It came from all quarters, but most often from personnel who had not been on overseas service. The collective memories of veterans would suggest that perhaps much of the slugging was confined to Western Command. Pte Mick Dunne recalled that, in Cathal Brugha Barracks in Dublin, other than one reference to the term POW being put in his personal file he got no slugging and ‘it was nothing like the Athlone crowd got.’<sup>35</sup>

One of the Athlone soldiers, Pte Michael Greene remembered what he went through when it came to slugging. It had started in Elisabethville: Fellow soldiers in Elisabethville said to him, ‘Greene, you showed the white feather.’ On return to Ireland ‘that was used lots of times back in Athlone ... I never forgot that; I never will.’<sup>36</sup>

Pte Greene explained the situation he faced in detail to the Independent Review Group and how it influenced his decision to leave the Defence Forces as soon as he could:

It was rough you know, I got it hard, because between the fighting in Jadotville and, you know, the mickey taking from the soldiers, you know, you would have to fight every day if you wanted to, you know, listening to them. But it was an embarrassment really listening to them. I was embarrassed for myself and other fellows all this “white feather” crack.<sup>37</sup>

No one tried to stop it, no officer tried, even if they had intervened, it would still go on in billets at night. Asked what would have helped, Michael Greene felt that

A bit of understanding you know from the people back in Ireland, in Athlone, in the barracks, a bit of understanding, everything was just trying to wind you up you know, there was no understanding. Of course, I can see why because they didn’t understand it themselves, they didn’t know what we’d been through and what they were told was all rumours because no one had been back to tell them the truth.<sup>38</sup>

In April 1962, Michael Greene left the Defence Forces. He emigrated to England, with his family later joining him. He said: ‘I liked the Army, only for that, all the soldiers back there taking the

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<sup>33</sup> Pte James Tahaney, interview with IRG, 28 January 2021.

<sup>34</sup> Pte Paul Malone, interview with IRG, 2 February 2021.

<sup>35</sup> Pte Mick Dunne, interview with IRG, 21 February 2021. The IRG heard little or nothing from Jadotville veterans of such attitudes in Cork.

<sup>36</sup> Pte Michael Greene, interview with IRG, 22 April 2021.

<sup>37</sup> Pte Michael Greene, interview with IRG, 22 April 2021.

<sup>38</sup> Pte Michael Greene, interview with IRG, 22 April 2021.



mick you know like that, I think I would have stayed in the army. I just wanted to get out as fast as I could. I finished my time, and I came over to England then.<sup>39</sup>

Recalling the atmosphere in Mullingar, Kathleen Lafferty, daughter of Cpl John McAnaney explained

to be called cowards by your own, is, is just to me its unforgivable ... for someone to walk up to you and catch you on the shoulder and say “Howya Jack”, “Howya Joe” and then you put your hand into your breast pocket and you pull out a white feather ... this is from the men you serve with, the men that you see every day.

Cpl McAnaney was hurt by how he was treated. But the slagging continued, and it continued outside barracks. Kathleen Lafferty recalled being segregated in school in Mullingar and put in a separate row ‘because you came from a certain background’ and then ‘you were called this thing a “Jadotville Jack”.’ She also remembered how, many years later, as a thirteen year old, a man who worked in the barracks in Mullingar ‘literally went out of his way to explain’ to her why her father was called a ‘Jadotville Jack’ and ‘seemed to get some delight out of it ... he proceeded to tell me my father was a coward ... in his words he didn’t really deserve to be in the army’.<sup>40</sup> And then ‘he said “tell your mother I said hello”, ‘I never understood why, you know, I didn’t, I couldn’t comprehend why would an adult, like want to do that to a child.’

Comdt Danny Tiernan (Retd), then aged seven, in national school in Boyle, Co. Roscommon, remembered that while his father, Sgt George Tiernan was in captivity in Katanga after Jadotville, finding a bunch of three or four white feathers placed on his schoolbag during the 11 o’clock break:

I got the white feathers by the way in school, the headmaster was a guy called Paddy Joe Kennedy, now his brother-in-law was Maj Gen M.J. Costello, so he was pretty wise to the white feather, I wouldn’t have had a clue at the time what it was. I remember he took it off me and told me “you don’t need to bring them home with you”.<sup>41</sup>

Another teacher, Michael Carthy, who was a sergeant in the FCA, spotted them and told Paddy Joe Kennedy, who was a lieutenant in the FCA, who ensured that Danny Tiernan, and a classmate who also got a bunch of white feathers on his bag, did not bring them home. He did not know what the feathers signified, and ‘It was afterwards I found what the feathers meant.’ When he did find out he recalled, ‘I was sad, I knew my Dad wasn’t a coward, I felt hurt that somebody would do it.’ Sometime later, perhaps a year later, a teacher said to him, ‘Don’t worry about it, these people didn’t have the guts to stand up and hand them to you yourselves.’

Rosalinda Murphy remembered distinctly a similar series of events, but regarding her father, Pte Joseph Duff, who was a cook with ‘A’ Company. They took place in their family home in Mullingar a short time after he returned to Ireland:

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<sup>39</sup> Pte Michael Greene, interview with IRG, 22 April 2021.

<sup>40</sup> Kathleen Lafferty initially thought the term was ‘Jadotville Jock’, said on account of her father’s Derry accent.

<sup>41</sup> Comdt Danny Tiernan (Retd), interview with IRG, 1 April 2021.

There were feathers left an awful lot, because I remember my father was always telling me to go to his pocket. Like for, he'd give me his change, y'know. There'd always be change in his pocket, in his army coat. And I can remember distinctly going to his pocket and taking some change out and a white feather came out with that change. And I asked Daddy "What's this, Daddy?", and he said, "Oh, put that in the fire". "Just throw that in the fire", he said. And nothing more. I remember that distinctly.<sup>42</sup>

She felt it made her father leave the Defence Forces earlier than he would otherwise have done. Of her finding the feathers in his greatcoat pocket, Rosalinda felt that 'I don't think it was that big of a shock to him, he was angry, I think the fact that his little girl found it, his youngest, his little daughter, went into his pocket and found this, and I think that devastated him.'<sup>43</sup>

'My father never spoke about the Congo', remembered John Sweeney of his father, Pte Bernard Sweeney, 'only that they were disgusted how they were treated when they came home with this white feather thing and all this.'<sup>44</sup> His father spoke of being called part of 'The White Feather Group' by soldiers who had no overseas service to their names, 'his own comrades in the barracks, who never served overseas' called them cowards.<sup>45</sup> When John himself joined the Defence Forces in the 1970s, like his brothers did, he never heard direct insults to his face about his father and Jadotville but it was 'always in the background.'

Neither would Pte Sweeney's friends Cpl Joe Relihan and Private Jimmy Redmond talk about Congo. Indeed, Cpl Relihan's son Joe recalled that his father would not serve overseas again after his experiences in the Congo.<sup>46</sup> His father had lost weight in Congo and looked gaunt and older when he returned with the 35 Inf Bn in December 1961.

In 1962, the atmosphere deteriorated further and the following years into serious disagreements and fist fights inside and outside barracks. There was a sense from veterans that perhaps there was more slagging amongst enlisted men, and that officers were somewhat more circumspect in their remarks, but they made remarks anyway. 'A' Company's return had brought problems from Katanga back to Ireland. Lt Col Hugh McNamee's son Liam, a teenager at the time, remembered that in the first weeks and months after this father returned from Katanga there was

quite a lot of fractious discussion on what was going to happen and the attitude of many to 'A' Company and that type of thing. And I know that as a thirteen-year-old listening to these things you would gather that things weren't in a happy situation for those involved in the first few months, and a lot of disagreement, I would say, was the name of the game.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Rosalinda Murphy, interview with IRG, 4 May 2021.

<sup>43</sup> Rosalinda Murphy, interview with IRG, 4 May 2021.

<sup>44</sup> John Sweeney, interview with IRG, 4 May 2021.

<sup>45</sup> John Sweeney, interview with IRG, 4 May 2021.

<sup>46</sup> Joe Relihan, interview with IRG, 22 April 2021.

<sup>47</sup> Brig Gen Liam MacNamee (Retd), interview with IRG, 12 January 2021.

**1962**

Having returned from the Congo in spring 1962, Lt Gen Seán MacEoin was the guest of the Louthmen's Association at a dinner in Dublin on 15 April 1962. The association's Chair, Paddy Markey, paid tribute to Lt Gen MacEoin and to the Defence Forces for service with ONUC. Addressing the dinner, he said that 'in future the names of Jadotville, Kamina, Niemba and Elisabethville will rank with those of Fontenoy, Ramillies and Cremona' in Irish military history.<sup>48</sup> In April 1962, Minister for External Affairs Frank Aiken TD emphasised that 'A' Company, 35 Inf Bn, had 'acquitted themselves with great gallantry in extremely difficult and trying circumstances without any serious casualties.'<sup>49</sup>

Introducing the Defence estimates in Dáil Éireann in May 1962, Minister for Defence Gerald Bartley TD included in his speech that 'everything he had heard about the officers and men at Jadotville had been praiseworthy.'<sup>50</sup> Internationally, civilian head of ONUC Dr Sture Linner told the press in London that he was 'ashamed' at what had happened at Jadotville.<sup>51</sup> There was, Dr Linner said, no covering over the fact that at Jadotville 'A' Company had been subject to 'a trick' and 'by a very deceitful kind of arrangement, taken prisoner.'

***The 37 Inf Bn and 38 Inf Bn deploy to Congo***

Six months after the return of the 35 Inf Bn to Ireland, references to Jadotville were slowly becoming less frequent in the Irish media, but they were still significant. When Pte C. Nugent left for ONUC service with the 37 Inf Bn in May 1962, the *Irish Press* pointed out that Pte Nugent had served with the 32 Inf Bn and the 35 Inf Bn, being wounded in the leg at Lufira Bridge 'when he and his comrades tried to get to Jadotville to release the Irish prisoners there.'<sup>52</sup> Also with the 37 Inf Bn was Cpl Francis McManus from Sligo. Announcing his promotion to corporal whilst in the Congo, the *Sligo Champion* told readers that Pte McManus had 'fought at the siege of Jadotville, where he distinguished himself as a Bren gunner.'<sup>53</sup> When the 38 Inf Bn departed for Congo service, it was 'A' Company's Chaplain Father Joseph Fagan's service in Jadotville with 'Comdt Quinlan's company' that got mentioned.<sup>54</sup>

Many of the 37 Inf Bn were 'Jadotville men going out again.' As they were about to deploy to the Congo from Dublin, they moved to the Curragh Camp, from where they would go to Dublin Airport to fly out to Africa. The entire 37 Inf Bn was now concentrated in the Curragh Camp. When the Western Command elements of the 37 Inf Bn walked into the canteen they met a contingent from Dublin and 'the first words were "Aah: White Flags at Jadotville", now, it was said in a kind of Dub, wind-you-up kind of way, but an almighty fight broke out.'<sup>55</sup> The officers, drinking in their own mess, knew nothing about this at the time. That was 'round one', the men of 37 Inf Bn had 'another round in the Congo of thumping one another' on the occasion of the

<sup>48</sup> *Evening Herald*, 16 April 1962.

<sup>49</sup> *Cork Examiner*, 5 April 1962.

<sup>50</sup> *Cork Examiner*, 23 May 1962.

<sup>51</sup> *Cork Examiner*, 12 May 1962.

<sup>52</sup> *Irish Press*, 23 May 1962.

<sup>53</sup> *Sligo Champion*, 28 July 1962.

<sup>54</sup> *Evening Herald*, 7 November 1962.

<sup>55</sup> MA, MAOHP-0004, Lt Gen Gerry McMahon DSM (Retd), interviewed 21 December 2016.

opening of a new battalion mess in Elisabethville. Looking back, Lt Gen Gerry McMahon, then a lieutenant, remembered he was ‘present at this’ and that

my Platoon Sergeant just caught me physically and said, “there’s going to be a dust up here”, he said, “officers shouldn’t be witnesses” and he hustled me out of there and I went home. And there was a thumping match, I believe, and nobody spoke about it afterwards.

He added ‘these weren’t kind of officially condoned punishments, this was wise guys making comment – wind up your man, you know.’<sup>56</sup>

### ***Changing interest in Jadotville***

Sighted at the Bundoran Lobster Festival in June 1962 by Tom Hennigan of the *Evening Herald* was Comdt Pat Quinlan who, ‘distinguished himself at the siege of Jadotville.’<sup>57</sup> The same month *The fighting Irish in the Congo* by journalist Raymond Smith, the first book-length history of Defence Forces service with ONUC, was published. Widely reviewed in the press in the following months, it included an account of the Battle of Jadotville and ‘the long ordeal of the beleaguered and outnumbered company, as well as the gallant if unavailing efforts of their comrades to cross the Lufira Bridge and rescue them.’<sup>58</sup>

On the first anniversary of events leading to the Battle at Jadotville and the battle itself, Raymond Smith and other journalists covered how news of Jadotville and the scare stories put out by the Katangese press were carried in Irish newspapers. Even Lt Gen MacEoin made mention of Jadotville, and did so in a positive light, when he opened Oireachtas na Gaeilge at the Mansion House in Dublin on 21 October 1962, remarking that ‘it was through the use of Irish that they succeeded in learning the true situation of the soldiers undergoing attack at Jadotville.’<sup>59</sup>

A sign of the continuing interest internationally in the Battle of Jadotville was a remark by Cornelius Ryan, author of *The Longest Day*, the best-selling history of D-Day, that Jadotville was ‘the one episode in the Congo he would like to have written about.’<sup>60</sup> Cornelius Ryan was in Dublin for the premiere of the film of his book and on arrival posed in Dublin Airport with members of the outbound 38 Inf Bn as they departed for the Congo.

The publication of Conor Cruise O’Brien’s *To Katanga and Back* in November 1962 saw reference to Jadotville, but little new information or interpretation. Cruise O’Brien argued that ‘A’ Company need never have surrendered and was forced to do so because of ‘the UN’s confusion of purposes’ in fulfilling Operation Morthor and getting its message across to the population of Katanga.<sup>61</sup> This was in essence an entirely political argument that showed little understanding of the actual physical and military position in which ‘A’ Company was situated on 17 September 1961. However, the impact of the book on Irish and UN minds was such as to increase the vilification of Cruise

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<sup>56</sup> MA, MAOHP-0004, Lt Gen Gerry McMahon DSM (Retd), interviewed 21 December 2016. Declan Power recalled hearing stories of these punch-ups while stationed in the Curragh in the 1980s (Declan Power, interview with IRG, 4 May 2021).

<sup>57</sup> *Evening Herald*, 4 June 1962.

<sup>58</sup> *Irish Independent*, 22 June 1962.

<sup>59</sup> *Irish Independent*, 22 October 1962.

<sup>60</sup> *Irish Independent*, 9 November 1962.

<sup>61</sup> Conor Cruise O’Brien, *To Katanga and Back* (London, 1962), p. 283.

O'Brien as the scapegoat for the UN's failure during Operation Morthor and to further increase reasons why it was thought inappropriate to talk of events in Katanga, including Jadotville, in September and October 1961.

### ***Return to Jadotville 1963***

As UN forces again pushed towards Jadotville in the first days of January 1963, it was the Heavy Mortar Troop under the command of Capt Tom Boyle from the 38 Inf Bn, fighting alongside Indian forces that brought the town back into the immediate realm of the Defence Forces. Jadotville fell to ONUC on 4 January 1963 amidst some confusion as to whether ONUC had followed Secretary General U Thant's instructions.

A new take on 'A' Company's performance in Jadotville now became apparent. *Daily Mail* journalist Peter Youngusband in a glowing account of how the 38 Inf Bn under the command of Lt Col Patrick Delaney took Kipushi, nevertheless referred to 'the humiliation of the Irish surrender at Jadotville the year before last, due to the political and military blunders made at the centre of operations in Elisabethville.'<sup>62</sup>

Hiding these political and military actions and making sure that reference to Jadotville was muted or suppressed, now began to replace the praise and attention that 'A' Company had received since December 1961.

### ***A sense of disquiet: Dáil Éireann, March 1963***

An indication of the sense of disquiet felt by the members of 'A' Company at how they had been treated since their return to Ireland was raised by Fine Gael TD Lionel Booth in Dáil Éireann. On 28 March 1963, Booth explained that in his opinion 'the troops who were engaged in Jadotville are under a sort of a cloud, and I am absolutely convinced they should not be.' Booth continued that he had received Minister for Defence Gerald Bartley's 'assurance previously that he feels the same.' Nevertheless

somehow the lads who were involved in the fighting at Jadotville have seemed to be under a cloud ever since and have been under a considerable disadvantage, although I still insisted, they did extremely well. They fought hard and did an extremely good job, even after they had been tricked into a cease-fire. Everybody - officers, NCOs and men - were magnificent and, when they were involved in further combat operations shortly after they had rejoined the main force they showed that again.<sup>63</sup>

Deputy Booth's point was reinforced shortly afterwards in the Dáil by John McQuillan TD of the National Progressive Democrats. Deputy McQuillan explicitly turned to the question of decorations for 'A' Company and explained that though 'I do not know how accurate it is', he understood that 'there has been no recognition, by decoration or otherwise, of the service given by the troops involved in that incident.' Deputy McQuillan wanted to

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<sup>62</sup> *Irish Press*, 12 January 1963.

<sup>63</sup> *Dáil Éireann debates*, 28 March 1963.



put it on record that I think the conduct of the Irish troops and their officers at Jadotville deserves the highest commendation. They showed common sense, intelligence and integrity. Had they not displayed those characteristics, a further 50 or 60 young Irishmen might have been killed. If there is no recognition of their services by the powers that be, it is, to me at any rate, positive proof that the mentality behind it is the same mentality as I referred to earlier, a bloodlust mentality. The people concerned who have the decision in this would prefer to see these men as dead heroes.<sup>64</sup>

Both Deputies introduced points about 'A' Company's experience during and after Jadotville that would recur over the decades, in particular Deputy McQuillan's point on the preference for 'dead heroes', - only the valiant dead would be honoured, but no-one had died at Jadotville.

### ***Declining press interest in Jadotville***

References to Jadotville in the national and local press became sparser throughout 1963. When Lt Joseph Leech was promoted to captain in May 1963, the *Westmeath Independent* carried a few lines on the event, incorrectly telling readers that Capt Joe Leech 'was in 'C' Company at Jadotville'.<sup>65</sup> Memories were fading. The inclusion of Comdt Pat Quinlan's son Cadet Eamon 'Leo' Quinlan in the Defence Forces Honour Guard at President Kennedy's funeral in November 1963, saw muted passing reference to Comdt Quinlan's having 'won fame while in charge of the Irish troops at Jadotville during the Katanga revolt two years ago'.<sup>66</sup> Jadotville was increasingly beginning to sound like an event from history.

It was similar when 'the siege of Jadotville, Katanga, in September 1961 was recalled' in a ceremony at Custume Barracks in Athlone where 'A' Company assembled under Comdt Quinlan's command, and donated a crib to the barracks in memory of the comrades who died in the Congo.<sup>67</sup> The crib was handed over by Comdt Quinlan to OC Western Command Col Harry Byrne, after being blessed by Chaplain Rev. P Collins C.F. and a decade of the rosary was recited in memory of the men being remembered. It was planned that the crib would be re-erected each year in a prominent place in the barracks.

### ***'Those who applauded them turned their backs and instead of medals they got white feathers'*<sup>68</sup>**

Out of sight of the media and away from such public episodes, many veterans of Jadotville and their families were increasingly subject to a snide campaign of insinuation, sometimes laughed off as mere 'slagging'. 'For two years in Athlone it was terrible' recalled Pte Billy Keane on the slagging he received after returning from Katanga.<sup>69</sup> He resolved nevertheless to stay in the Defence Forces: 'The beginning of it, I said to myself, I wasn't going to leave Army, because there was no work, I knew there was no work, I knew that, so I just soldiered on.'

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<sup>64</sup> *Dáil Éireann debates*, 4 April 1963.

<sup>65</sup> *Westmeath Independent*, 18 May 1963.

<sup>66</sup> *Connacht Tribune*, 30 November 1963.

<sup>67</sup> *Irish Independent*, 19 December 1963.

<sup>68</sup> Deboragh Kerr-Flanagan, interview with IRG, 28 January 2021.

<sup>69</sup> Pte Billy Keane, interview with IRG, 6 May 2021.

As described earlier in this chapter from September 1961 white handkerchiefs were waved by fellow soldiers at men who had served in Jadotville and they were slagged and insulted in other ways, children of these men living in barracks and in the wider communities they lived in heard at school from fellow-students that their fathers were ‘cowards’. Back home they were told not to listen to such taunts. Collette Byrne, daughter of CQMS Patrick Neville, recalled telling her father that a girl in her class at school “‘called you a coward”, you were a “Jadotville Jack””. He told her, ‘Collette, now you walk away from all that, but I’m going to tell you something now, you are going to hear about Jadotville in years to come.’<sup>70</sup> In barracks the seemingly innocent whistling of the 1956 American hit ‘Lay down your arms’ by the Chordettes, made famous in Britain the same year by Anne Shelton, took on a new and intimidating meaning, the refrain running ‘lay down your arms and surrender to mine’. One soldier about to embark on training men on the Bren gun was reminded by an NCO not to lose the weapon ‘like he had done in Jadotville’. Officers seemed to fare less badly.

No one seemed to know quite when this insinuation and ‘slagging’ began. To some it had already started in Elisabethville on ‘A’ Company’s release, and was brought back to Ireland in December 1961. ONUC veterans from all Defence Forces units who served in Congo brought back memories of time in the Congo.

Some men just got on with their lives. Jadotville did not affect them. Indeed, the Independent Review Group heard during its interviews many stories of happy childhoods spent in caring family homes across Ireland. Although aware of the way his father was treated on ‘A’ Company’s return to Ireland as his mother had mentioned it, Liam Roche’s father Cpl Christy Roche ‘just got on with it, he loved the uniform.’<sup>71</sup> CQMS Paddy Neville’s daughter Collette recalled that ‘he wasn’t in any way upset by Jadotville or anything, he didn’t show it.’<sup>72</sup>

A good friend of CQMS Neville was Platoon Sgt Martin McCabe. Sgt McCabe’s daughter Grace remembered that initially her father was ‘very on edge, the slightest bang or anything else in the house and he would jump a foot off the ground’.<sup>73</sup> Grace felt this was short term and her brother Declan felt he ‘came back out of it, he was always a very stable and loving father. I never perceived PTSD as some of the other soldiers seem to have experienced.’<sup>74</sup> Declan wondered if this was perhaps because his father was older than others in ‘A’ Company, being forty-four in Jadotville, and adding ‘I think he weathered it fairly well.’ This Declan also put down to his father having a large peer group and ‘a ton of hobbies’, he could talk to about his experiences, adding ‘I know some of the other fellows went through a terrible time afterwards.’

Others were troubled, and increasingly so, by their experiences in Jadotville and the troubling memories they now held within. It was not specific to ‘A’ Company, 35 Inf Bn, but in the case of ‘A’ Company persistent and haunting memories of what had happened at Jadotville began to coalesce with the taunts of fellow soldiers who had not experienced what they had seen in Katanga.

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<sup>70</sup> Collette Byrne, interview with IRG, 28 January 2021.

<sup>71</sup> Liam Roche, interview with IRG, 20 April 2021.

<sup>72</sup> Collette Byrne, interview with IRG, 28 January 2021.

<sup>73</sup> Grace Grouden, interview with IRG, 20 April 2021.

<sup>74</sup> Declan McCabe, interview with IRG, 11 February 2021.

Kathleen Lafferty told the IRG how her father Cpl John McAnaney came back from Katanga he was

a different man when he came back, he went out there with a full head of hair, and he went out with dark brown hair, and when I look at photos, he's just not that long home and you can see the worry on his face, you can see he's white, just literally white, and my mother would say he was never the same when he came back and he wouldn't talk much about it, not to his brothers, or to any one, except me for some reason.<sup>75</sup>

Some Jadotville veterans could meet and speak amongst themselves, some could move on, but for many there was no one to turn to. Men went AWOL, turned to drink and too many committed suicide. Marriages were wrecked and families were broken. Children saw and faintly understood, but understood all too well, that something was wrong with their fathers and between their fathers and mothers.

It went right to the top of 'A' Company. One night, shortly after Comdt Art Magennis returned from the Congo, he placed the event shortly after Christmas 1961, he opened his front door at home in Newbridge, Co. Kildare to find Comdt Pat Quinlan outside in a distressed state. Comdt Magennis recalled that 'there were tears running down out of his eyes, and I said, "In the name of God, Pat, what's wrong with you, are you hurt?' 'No', Comdt Quinlan replied, 'I've just gone up to Army Headquarters', and he said, "I know there's tears coming out of my eyes, and they are coming out because I have been in Army Headquarters".' Magennis asked 'What in the name of God did they do to you?' Comdt Quinlan replied 'they told me I was responsible for the surrender.' Comdt Magennis added 'he told me afterwards that there were two or three senior men who were out there accused him for being responsible' for the surrender. Of Comdt Quinlan, Comdt Magennis felt that he was 'the best soldier in the whole battalion, brave and good.'<sup>76</sup> He was prepared to go to Army Headquarters himself to speak up for Comdt Quinlan and said that he always spoke highly of him after Jadotville.

Suffering at all levels and ranks in 'A' Company continued after their return from Jadotville, their experiences back in Ireland were not unique. Other ONUC veterans experienced dreams and flashbacks. Some woke in bed at night bathed in sweat emerging in terror from dreams that they were back in Katanga amid gunfire. For months after returning from Jadotville Cpl Seán Kerr would 'jump out of bed at night in an attack on something, someone, somewhere' and his wife Peggy would 'have to get out of the bed and say "It's ok Seán you're home, you're with me, you're alright".'<sup>77</sup> In some cases, they took their feelings out on those who were nearest to them.

Pte Matt Quinlan also suffered nightmares and woke screaming and shouting; he was troubled by what he had seen at Jadotville, particularly the dead bodies. He had 'gone out, he trained, he loved the army, he did what he was supposed to do, he'd followed all the orders, he'd been left in charge of a mortar at one stage' and came back to barracks to taunts of being a coward and to fights over

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<sup>75</sup> Kathleen Lafferty, interview with IRG, 9 February 2021.

<sup>76</sup> MA, MAOHP-0002, file 4, Comdt Art Magennis interview, 24 June 2016.

<sup>77</sup> Deborah Kerr-Flanagan, interview with IRG, 28 January 2021, recounting her mother's experiences.

Jadotville.<sup>78</sup> His sister Alice felt that after Jadotville and how he was treated on his return to Ireland ‘he was like a spinning wheel’, he had ‘gone out to Jadotville a boy and come back a very different man’ and he spent the rest of his life trying to get away from Jadotville.

In the words of Pte Joe O’Kane, ‘How were we treated? Do you want me to tell you the truth? We weren’t treated at all ... We were treated better in the Congo than we were when we got back to our own barracks ... you were looked at as much to say “there’s a coward, there’s a coward”.’<sup>79</sup> Calling someone a coward is ‘the worst thing you could say to any member of society, be it a civilian or a military, so you totally underestimate them, then if they don’t have a trust in the system they go to self-medication.’<sup>80</sup> Men became isolated and wished to withdraw from society or get away.

‘The atmosphere was poisonous ... “surrender” was the name of the game if you went into a canteen’ in the Curragh if you had been at Jadotville, and as a result to get away Pte John Dreelan volunteered to return to Congo with the 37 Inf Bn.<sup>81</sup> Pte Dreelan remembered the insults ‘went on for years and years’ afterwards and Capt Noel Carey recalled the ‘awful silence from on high within the Defence Forces’ in response to the insults.<sup>82</sup> Capt Carey added ‘surely they should have listened to us, surely someone should have said let’s sit down and talk to you about what had happened in Jadotville ... what lessons we could have learned.’ No one wanted to talk about what happened at Jadotville and no one wanted to listen to the veterans of ‘A’ Company. That was the overarching tragedy of the following sixty years.

It was not only a tragedy for the men who ‘bottled up things’,<sup>83</sup> it was also ‘a very cruel thing to do to the families that knew exactly what went on.’<sup>84</sup> There was not only an institutional failure to resolve the trauma of Jadotville, there was an institutional failure to see that there was any trauma, that it extended to children, wives and families, and to resolve that trauma in the first place.

Talking of his childhood memories of how Jadotville was spoken of at home, John McCarton, son of Tpr Patrick McCarton said that ‘all in all’ his father ‘didn’t really like talking about’ what happened in Jadotville,

on the other hand, my mother, if you mentioned the word “coward” in my mother’s home, even as a kid, slagging or whatever, my mother hated that word, because obviously that word was ingrained in my mother’s head from what they were called, obviously the heartache that my dad went through, the stigma, call it whatever you want to call it, the hassle he had with the word “coward”, my mother hated that word. So even if I called my younger brother a “coward”, even in a playful argument or even an argument, that you’d get a clip because “cowards”, you don’t use that word in the house.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> Alice Quinlan, interview with IRG, 16 February 2021.

<sup>79</sup> Pte Joe O’Kane, interview with IRG, 25 February 2021.

<sup>80</sup> Lt Col Ollie Barbour (Retd), interview with IRG, 18 March 2021.

<sup>81</sup> Pte John Dreelan, interview with IRG, 25 February 2021.

<sup>82</sup> Pte John Dreelan, interview with IRG, 25 February 2021; Capt Noel Carey, interview with IRG, 19 January 2021.

<sup>83</sup> Pte Noel Stanley, interview with IRG, 21 January 2021.

<sup>84</sup> Michael Williams, interview with IRG, 19 January 2021.

<sup>85</sup> John McCarton, interview with IRG, 20 April 2021.

Sgt John McCarton (Retd), a former Defence Forces paramedic, asked his father ‘straight out’: “‘how many do you think you whacked”, because I needed to kind of get rough bearings. He said to me he lost count.’ John knew that ‘the psychological effect’ on his father ‘as a young lad, over there, you don’t realise it, how he bottled, how a lot of them men bottled it up over the years and it morphed into other issues.’<sup>86</sup>

Men who had been extrovert became introverted. ‘My mum said he was never the same man’, remembered Liam Roche of his father Cpl Christy Roche, ‘he liked to be on his own and go up to the pub and sit on his own.’<sup>87</sup> Sgt John McCarton (Retd) also cited alcohol and added anger, a bitterness at the aftermath of Jadotville and personally felt that his father, who he felt suffered from PTSD, was happier out of Dublin back in Mullingar with the men he had served with in Jadotville: ‘I think he felt a bit more relaxed down there because he was with them, and he associated with them as such because ... because they went through, him and them went through it, where a lot of the people in Dublin wouldn’t have gone through it.’<sup>88</sup>

Within the Defence Forces the men of ‘A’ Company ‘had nobody to talk to when they came home.’<sup>89</sup> What is worse is that many felt that they were not allowed to talk about Jadotville. Elizabeth Hennesly summed it all up when telling the Independent Review Group how her husband Pte Gerald Hennesly looked at the reaction to all he and his comrades had gone through in Jadotville and afterwards in captivity: ‘he felt Ireland had deserted them’.<sup>90</sup> ‘I was a POW but no-one cared’, was the only comment that Cpl Thomas O’Connor ever made about his time in Jadotville.<sup>91</sup> The complete breakdown of trust and abandonment which the men of ‘A’ Company suffered as a result of the destruction at Jadotville of their bond with the Defence Forces and the state which had sent them overseas in the cause of peace meant that many of them ‘had nowhere to go’ in the years and decades after Jadotville.<sup>92</sup> Or as Sgt John McCarton (Retd) bluntly put it, despite the acclaim they received on their return to Ireland, ‘no one really gave a shit’ about the men of ‘A’ Company after 1961.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Sgt John McCarton (Retd), interview with IRG, 20 April 2021.

<sup>87</sup> Liam Roche, interview with IRG, 20 April 2021.

<sup>88</sup> John McCarton, interview with IRG, 20 April 2021.

<sup>89</sup> Kathleen Lafferty, interview with IRG, 9 February 2021.

<sup>90</sup> Elizabeth Hennesly and Geraldine Hennesly, interview with IRG, 26 February 2021.

<sup>91</sup> Martin O’Connor, son of Cpl Thomas O’Connor, interview with IRG, 31 Mar 2021.

<sup>92</sup> Lt Col Ollie Barbour (Retd), interview with IRG, 18 March 2021.

<sup>93</sup> John McCarton, interview with IRG, 20 April 2021.

## Chapter 8

# 1961 Medals Board Process

### *Overview of Chapter 8*

This Chapter addresses the following issues:

- Legislative Measures,
- Pte A. Johnston (32 Inf Bn), Comdt P.P. Barry (33 Inf Bn),
- Niemba Ambush: Lt K. Gleeson, Sgt H. Gaynor, Tpr A. Browne,
- Submitted Recommendations: MMG (5),
- Work of 1961 Medals Board,
- Promotion of Pte A. Johnston to the rank of sergeant,
- Significance of 1961 Medals Board,
- Tpr A. Browne MMG.

### *Legislative Measures*

When examining the processes associated with the 1961, 1962 and 1965 Medals Boards, an understanding of the relevant legislation, regulations and procedures is required.

During this particular period, the Defence Act 1954<sup>1</sup> prescribed for the establishment of three military branches in the Department of Defence, the heads of which were the Chief of Staff, the Adjutant-General and the Quartermaster-General.<sup>2</sup> These three office holders were appointed by the President on the advice of the Government. Their duties and responsibilities were set out in Sealed Orders issued by the Minister for Defence,<sup>3</sup> and were promulgated by means of General Routine Orders 43/1955. Included in the Adjutant-General's duties and responsibilities are 'medals and decorations, and promotions in respect of NCOs and Privates'.<sup>4</sup>

The Defence Act 1954 authorised the Minister for Defence to issue Statutory Instrument 243/1954, Rules of Procedure (Defence Forces) 1954.<sup>5</sup> It also authorised the Minister to issue Defence Forces Regulations (DFRs), including: DFR A5, which deals with Courts of Inquiry, DFR

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<sup>1</sup> Number 18 of 1954. Note: with the reorganisation of Defence Forces Headquarters in 1998, whereas the appointments are Chief of Staff, Deputy Chief of Staff (Support) and Deputy Chief of Staff (Operations), the responsibilities of the Deputy Chief of Staff (Support) mirror those of the Adjutant-General.

<sup>2</sup> Section 13 of Defence Act 1954.

<sup>3</sup> Sealed Orders refer to orders issued under the seal of the Minister for Defence.

<sup>4</sup> GRO 43 of 1955, part 1, paragraph 2(2)(i).

<sup>5</sup> Section 240 of Defence Act 1954.



A10 and DFR A15, which deal with promotions for enlisted personnel and for commissioned officers, and DFR A19,<sup>6</sup> which deals with Medals and Awards.<sup>7</sup>

The provisions of DFRs A5, A10, A15 and A19, and the manner in which they were implemented during the period 1960 – 1971, are of significant relevance to the work of the Independent Review Group, and the contents of Chapters 8, 9, 10 and 12 of its Report.

Likewise, in the context of Defence Forces units deployed to ONUC, it is important to note that members of the Permanent Defence Force, who serve abroad with an armed United Nations international force, are deemed to be on active service.<sup>8</sup> The administration of military law is adapted for periods of active service in that certain offences against military law may attract a greater punishment.

### ***Medals, Commendations and Promotions***

The deployment of members of the Defence Forces overseas on service with the United Nations, beginning in 1958, brought with it the likelihood that some would carry out acts meriting recognition. However, the options available for rewarding these acts were limited at the time. In 1960, when units began deploying with ONUC, the only medal award available was the Military Medal for Gallantry. This had been instituted in 1944 but had never been awarded under the terms of DFR A19 prior to overseas deployments. The standard set for its award, as will be seen, was extremely high.

In the absence of any other form of medal award, other forms of recognition used in 1961 included promotion under the terms of DFR A10 and DFR A15,<sup>9</sup> and ‘commendation’. In 1961, a commendation would seem to have been a form of extra-regulatory award, the details of which are not clear.

The recommendation, consideration, and awards process, which will be described in detail below, generally followed the procedures associated with Military Courts of Inquiry. The Medals Boards of 1961, 1962 and 1965 were the first such boards convened by the Defence Forces and show a rudimentary, if developing process, being undertaken by an institution that was somewhat reluctant to award decorations.

These three Medals Boards show that precedent mattered as much as procedures, and that individuals with strong intentions could exert their views over a Medals Board. The progress of each Medals Board also shows that the procedures prescribed in DFRs A10, A15 and A19 presented administrative ambiguities, and that in some cases these had the potential to undermine good practice and the governance of the award process. The Defence Forces of the early 1960s

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<sup>6</sup> Since December 2001, DFR A19 is incorporated in DFR A9 (New Series) titled Dress and Medals.

<sup>7</sup> Section 26 Defence Act 1954.

<sup>8</sup> Section 4, Defence (Amendment Act) No 2) Act 1960. Section 5 of the Defence Act 1954 prescribes active service as ‘A person subject to military law shall for the purpose of the Defence Act 1954 be on active service whenever he is attached to or forms part of a force which is engaged in operations against an enemy or whenever he is engaged in military operations in a place wholly or mainly occupied by an enemy.’

<sup>9</sup> DFR A10 contains provision for the promotion of enlisted personnel for meritorious service or distinguished conduct. DFR A15 contains provision for the promotion of officers for distinguished service.

were keen and eager administrators, and there was no shortage of administrative endeavour in Army Headquarters. Nevertheless, there was a lack of administrative oversight, and in the strictly hierarchical structure of the 1960s, to robustly challenge questionable decisions made at a higher level was neither encouraged nor accepted.

***Commendation – Pte Alfred Johnston, 32 Inf Bn***

Lt Col Mortimer Buckley, OC 32 Inf Bn, considered that Pte Alfred Johnston had displayed ‘very commendable courage and devotion to duty even to the extent of endangering his own life.’<sup>10</sup> On the night of 28/9 September 1961, at Kisengi in Goma, Pte Johnston, on sentry duty, had grabbed a loaded Lee Enfield rifle from a comrade who was likely to discharge the weapon again, having already indiscriminately fired several rounds of ammunition.

Lt Col Buckley had ‘commended Pte Johnston on parade’, but he felt that it was ‘an occasion where some greater recognition is merited.’ Lt Col Buckley would have put Pte Johnston forward for the Military Medal for Gallantry ‘were it not for the fact that he seems to be precluded from being awarded this medal because the action took place on active service.’ He asked that his commendation for Pte Johnston be ‘forwarded to the Adjutant-General for whatever action he deems appropriate.’

Pte Johnston was deemed to be on ‘active service’ as a UN peacekeeper.<sup>11</sup> Serving with the UN’s ONUC mission did not amount to ‘war service’ under DFR A19, Part II paragraph 11. The Military Medal for Gallantry was instituted in 1944 to decorate acts of gallantry not performed on war service. The intention would seem to have been that if Ireland entered the second world war, a further medal or medals would be introduced to cover actual war service.

***Military Medal for Gallantry - Comdt P.P. Barry, 33 Inf Bn***

On 14 September 1960, Comdt P.P. Barry as commander of ‘B’ Company, 33 Inf Bn deployed his company in the North Katangese town of Manono. The deployment was to ensure the safety of 160 local police, their wives and families, and a party of eighty-five European employees of a local tin mine from 250 hostile members of the Baluba tribe, following a clash between the police and the Baluba in which some twenty-five Baluba were killed. The local Baluba wished to execute the members of the police for the deaths they had caused amongst their kinsfolk.

Comdt Barry’s action ensured that the police, their families, and the European mine workers could be evacuated by the United Nations. The Officer Commanding 33 Inf Bn, Lt Col Richard Bunworth, felt that Comdt Barry had ‘displayed courage and leadership of a high order’ in ensuring the safety of those under threat from the Baluba.<sup>12</sup>

Lt Col Bunworth also praised Comdt Barry for actions after the November 1960 Niemba Ambush. Comdt Barry, then stationed in Albertville, flew to Manono with a small hand-picked party from his company and, with the co-operation of Nigerian and Moroccan ONUC units in Manono,

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<sup>10</sup> MA, DOD, 3/37397, Lt Col Buckley to Col Byrne (OC Irish Contingent), 4 October 1960.

<sup>11</sup> Section 4(1) of Defence (Amendment) (No. 2) Act 1960.

<sup>12</sup> MA, box, Medals Board, Box 2, ‘Recommendation for award of An Bonn Míleata Calmachta – Cft P.P. Barry’, Lt Col Bunworth to Maj Gen Collins-Powell, 30 January 1961.

detained five Baluba in a hospital in the city, who had been injured in the Niemba Ambush, and ensured that they were flown to custody in Albertville.

In what was described as a highly secret mission, Comdt Barry had put into effect ‘a detailed plan which was formulated and later executed with great precision and daring.’ Lt Col Bunworth felt that Comdt Barry had ‘showed a very high standard of leadership and an outstanding courage in face of what might have been tremendous odds.’ He accordingly recommended Comdt Barry for the Military Medal for Gallantry.<sup>13</sup>

#### ***Niemba Ambush***<sup>14</sup>

On 8 November 1960, an eleven-man patrol from No 2 Pl, A Coy, 33 Inf Bn departed its base at Niemba, under the command of Lt Kevin Gleeson. The patrol consisted of one officer, three NCOs and seven men. Having departed Niemba, the patrol cleared a number of obstacles along the route. At approximately 1500hrs, the patrol arrived at a crossing point some twenty kilometres from Niemba, where the road from Niemba crosses the Luweyeye River. The patrol dismounted from the vehicles and moved forward to see if the bridge could be repaired.

Within a short space of time, the patrol was surrounded by a large number of Baluba tribesmen located on both banks of the river. The Balubas attacked without warning. Lt Gleeson ordered the patrol to hold fire, then to return fire. He later ordered the patrol to take cover and withdraw from the ambush. They were overcome by sheer weight of numbers. Nine of the patrol were killed in action. Two members of the patrol managed to survive.<sup>15</sup>

#### ***Military Medal for Gallantry: Lt K. Gleeson, Sgt H. Gaynor and Tpr A. Browne, 33 Inf Bn***

As OC 33 Inf Bn, Lt Col Bunworth recommended one officer, one NCO and one trooper from ‘A’ Company for the Military Medal for Gallantry, namely Lt Kevin Gleeson, Sgt Hugh Gaynor and Tpr Anthony Browne. Lt Col Bunworth felt that Lt Gleeson, as the patrol’s commander, ‘made tremendous efforts to preserve the lives of his men’; that, like Lt Gleeson, Sgt Gaynor had ‘shown considerable courage in battle’. Based on reports from Pte Kenny one of the two survivors of the ambush, Lt Col Bunworth concluded that Tpr Browne’s courage in drawing Baluba attention to his location had put his own life in danger and thereby allowed Pte Kenny to escape.<sup>16</sup>

In the two days following the ambush, during the subsequent recovery operation, the bodies of eight of the nine missing in action were recovered. In January 1961, Tpr Browne was listed as missing in action, presumed dead. Almost two years to the day after the ambush, Tpr Browne’s

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<sup>13</sup> In November 1965, Lt Col Bunworth recommended Lt Col Barry and the thirteen others who participated in Operation Shamrock for a DSM as ‘every member of the party involved in this enterprise ran the risk of violent death’ (MA, O.7500 Lt K Gleeson, personal file, Lt Col Hogan to Col Shortall, 2 Nov. 1965). Lt Col Bunworth left the class of the DSM to be awarded to the discretion of the Medals Board, but none of the thirteen received an award. Lt Col Barry’s DSM citation, which was awarded by the 1965 Medals Board, does not refer to ‘Operation Shamrock’, but to his actions at Manono in September.

<sup>14</sup> MA, Unit History, 33 Inf Bn pp 88–94.

<sup>15</sup> The nine who were killed: Lt Kevin Gleeson, 2 Fd Engr Coy, aged 30 from Terenure, Sgt Hugh Gaynor 2 Mot Sqn, aged 29 from Leixlip, Cpl Liam Dougan 5 Inf Bn, aged 24 from Cabra, Cpl Peter Kelly 5 Inf Bn, aged 25 from Templeogue, Tpr Anthony Browne MMG 2 Mot Sqn, aged 20 from Rialto, Pte Matthew Farrell 2 Hosp Coy, aged 22 from Swords, Tpr Thomas Fennell 2 Mot Sqn, aged 18 from Donnycarney, Pte Gerard Killeen CTD (E), aged 27 from Rathmines, and Pte Michael McGuinn 2 Fd Engr Coy, aged 21 from Carlow.

<sup>16</sup> MA, box, Medal Boards, Box 2, individual letters by Lt Col Bunworth to Maj Gen Collins-Powell recommending Sgt Gaynor, Tpr Browne and Lt Gleeson for the Military Medal for Gallantry, all 30 January 1961.

body was recovered from the bush in the vicinity of the village of Tundula approximately 2 miles from the actual ambush site.

In October 1961, 1 Inf Gp redeployed from Kamina Base to Nyunzu,<sup>17</sup> in north eastern Katanga, some 48 kilometres from Niemba. Its commander, Lt Col John C. O'Donovan decided to erect a memorial at the site of the Niemba ambush. A cross was cast in cement by Sgt William McLoughlin from the Engineer Section, and the inscription was carved by Pte Patrick Appleby.<sup>18</sup> On 5 November 1961, the cross was erected close to the Niemba ambush site, and Mass was celebrated by the unit chaplain Father Phelim McCabe CF.<sup>19</sup>

### ***Submitted Recommendations: Military Medal for Gallantry (5)***

Under the provisions of DFR A19 Lt Col Bunworth recommended to the Chief of Staff Maj General Collins-Powell that Comdt P.P. Barry, Lt K. Gleeson, Sgt H. Gaynor and Tpr A. Browne be considered for the award of the Military Medal for Gallantry.

Having been satisfied that 'active service' did not preclude Pte A. Johnston from being recommended by Lt Col Buckley for the award of the MMG, his name was included with those placed before a Military Board for its consideration for that award.

Lt Gleeson's recommendation covered more than just his action at Niemba. Lt Col Bunworth included in his recommendation an earlier incident where Lt Gleeson, showing 'resolute leadership and great daring' had led the rescue of a Belgian priest, Fr Peeters, from the Baluba controlled town of Nyunzu.<sup>20</sup>

These five recommendations for the award of the Military Medal for Gallantry were to be considered by a Medals Board appointed by Maj Gen Collins-Powell on 24 February 1961. This was the Defence Forces' first Medals Board.

The medals awarded to members of the Defence Forces up to now had been service based and did not require recommendations from a Medals Board. While the Military Medal for Gallantry had been instituted in 1944, it had never been awarded.

### ***The Work of the 1961 Medals Board***

The Chief of Staff appointed the Director of Plans and Operations Col Thomas J. Gray as President of the 1961 Medals Board, with Lt Col Olaf MacNeill and Comdt D.E. Ó Cuanacháin as ordinary members. The documents submitted to the 1961 Medals Board were direct and concise. Lt Col Bunworth and Lt Col Buckley each submitted separate statements to the 1961 Medals Board concerning those they were recommending for consideration for an award, with a covering letter to the Chief of Staff Maj Gen Collins-Powell.

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<sup>17</sup> MA, Unit History, 1 Inf Gp, p. 76.

<sup>18</sup> MA, Unit History, 1 Inf Gp, p. 35.

<sup>19</sup> MA, Unit History, 1 Inf Gp, pp 56 and 57.

<sup>20</sup> MA, O.7500 Lt K Gleeson, personal file, Lt Col Bunworth to Maj Gen Collins-Powell, 30 January 1961.

There are no available records of the deliberations of the 1961 Medals Board. The Board considered five cases for the Military Medal for Gallantry, and would have been fully aware of the regulations regarding available options.

The Board reported to the Chief of Staff Maj Gen Collins-Powell on 10 March 1961, exactly two weeks after it was convened.<sup>21</sup>

The 1961 Medals Board was 'NOT satisfied' that Pte A. Johnston 'did perform any specific act' which 'could be regarded as coming within the scope of the provisions of DFR A19 Para 11'.<sup>22</sup> Pte Johnston was not recommended for a Military Medal for Gallantry by the 1961 Medals Board.

The Board came to the same conclusion in relation to Comdt P.P. Barry. It was 'not satisfied that' he 'did perform any specific act during his period of duty in MANONO which could be regarded as coming within the scope of the provisions of DFR A19 paragraph 11'.<sup>23</sup> It made no reference to 'Operation Shamrock'.

However, the 1961 Medals Board concluded that 'the service rendered by Comdt Barry in the Congo was distinguished and worthy of recognition'. Accordingly, the Board proposed another course of action to recognise Comdt Barry. It invited the attention of the Chief of Staff to the provisions of DFR A15 paragraph 10 whereby 'an officer may be awarded for distinguished service by promotion to higher grade to fill a vacancy in Establishments.' Nevertheless, the provisions of DFR A15 do not provide for retrospective promotions by the Minister for Defence.<sup>24</sup> Comdt Barry was promoted to the rank of lieutenant-colonel on 22 September 1961 when a vacancy in establishments allowed this.<sup>25</sup>

The 1961 Medals Board in its deliberations interviewed Pte T. Kenny and Pte J. Fitzpatrick, the two survivors of the Niamba ambush. The Board also interviewed Comdt P.D. Hogan and Capt D.F. Crowley, who had both taken part in the search for survivors. The 1961 Medals Board was not satisfied that Lt K. Gleeson and Sgt H. Gaynor did perform any specific act during the Niamba action which could be regarded as coming within the scope of the provisions of DFR A19 paragraph 11, and accordingly the award of the Military Medal for Gallantry was not recommended in these two cases. However, the Board was satisfied that Tpr A. Browne did perform an act of gallantry coming within the scope of the provisions of DFR A19 paragraph 11. The Board recommended the award of the Military Medal for Gallantry, 2nd Class for Tpr A. Browne. Tpr A. Browne's award was approved by Minister for Defence Kevin Boland TD on 22 September 1961.

### ***Promotion of Pte A. Johnston to the rank of sergeant***

Of the five cases falling under the remit of the 1961 Medals Board, Pte A. Johnston's led to further discussion after it came to the attention of Minister for Defence Kevin Boland TD. Mr

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<sup>21</sup> MA, box, Medals Board, Box 2, 'Report of Military Board on recommendations for the award of An Bonn Míleata Calmachta', 10 March 1961.

<sup>22</sup> MA, box, 'Jadotville Medal queries', memorandum, '804718, Pte A. Johnston, HQ Coy 32 Inf Bn', undated.

<sup>23</sup> The Medals Board's report seems somewhat vague on its conclusions on Barry's Manono hospital raid.

<sup>24</sup> MA, DOD, 3/37397, minute by SÓM, 3 October 1961.

<sup>25</sup> *Irish Press*, 23 September 1961. Lt Col Barry was later also awarded the DSM for these actions in Katanga.

Boland had informed the Chief of Staff that he wished Pte Johnston's case to 'be reconsidered with a view to promoting him to the rank of Cre [Corporal].'<sup>26</sup>

DFR A10, para 38 (7) provided the Adjutant-General with the authority to 'promote a Private to the rank of Corporal because of meritorious service or distinguished conduct.' Accordingly, the Adjutant-General Col P.J. Hally was 'at liberty to consider Pte A. Johnston's action apart from any other considerations given to it by the Board.'<sup>27</sup> However, Pte Johnston had already been promoted to the rank of corporal on 3 August 1961, filling a routine vacancy in establishments.

On 25 September 1961, it was agreed by a decision of the Chief of Staff and the Minister for Defence, despite the absence of any such finding by the 1961 Medals Board, that Cpl Johnston be promoted to 'Sáir (Líne)' for meritorious service and distinguished conduct.<sup>28</sup> This decision was then implemented by the Adjutant-General Col Hally. Cpl A. Johnston's promotion to the rank of sergeant was to 'be borne against the overall army strength, but if and when a suitable vacancy arises in his unit, he should be considered for advancement to Sáir (Technician).' His promotion 'should be published in R[outine] O[rders] as soon as possible' and 'official citation will be forwarded'. Cpl Johnston's authorisation for promotion read that the Adjutant-General Col Hally, 'being the prescribed authority, do hereby order, pursuant to ROE, A10, paragraph 42(1), the Uimhir 804718 Cré Johnston, Alfred, be promoted to the rank of Sáirsint (Line), on 26 Meán Fomhair, 1961, for meritorious service and distinguished conduct while serving in the Republic of the Congo.'<sup>29</sup>

Of most concern arising from the 1961 Medals Board, was the manner of the implementation of promotions under DFR A10 and DFR A15. Promotions of officers for distinguished service under DFR A15 had to wait on there being vacancies in establishments to be filled. Promotions of NCOs for meritorious service and distinguished conduct could not be made above the rank of sergeant. Col Hally proposed to the Secretary of the Department of Defence that amendments be made to both regulations to remove these restrictions.<sup>30</sup> The recommended changes to regulations were not approved.

### ***Significance of the work of the 1961 Medals Board***

The deliberations and recommendations of the 1961 Medals Board are significant in their illustration of the medals awarding process. Following DFR A10, A15 and A19, which in turn deal with promotions for privates and corporals for meritorious service or distinguished conduct, promotions of officers for distinguished service, and finally the award of the Military Medal for Gallantry, in 1961, overseas unit commanders submitted their recommendations for consideration for awards.

On foot of receiving prima facie endorsements from the Adjutant-General, the Chief of Staff convened a Medals Board to consider the recommendations. The Board reported its findings to

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<sup>26</sup> MA, box, Medals Board, Box 2, minute, Lt Col Caseley to Col Hally, 23 September 1961.

<sup>27</sup> MA, box, 'Jadotville Medal queries', memorandum, '804718, Pte A. Johnston, HQ Coy 32 Inf Bn', undated.

<sup>28</sup> MA, box, Medals Board, Box 2, minute by Col Hally, 25 September 1961, on Lt Col Buckley to OC Irish Contingent (Col Byrne), 4 October 1960 and also O'Broin to OIC, CTC, 26 September 1961.

<sup>29</sup> MA, box, Medals Board, Box 2, 'Order for Promotion' signed by Col Hally, 26 September 1961.

<sup>30</sup> MA, box, 'A' Adm 61/07, Col Hally to Brady, 11 November 1961.



the Chief of Staff. The Chief of Staff then submitted the Board's recommendations to the Minister for Defence for approval, resulting in an award, which in the timeframe of 1961 was the Military Medal for Gallantry.

Regarding the recommendations for promotions from the Medals Board, the role of the Adjutant-General in implementing awards by way of promotion is prescribed in DFR A10 and DFR A15.

The Minister for Defence has the ultimate authority in authorising the awards proposed by the Medals Board. The Minister authorised the award of the Military Medal for Gallantry to Tpr Browne. Pte Johnston's promotion process shows that the Minister can also return for reconsideration any recommendations of a Medals Board.

The 1961 Medals Board shows that the Chief of Staff occupies a grey area when it comes to awards for meritorious conduct. The 1961 Board submitted its conclusions on Comdt Barry's possible promotion to the Chief of Staff, not the Adjutant-General, or the Minister for Defence. Yet the Chief of Staff was the convening authority for the Board, not the authorising authority for its awards. The authorising authority was the Minister for Defence.

### ***Tpr Anthony Browne MMG***

The notification signed by the Adjutant-General Col Hally, of the award of the Military Medal for Gallantry 2nd Class to Tpr Anthony Browne by the Minister for Defence was published in General Routine Orders on 6 October 1961. On the first anniversary of the Niamba ambush, Tpr Browne's parents were presented with his Military Medal for Gallantry by Taoiseach Seán Lemass TD in a military ceremony at Collins Barracks, Dublin, attended by the President of Ireland Éamon de Valera. The Adjutant-General Col Hally read the citation to those gathered at the ceremony, and Tpr Browne's father John accepted the medal. The families of Tpr Browne's eight comrades who were also killed at Niamba were presented with their United Nations Service Medals at the ceremony.

Tpr Browne was the first recipient of the Military Medal for Gallantry, the Defence Forces highest military award. Tpr Browne's citation reads:

He endeavoured to create an opportunity to allow an injured comrade to escape by firing his Gustaf, thereby drawing attention to his own position, which he must have been aware would endanger his life. He had a reasonable opportunity to escape because he was not wounded but chose to remain with an injured comrade.

The decision of the 1961 Medals Board not to recommend Lt Kevin Gleeson for a Military Medal for Gallantry was a matter for concern for his commanding officer Lt Col Richard Bunworth. The Medals Board's report made no reference to Lt Gleeson's actions in Nyunzu in saving Fr Peeters. Its findings refer solely to 'the Niamba action'.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> MA, O.7500 Lt K. Gleeson, personal file, 'Report of Military Board on recommendations for the award of An Bonn Míleata Calmachta', 10 March 1961.

By 1964, and following the incorporation of the Distinguished Service Medal in Defence Forces Regulations, Lt Col Bunworth had ‘further evidence ... which I feel might have persuaded the Board to have reached a decision in favour of Lt K. Gleeson had it been available’.<sup>32</sup> He requested that ‘the case be re-examined in the light of the evidence of Fr Peeters in his letter to Mrs Gleeson’. Lt Col Bunworth ‘strongly’ recommended ‘the award of the lesser medal – for Meritorious Conduct’.

A specially typed version of the ‘Recommendation for Awards’ pro-forma for awards under DFR A10, A15 and A19 was created for Lt Gleeson. His action leading a small patrol from Niemba to Nyunzu to rescue Fr Peeters was described as ‘conspicuously brave’.<sup>33</sup> The recommendation was initiated by Comdt Louis Hogan, Lt Gleeson’s company commander, and counter-signed by Lt Col Bunworth, his battalion commander. The Adjutant-General Maj Gen Collins-Powell agreed that a prima facie case existed for an award, but the 1965 Medals Board made ‘no award’ to Lt Gleeson. This recommendation did not relate in any way to Lt Gleeson’s actions during the Niemba ambush.

There was considerable dismay when the awards recommended by the 1965 Medals Board were made public in 1967 that Lt Gleeson was not decorated for his service with ONUC.<sup>34</sup> The *Sunday Express* newspaper carried comment from within the Defence Forces that in rescuing Fr Peeters ‘the guts showed by Gleeson was the talk of the Congo’.<sup>35</sup> This dismay continued through the following decades. An unsigned and undated 1985 memorandum on Lt Gleeson’s case, initiated after his daughter Celine wrote presenting her father’s case to Minister for Defence Patrick Cooney TD, concluded that two Medals Boards had considered Lt Gleeson’s recommendations, he had been recommended for consideration for two medals, that the time limit for the submission of recommendations had ‘elapsed’ and that there was ‘no precedent for the re-opening of unsuccessful cases for the award of a medal to members of the Defence Forces’.<sup>36</sup>

Some Jadotville veterans commented after the names of those being awarded Distinguished Service Medals became public that they might have stood a better chance of a decoration if they had been killed in the Battle of Jadotville. The example of the Niemba ambush suggested otherwise.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> MA, O.7500 Lt K. Gleeson, personal file, ‘Award - Lt K. Gleeson’, undated.

<sup>33</sup> MA, O.7500 Lt K. Gleeson, personal file, typed awards recommendations pro-forma on lined paper.

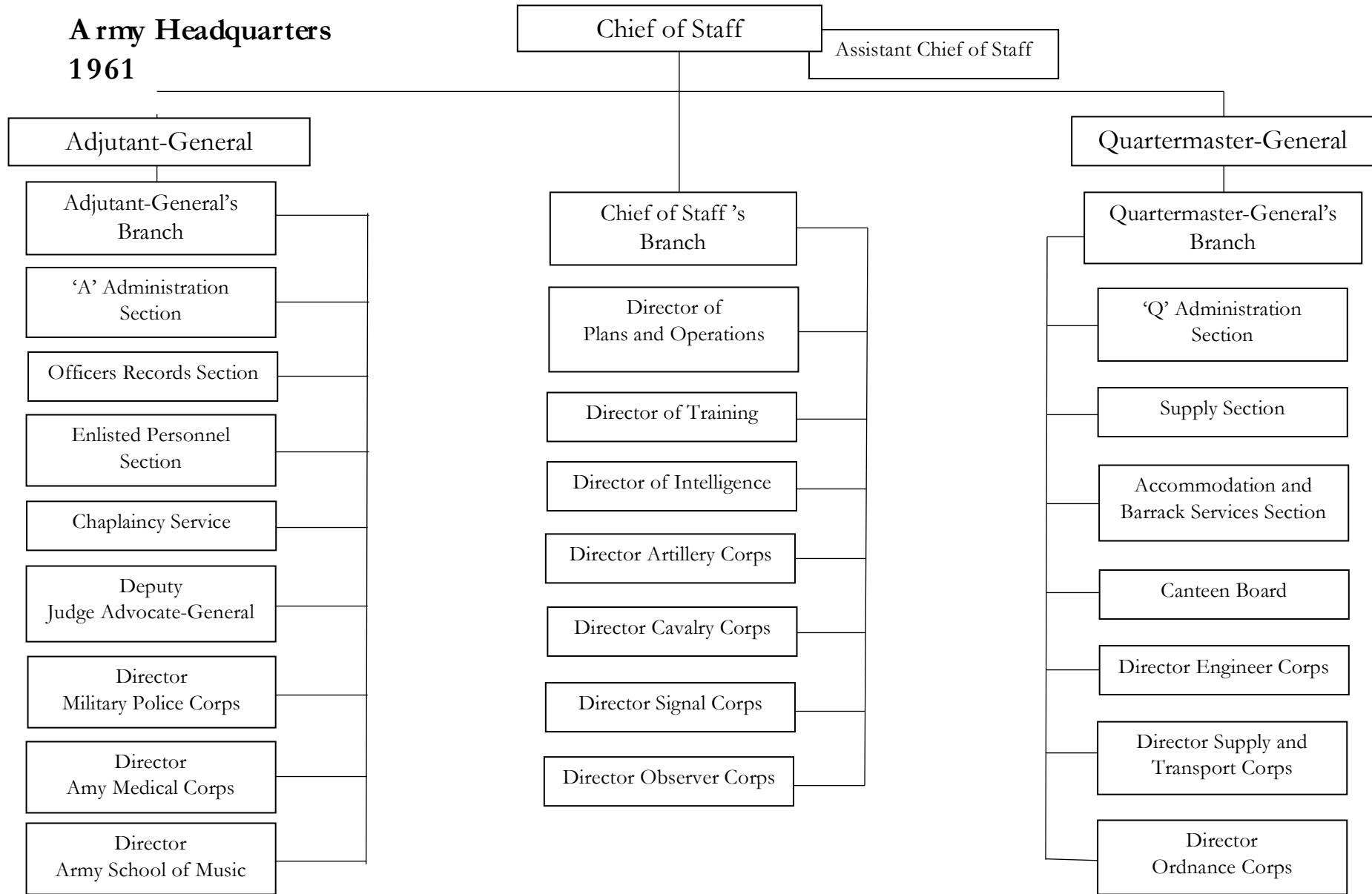
<sup>34</sup> See also Chapter 10 below.

<sup>35</sup> *Sunday Express*, 12 March 1967.

<sup>36</sup> MA, O.7500 Lt K. Gleeson, personal file, ‘Award of Medal. Lt K. Gleeson, 33 Inf Bn ONUC’.

<sup>37</sup> See also Chapter 10 for Lt Gen Seán MacEoin’s view on the question of specific awards to those killed at Niemba.

# Army Headquarters 1961



## Chapter 9

# 1962 Medals Board Process

### *Overview of Chapter 9*

This chapter addresses the following issues:

- Initiation of the Medal Process, Ballot Papers to Katanga, Unit Histories, Lessons Learned Process, Medals and Awards – Military Medal for Gallantry,
- OC 35 Inf Bn Recommendations, Evaluation of Medal Files, Formal Submission to the Adjutant-General,
- Recommendations for Military Medal for Gallantry, Recommendations for Meritorious Conduct Medal, Recommendations for Promotion, Analysis of Recommendations,
- 1962 Medals Board, Considerations – Military Medal for Gallantry, Considerations – Meritorious Conduct Medal, Promotions,
- Aftermath, Approval of New Medal – Distinguished Service Medal, Reconsidering Findings of 1962 Medals Board.

### *Initiation of Medal Process*

On 23 September 1961, Minister for Defence Kevin Boland TD raised the question of medals for acts of bravery and gallantry for service with ONUC with the Chief of Staff, Maj Gen Seán Collins-Powell. Minister Boland asked about the system to investigate events that had taken place in Katanga, with the prospect of the ‘making of recommendations for awards in recognition of the performance of any act of exceptional bravery or gallantry’.<sup>1</sup> Briefing the Adjutant-General Col P.J. Hally on Minister Boland’s wishes, OIC ‘A’ Administration Section,<sup>2</sup> Lt Col James J. Caseley<sup>3</sup> explained that the procedure for initiating, forwarding, and examining ‘acts’ for the award of the Military Medal for Gallantry, is:

- ‘An initial recommendation accompanied by statement(s) by persons with personal knowledge, or eyewitnesses, forwarded to the Adjutant-General,
- ‘A’ Adn [Árd-Aidiúnaigh/Adjutant-General] is satisfied the case is brought before a Military Board appointed by An Ceann Foirne, [The Chief of Staff],
- Consideration and Recommendation by Board. See DFR A 19 Part II.’

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<sup>1</sup> MA, Medals Board, Box 2, minute, Lt Col Caseley to Col Hally, 23 September 1961.

<sup>2</sup> ‘A’ Administration Section is responsible for areas such as administration, regulations, messes, ceremonial and medals falling under the remit of the Adjutant-General. The Lt Col in charge of ‘A’ Administration Section is responsible in effect for the administration of these matters covered by the Adjutant-General’s Branch of the Defence Forces Headquarters. The ‘A’ stands for Adjutant-General’s Branch, as opposed to ‘Q’ Administration, which was the equivalent for the Quartermaster-General’s Branch.

<sup>3</sup> Lt Col, later Col, James J. ‘Jock’ Caseley (born 1915), from County Monaghan, joined the Defence Forces in 1935. By 1961 he had United Nations experience in Lebanon with UNOGIL in 1958, and in Congo with ONUC in 1961, where he served as Military Assistant to the Force Commander Lt Gen MacEoin. Lt Col Caseley was later appointed OC 4 Inf Bn. and retired in 1974 as Deputy Adjutant-General.

Lt Col Caseley then explained to Col Hally the problems associated with sending an officer to Katanga to carry out any preliminary investigation in the context of any recommendations regarding Irish ONUC units. He planned that an investigating officer would depart from Dublin for Katanga under the guise of being an official courier bringing ballot papers to Defence Forces personnel for the October 1961 Irish general election. The schedule proposed shows that Lt Col Caseley was anxious to visit 'A' Company which was in captivity in Jadotville:

- 'If the schedule for the trip can be adhered to, ample time would be available at Elisabethville and by arrangement at KAMINA airfield to see OC 1 Infantry Group;
- If troops at JADOTVILLE are still held, then clearance to see OC 'A' Company would have to be obtained from KATANGA authorities. This might be got through UN HQ or with US of British Consulates at Elisabethville. For such an approval, a letter from Minister for External Affairs outlining the purpose of the visit would help.<sup>4</sup>

The feasibility of the plan notwithstanding, all elements of the 35 Infantry Battalion (35 Inf Bn) and the 1 Infantry Group (1 Inf Gp) were being treated equally with regard to the proposed investigation for medal awards. Indeed, Minister Boland most obviously wanted Lt Col Caseley to directly obtain the opinion of Comdt Pat Quinlan, 'A' Company commander, on the issue of awards by his going to Jadotville.<sup>5</sup>

### ***Delivery of Ballot Papers to Katanga***

Lt Col Caseley brought the 1961 general election ballot papers to Katanga, for distribution to personnel of HQ ONUC, 35 Inf Bn and 1 Inf Gp. Departing Dublin on 28 September, a photograph on the front page of the *Irish Times* of 29 September, showed him holding his briefcase of ballot papers. He was recorded in the Unit Journal of HQ Company, 35 Inf Bn, as present visiting 'company lines' in Elisabethville on 30 September 1961.<sup>6</sup> Lt Col Caseley did not gain permission to visit 'A' Company, and he returned to Dublin on 2 October.

Reporting his arrival at Dublin Airport, the *Irish Independent* told its readers that Lt Col Caseley had distributed ballot papers in Leopoldville, Kamina and Elisabethville, but that if he had been another day in the Congo he might have got to Jadotville.<sup>7</sup> Lt Col Caseley explained that the ballot papers he had hoped to bring to Jadotville were instead brought by Irish journalists to 'A' Company 'but they were not returned before he left.'<sup>8</sup> The *Irish Press* carried a slightly different take on the story. The journalists had given the ballot papers to 'A' Company, but as the Gendarmerie commander of the camp was not present at the time of the journalists' visit, they were not able to secure permission to take the papers out again. Lt Col Caseley was not sure if the votes had got out of the camp in Jadotville, adding that 'the votes may have got out yesterday and may reach us in time if posted.'<sup>9</sup> Lt Col Caseley never explained why he had not made it to Jadotville which was

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<sup>4</sup> MA, Medals Board, Box 2, 'Investigation of Events. Katanga' attached to minute, Lt Col Caseley to Col Hally, 23 September 1961.

<sup>5</sup> Not to mention the value from the intelligence and other perspectives of a meeting with Comdt Quinlan and his men.

<sup>6</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 35INFBN, 2/9, 30 September 1961.

<sup>7</sup> *Irish Independent*, 3 October 1961.

<sup>8</sup> *Irish Independent*, 3 October 1961.

<sup>9</sup> *Irish Press*, 3 October 1961.

one of the primary objectives of his visit to Katanga. No 'A' Company veteran interviewed by the Independent Review Group recalled receiving ballot papers, or hearing of their arrival in their Jadotville camp.

Col Hally and Maj Gen Collins-Powell discussed Minister Boland's medals query on 23 September 1961. What most likely influenced Minister Boland to act, was not only the recent ceasefire in Katanga, but that the previous day he had approved the findings of the 1961 Medals Board,<sup>10</sup> which on 10 March 1961 had recommended the award of the Military Medal for Gallantry, 2nd Class, to Trooper Anthony Browne, missing, presumed dead, for action at Niemba in November 1960.<sup>11</sup>

### ***Unit Histories***

In January 1962 two linked issues, writing the Unit History of the ONUC units, and assessing how units and men had fared in the Congo, were initiated by the Defence Forces, with varying degrees of success.

On 16 January 1962, the Deputy Adjutant-General, Col S. O'Broin, issued an instruction 'to ensure that all records and documents of the Congo Units are properly disposed of'.<sup>12</sup> He ordered unit Adjutants and Company Administrative Officers of the 35 Inf Bn to assemble for the task at Army Headquarters, Dublin at 1100 on 19 February 1962. Comdt Edward Condon, Capt Thomas McGuinn, Capt J.F. O'Connell and Capt Ralph Cregan were to sort files and documents to 'prepare material for inclusion in the Unit History where that has NOT already been done'.<sup>13</sup> Files for retention were to be listed before being handed over to Lt Col Caseley as OIC of 'A' Administration Section of the Adjutant-General's Branch, 'for disposal to Officers' Records Section, Enlisted Personnel Section, or Archives as necessary.'

Concurrently, in Plans and Operations Section (Rannóg Phleanna agus Oibríocht), Col Christopher E. 'Ned' Shortall drew up plans for the Unit Histories of the 34 Inf Bn, 35 Inf Bn and the 1 Inf Gp.<sup>14</sup> Lt Col McNamee was instructed to 'initiate action to have a Unit history prepared, while the matter is still fresh in the minds of the personnel concerned'.<sup>15</sup> Lt Col McNamee was responsible for 'preliminary co-ordination and final submission'. Col Shortall 'appreciated that the task is a large one, requiring considerable delegation of tasks and that much of the history will have to be prepared piecemeal.' Lt Col McNamee, with his staff and company commanders, was to meet at GHQ at 1100hrs on 22 February 1962 to discuss writing the 35 Inf Bn's history, at a meeting that Col Shortall would preside over. Col Shortall set out the working headings for the history of 35 Inf Bn, and the other units that served with ONUC. As Director of Plans and Operations, Col Shortall would oversee the process. While the Commanding Officer of each ONUC unit was to provide a general editor, company commanders were to write their own

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<sup>10</sup> See Chapter 8.

<sup>11</sup> This Medals Board was appointed on 24 February 1961 and submitted its findings on 10 March 1961. It also considered other recommendations for the Military Medal for Gallantry, but did not recommend the award, to Comdt P.P. Barry (promotion to Lt Col instead), Lt Kevin Gleeson and Sgt Hugh Gaynor (both killed at Niemba), and Pte Alfred Johnston. Tpr Browne's award was published in General Routine Orders on 6 October 1961. His parents were presented with his medal on 8 November 1961 at Collins Barracks in Dublin by Taoiseach Seán Lemass; it was the first anniversary of the Niemba ambush.

<sup>12</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 1INFGP, 1/8, "'A'" Records and documents – Congo Units', 16 January 1962.

<sup>13</sup> As OC 35 Inf Bn, Lt Col McNamee was invited to attend.

<sup>14</sup> Col Shortall, a former OC of 1 Brigade, Cork, had been appointed Director of Plans and Operations in May 1961.

<sup>15</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 1INFGP, 1/8, 'History of Unit Operations in Republic of Congo', 26 January 1962.



accounts. Initial expectations were for the histories to be completed by 1 May 1962.<sup>16</sup> It would take until February 1964 for the 35 Inf Bn's Unit History to be completed. The substantial portion of the 35 Inf Bn's Unit History concerning Jadotville derives from an account of the events of September and October 1961, written from memory by Comdt Pat Quinlan for the information of ONUC Force Commander Lt Gen Seán MacEoin in the days following 'A' Company's release from captivity.<sup>17</sup>

### ***Lessons to be Learned from ONUC***

Col Shortall's colleague Col Eoghan O'Neill had a further initiative. Realising that there was 'a vast reservoir of knowledge and experience' in the Defence Forces as a result of 'active service' with ONUC, he argued that there was 'a great danger that this experience will be lost or dissipated, as, generally speaking, there is no official cognisance of it, and there is evidence that some of the lessons learned are not being applied in the Army at home.'<sup>18</sup>

No debriefing was taking place, lessons learned were not being taught. There was 'insufficient study to interpret various lessons learned at different times by Commanders who served in completely different situations.'

Col O'Neill proposed the formation of a Board 'to collect, collate and interpret the experience of our units in the Congo and recommend policy to be adopted at home.' He did not see this as 'a fault-finding witch-hunt to see which officer was the worst trained, what company was undisciplined, what unit was best trained.' Rather, he wanted 'to distil particular experiences into general policy'. Col O'Neill wanted to look at training, selection and promotion at officer level, training, discipline and leadership amongst NCOs and Privates, and 'staff work leadership, teamwork cohesion, morale and esprit de corps' at unit and subunit level. It is likely that the process would also evaluate decisions related to the non-convening of Courts of Inquiry by unit commanders.

Col O'Neill proposed that the Board be composed of officers who served in HQ ONUC, rather than officers who had served in a Congo Battalion, and that it be chaired by Col James J. Quinn who had served at ONUC HQ in Leopoldville. Col Shortall circulated Col O'Neill's proposal to 'A' Administration Section, 'Q' Administration Section, Training Section and Intelligence Section, to see if they were in favour, and to seek advice regarding the terms of reference and members of the proposed Board. The response was lukewarm. Training Section favoured the idea of the Board, explained that it should be made of officers who had served in the Congo, and looked forward to receiving its observations. Intelligence Section regretted they had not an officer available to sit on such a board. No Section jumped at the opportunity. There is no response on file from 'A' and 'Q' Administration Sections.

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<sup>16</sup> Other forms of history of the 35 Inf Bn were also being put together. On 3 February 1962 at the Cavalry Club at McKee Barracks a series of films and slides taken by Capts Roger McCorley, Michael Considine and Frank Lawless were shown to an audience including Lt Col McNamee and Chief of Staff Maj Gen Seán Collins-Powell and Adjutant-General Col P.J. Hally. Comdt Pat Cahalane spoke on the general events leading to the September and December 1961 fighting, and Capt Art Magennis outlined the tactics he employed at the Old Airstrip, Elisabethville on 5 December 1961, in which, it was noted 'the men of 'A' Company of the 35 Inf Bn took part' (*Evening Herald*, 5 February 1962).

<sup>17</sup> MA, Unit History, 35 Inf Bn, Annex B.

<sup>18</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 33INFBN, 4/2, 'Congo Operations', memorandum by Col O'Neill, April 1962.

Col O'Neill put forward his proposal again in July 1962, stressing that the object was 'above all ... to improve the Army at home.'<sup>19</sup> No further action was taken to convene the proposed Board and debriefing instead took place, if it took place, in an ad hoc manner across GHQ. Furthermore, despite the fact that three members of the 35 Inf Bn were killed in action in Elisabethville, that Comdt Pat Quinlan, Comdt Pat Cahalane and Lt Tom Ryan were forced to surrender, no Courts of Inquiry were convened into events at Elisabethville or Jadotville, nor was there any discussion by way of debriefing or critical analysis of what had taken place at Elisabethville, Jadotville or Kamina Base, in 1961. No one ever thought of asking personnel of the 35 Inf Bn, or any other ONUC unit or, after 1964, any UNFICYP unit, to record their experiences in a formal, or informal manner, beyond what was contained in the catchall Unit Histories prepared for these overseas units.

Had Col O'Neill's 'lessons learned' suggestion been acted upon; he would have found at least one officer willing to tell his story immediately. Capt Liam Donnelly, Support Platoon commander, 'A' Company, 35 Inf Bn, gave a lecture illustrated with slides at MacHale Technical School in Tuam on 10 March 1962.<sup>20</sup> Speaking to a 'capacity audience', Capt Donnelly 'described conditions' faced by 'A' Company in Jadotville 'and said that the Irish soldiers had proved the best in the world.'<sup>21</sup> It was the first of over four decades of lectures that Capt Donnelly would give on Jadotville. In the 1990s, he became one of the first campaigners, both in public and within the Defence Forces, to have Jadotville remembered as a significant chapter in Irish military history, and to find out just what had led to 'A' Company being sent to Jadotville in the first place, and the obliteration by the Defence Forces and the Department of Defence of their story and achievements thereafter.<sup>22</sup>

### ***Medals and Awards - The Military Medal for Gallantry***

Lt Col McNamee told the waiting press on his arrival in Dublin in December 1961, that he would be recommending several of his men for consideration for a medal, or an award for individual actions in Katanga. Lt Col McNamee had only one option when it came to a medal. Instituted in 1944, An Bonn Míleata Calmachta (The Military Medal for Gallantry), was, and remains, the highest medal awarded in the Defence Forces. Up to February 1964, it was the only medal that could be awarded for acts of gallantry and bravery in the Defence Forces.

The Military Medal for Gallantry is awarded for any act of exceptional bravery or gallantry (other than one performed on war service) arising out of, or associated with, military service and involving risk to life and limb.<sup>23</sup> It may be awarded to officers and enlisted personnel of the Defence Forces, and to members of the Army Nursing Service and Chaplaincy Service.

To Lt Gen Seán MacEoin, the Military Medal for Gallantry was 'the premier military award'.<sup>24</sup> A later document explained that in the early 1960s, 'it was considered, that the conditions for award of the Military Medal for Gallantry were so high that an award of this medal would be made ONLY

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<sup>19</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 33INFBN, 4/2, minute by Col Ó Neill, 13 July 1962.

<sup>20</sup> *The Connacht Tribune*, 10 March 1962.

<sup>21</sup> *Tuam Herald*, 10 March 1962.

<sup>22</sup> See Chapter 11: Seeking Recognition, Independent Review Group's Report.

<sup>23</sup> It was felt in 1944 that in the event of Ireland becoming involved in active hostilities in the Second World War that a separate series of 'War Service' medals would be issued.

<sup>24</sup> MA, box, 'Jadotville Medal Queries', 'An Bonn Mileata Calmachta', memorandum from Lt Gen MacEoin to Bartley, 5 February 1965. Forwarded to Bartley with the report of the Board, 12 February 1965.

in exceptional cases.<sup>25</sup> For the Military Medal for Gallantry to be awarded, Lt Gen MacEoin informed Minister for Defence Gerald Bartley TD that ‘before a decoration so important is awarded, it must be established beyond all reasonable doubt that the act performed merits the recognition.’<sup>26</sup>

However, this view about the medal being awarded in only the most exceptional of circumstances was contrary to an opinion expressed by Patrick J. Kilcullen, Principal Officer at the Department of Defence. He advised Assistant Secretary Stephen Kearney that the Chief of Staff when the Military Medal for Gallantry was introduced, Lt Gen Dan McKenna, ‘did not intend that the medal for gallantry should be awarded only in very rare circumstances.’<sup>27</sup>

Until 1964, when making recommendations for a medal for acts of bravery on overseas service, it was the Military Medal for Gallantry that was in an officer’s, or an NCO’s mind. However, from late 1961, some were aware that a second medal for acts of bravery, at a level below the Military Medal for Gallantry was under consideration. Regulations for this medal were drafted in early 1962, under the working title of the ‘Meritorious Conduct Medal’.

### ***Medals and Awards - The ‘Meritorious Conduct Medal’***

On 9 October 1961, Lt Col Caseley, OIC ‘A’ Administration Section, circulated an invitation to Army Headquarters and to the Commands to submit designs for a new medal ‘for Meritorious Conduct.’<sup>28</sup> This proposed medal would be for deeds of bravery which might not merit a Military Medal for Gallantry, but which were nonetheless worthy of award. Accordingly, a new ‘Part IV to DFR A19’ was planned, ‘to provide for awards for meritorious conduct’, and ‘The Meritorious Conduct Medal’ was proposed, based on guidance taken from the equivalent British and American medals.<sup>29</sup> The following day, 10 October 1961, the Adjutant-General Col P.J. Hally brought the proposed amendments to DFR A19, together with proposed amendments to A15 and A10, dealing with ‘meritorious conduct and promotion for distinguished service’ to the attention of the Chief of Staff Maj Gen Collins-Powell, for discussion at their next Staff Meeting.<sup>30</sup>

The need for the new medal had arisen with the advent of Defence Forces’ participation in overseas service from 1958 with the United Nations. It was clear that cases of bravery and gallantry could now arise where a medal award of lesser status than the Military Medal for Gallantry was appropriate. Quite simply, there were degrees of bravery and gallantry and not all merited a Military Medal for Gallantry. When instituted, the Military Medal for Gallantry was to be a single medal with no classes. At a later stage, DFR A19 was amended prescribing for 1st Class, 2nd Class and 3rd Class awards of the Military Medal for Gallantry.

A later article in the *Irish Times* highlighted the ‘lack of recognition of instances of outstanding service.’ It continued that ‘much meritorious service, both at home and abroad, has gone

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<sup>25</sup> MA, box, ‘Jadotville Medal Queries’, ‘Distinguished Service Medal’, undated, but post 1962.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> MA, DOD, 3/39180, Kilcullen to Kearney, 31 January 1962.

<sup>28</sup> MA, ‘A’ Adm 01/60, ‘Medals and Decorations 1961-1969’, Lt Col Caseley to various directors of sections, 9 October 1961.

<sup>29</sup> MA, ‘A’ Adm 01/60, ‘Medals and Decorations 1961-1969’, memorandum entitled ‘Awards for Gallantry and Lesser Awards’, undated, but attached to Lt Col Caseley to various directors of sections, 9 October 1961. It was in 1962 amended to Part V.

<sup>30</sup> MA, Medals Board, Box 2, Col Hally to Maj Gen Collins-Powell, 10 October 1961.

unrecognised by the Army authorities.<sup>31</sup> The newspaper noted that the Military Medal for Gallantry ‘could be awarded only in very exceptional cases, and the simple fact is that ... there has been no medal that could be awarded for anything less.’ The only medals that a soldier might hold in addition to the Military Medal for Gallantry were The 1916 Medal, The Service Medal (1917 – 1921), The Emergency Service Medal, The Service Medal and UN Service Medals.

The lack of a suitable medal beneath the Military Medal for Gallantry was seen in a letter from an officer from the Adjutant-General’s Branch recently returned from ONUC service who wrote to Norwegian Col Uggla, seeking advice on medals awarded for:

- Bravery, Gallantry, etc.
- Meritorious Service or Conduct,
- Good Conduct,
- Overseas Service.

The officer also looked for details on who received the medals, the conditions of the awards, and the nature and length of service required for receipt. He pointed out that ‘we are a young Army and until 1960 had no overseas, or active service, so the necessity for awards have not arisen until recently. Naturally we don’t want to go contrary to general practices elsewhere.’<sup>32</sup>

The absence of a medal of lesser status than the Military Medal for Gallantry, explains the references in the unit history of the 35 Inf Bn and in associated recommendations for awards such as:

- Recommendation for a citation,
- Recommendation for an award of recognition, and
- Recognition of meritorious service.

The proposed Meritorious Conduct Medal (MCM) was an attempt by the Defence Forces to deal with cases worthy of award, which were not at the high level of bravery, gallantry or conduct required for award of the Military Medal for Gallantry.

By early November 1961, ‘the military members of the Council of Defence’<sup>33</sup> had approved recommended amendments to DFR A19 for the new medal. Bringing this to the attention of the Secretary of the Department of Defence, Hugh C. Brady, the Adjutant-General, Col P.J. Hally, signed off by emphasising that ‘from reports already received from the Congo, the urgent necessity for awards in addition to An Bonn Míleata Calmachta, is apparent. It would be appreciated, therefore, if these proposals were approved as soon as possible.’<sup>34</sup> The process was not completed until February 1964, with the institution of the Distinguished Service Medal. The process required the elaboration of the concept behind the medal, the drafting, approval and promulgation of regulations, and Government approval.

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<sup>31</sup> *Irish Times*, 13 March 1964.

<sup>32</sup> MA, Medals Board, Box 1, unsigned carbon copy letter from Army Headquarters, Parkgate St, Dublin to Col Uggla, 25 January 1962. The reference to 1960 is incorrect, the first Irish soldiers served overseas in 1958 with UNOGIL in the Middle East.

<sup>33</sup> Chief of Staff, Adjutant-General and Quartermaster-General.

<sup>34</sup> MA, Medals Board, Box 2, Col Hally to Brady, 11 November 1961.

In early January 1962, Col Hally submitted a further memorandum, this time to Stephen Kearney, Assistant Secretary at the Department of Defence, on the proposed 'Meritorious Conduct Medal'. Col Hally pointed out the difference between the Military Medal for Gallantry and the proposed new medal. In doing so, he gave a succinct account of the Military Medal for Gallantry itself, the basis to the new medal under discussion and the terms of the Military Medal for Gallantry, versus the terms of the Meritorious Conduct Medal:

- The essential difference is that the former has the condition of "involving risk to life and limb". This immediately restricts the occasions and acts which may be considered for an award.
- The award of MMG has only been recommended ONCE since its inception. The standard required is very high and as a premier award that is as it should be. "Courage", "Leadership" and "Resource" are included in the conditions for award of the Meritorious Conduct Medal. These encompass a greater number of occasions and acts of a meritorious nature which might deserve recognition, but which could NOT be considered for a top award - the Military Medal for Gallantry.
- That there are degrees in bravery, courage, etc., is generally accepted - see the Navy awards given in practically all armies navies and air forces.<sup>35</sup>
- In the brief definition governing various awards, the choice of terminology is necessarily limited.
- We consider that what is wanted is a lower award than the Military Medal for Gallantry, and we feel that the definition for the award of the Meritorious Conduct Medal as set out is suitable.<sup>36</sup>

Concluding, Col Hally explained that 'in any case examples of meritorious conduct are rarely typical of general conduct. The acts and occasions are out of the ordinary, and it is precisely for that reason that they should be awarded publicly by a medal as proposed.' Col Hally's final point showed how significant the decision under consideration had become:

- The General Staff have given this proposal serious consideration as a military matter and their opinion is that a medal for meritorious conduct is necessary and appropriate.
- The Taoiseach raised the matter with An Ceann Foirne, and is also of the same opinion.

There remained the question of what the medal was to be awarded for. Assistant Secretary of the Department of Defence Stephen Kearney put it to Col Hally that 'the qualifying conditions proposed for the award of the new medal are not sufficiently distinct from those for the Military Medal for Gallantry.' Mr Kearney sought 'some typical examples of conduct qualifying for the proposed Meritorious Conduct Medal', seeking 'examples based on both service at home and service overseas.'<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Sentence reproduced as found.

<sup>36</sup> MA, 'A' Adm, 01/60, 'Medals and Decorations 1961-1969', memorandum, 'Meritorious Conduct Medal', Col Hally to Rúnai Cúnta, Department of Defence, 11 January 1962.

<sup>37</sup> MA, DOD, 3/39180, Kearney to Col Hally, 19 December 1961.

Col Hally responded with a seven-point memorandum 'Examples of actions/achievement for which a Meritorious Conduct Medal might be awarded' that took real life situations from the experience of Irish soldiers in Katanga, and anonymised them, while leaving the actual action very clear for the reader to ascertain:

1. a. Situation: Convoy of mixed vehicles held up on a bridge by roadblocks and under fire from three sides and unable to withdraw.  
  
b. Action: An officer dismounts from safety of armoured car organizes a small party to remove obstructions at which he himself works and by his example encourages others. By his efforts the men and vehicles were extricated safely under the guidance and control of the officer.
2. a. Situation: Own position under heavy machine gunfire but observation on opposing troops very limited.  
  
b. Action: Mortar Commander directed mortars in position by climbing onto roof of building which was under fire. Though in danger of being hit himself, by cool and accurate fire control he silenced the opposing fire effectively. This was ONLY one of a number of similar actions by this Commander.
3. a. Situation: Senior NCO in charge of a Sector under incessant attack for a period of days.  
  
b. Action: By constant visits to his men, he encouraged them, kept his position intact by observation and immediate counterfire; Succeeded in evacuating wounded by giving covering fire from an exposed position.
4. a. Situation: Accidental fire in tents involving ammunition, grenades and weapons, some of which were exploding.  
  
b. Action: Senior NCO continued to control and urge his men to fight the fire and despite injury to himself supervised the final clearing of the area. Through his efforts the total loss was comparatively small and danger of fire extending to other installations averted.
5. a. Situation: Section being withdrawn under fire to the protection of armoured car.  
  
b. Action: Section Commander successfully directed the withdrawal and gave covering fire when needed. One man under fire and in a shocked condition failed to get back. Section Commander returned and shielded the man to safety also collected the man's weapons and ammunition box.
6. a. Situation: Wireless operator at Coy-Bn set for six (6) days during which the position was under Aerial, Mortar and MMG fire.



- b. Action: The operator continued to keep contact and transmit, and received messages without regard to his own safety, or physical fatigue. His action kept morale and inspired those around him.
7. a. Situation: Coy position hard pressed and short supplies. Helicopter with supplies landed in the Area and came under opposing fire.
- b. Action: Private with comrade soldier went to the Helicopter on a number of runs to unload ammunition and supplies and brought them to the safety of his own lines – all this under fire from opposition.<sup>38</sup>

The above seven scenarios could be equated to actual events. For example, from an Independent Review Group's understanding, the events might well be:

- Lufira Bridge, Katanga, September 1961,
- Actions during fighting in Elisabethville, December 1961,
- Actions during fighting in Jadotville, September 1961,
- Fire at 'B' Company lines, Elisabethville, September 1961,
- Elisabethville or Lufira Bridge, September 1961,
- Actions during fighting in Jadotville, September 1961,
- Arrival of helicopter at Jadotville, September 1961.

If this is so, then there was no sense in early 1962 that Jadotville was not to be mentioned within the Defence Forces. In fact, it was being used as a study from which to make cases to award medals.

In February 1962, senior officers were aware, as the initial award recommendations were being submitted by unit commanders, that a new medal was being planned. These awards recommendations included those submitted by Lt Col Hugh McNamee, OC 35 Inf Bn, to the Adjutant-General, arising from a recommendation process initiated in Elisabethville.

### ***Lt Col McNamee's Recommendations***

On 21 September 1961, the second-in-command of the 35 Inf Bn, Comdt John P. Kane, asked the battalion's company commanders, and the commander of the Armoured Car Group, to submit by 25 September, reports of 'all actions by companies, platoons, sections and individuals.' Comdt Kane specified that 'special attention should be given to:

- Acts of gallantry,
- Casualties.
- Losses of equipment and transport,
- Recommendations.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> MA, 3/39180, 'Examples of Actions/Achievement for which a Meritorious Service Medal might be awarded.', attached to Col Hally to Kearney, 19 February 1962.

<sup>39</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 33INFBN, 2/11, memorandum 'Op Morthor', by Comdt Kane, 21 September 1961.

According to an entry in the Unit Journal of the battalion's HQ Company, 7 November 1961 was the date for the 'final submission of reports and statements re citations for meritorious service.'<sup>40</sup> The Battalion's Unit History, which was completed in February 1964, cited 'numerous examples of high morale, outstanding bravery, courage, and devotion to duty, by members of the unit during Sept-Dec. '61.'<sup>41</sup>

Unusually amongst ONUC Unit Histories, it explicitly stated that recommendations for awards of recognition were made in February 1962 in the following classes:

- Award of Bonn Míleata Calmachta: 6 Officers, 11 NCOs and 5 Privates: 22.
- Recognition of Meritorious Service: 8 Officers 16 NCOs and 19 Privates: 43.
- Promotions: 5 NCOs and 3 Privates: 8.

This is a significant historical record for the 35 Inf Bn. The information provides the Independent Review Group with a parameter against which to examine and review the recommendations for consideration of the awarding of medals, commendations, or promotions, in respect of personnel of 'A' Company. As the Distinguished Service Medal had yet to be instituted (it was not instituted until February 1964), at this juncture, no member of 'A' Company was recommended for consideration for the Distinguished Service Medal.

The Independent Review Group has discovered that when individuals were not selected by the 1962 Medals Board for a Military Medal for Gallantry recommendation, such individuals were subsequently reconsidered by the 1962 Board, for a recommendation for the award of the proposed 'Meritorious Conduct Medal'. Regrettably, in recent years, this has led to a misconception that some individuals recommended for the Military Medal for Gallantry were, in parallel, also recommended for a second medal.

In order to historically review the recommendations for the award of medals to personnel of 'A' Company, the Independent Review Group commenced its review with an examination of the list of recommendations submitted by Lt Col McNamee to the Adjutant-General in February 1962.

All recommendations for awards in respect of personnel of 'A' Company were typed, signed by witnesses, and submitted to Lt Col McNamee on the prescribed proforma. The proforma, titled 'Recommendations for Recognition of Meritorious Service' consisted of the following sections:

- Name, Number, Rank, Unit, Sub Unit, Location, Date, Time.
- Witnessed By (catering for 4 names),
- Statement, Signed by Name, Number, Rank, Unit,
- Statement, Signed by Name, Number, Rank, Unit.

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<sup>40</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 35INFBN, 2/9, HQ Company Unit Journal, 7 November 1961.

<sup>41</sup> MA, Unit History, 35 Inf Bn, p. 29.

In turn, as OC 35 Inf Bn, Lt Col McNamee submitted the recommendations to the Adjutant-General on a prescribed proforma, titled 'Recommendations for Awards under DFR A10, A 15 and A19'. DFR A10 and DFR A15 provided for Promotions (Officers, and Enlisted Personnel) and DFR A19 provided for Medals. The proformas consisted of the following sections:

- Number, Rank, Name, Unit, Parent Unit, Brigade / Command,
- Award for which recommended,
- Name, Rank and Appointment of officer initiating recommendation,
- Supported by (Name, Rank and appointment of persons - witnesses or with personal knowledge,
- Recommended by,
- Remarks by Adjutant-General,
- Military Board Recommendations,
- Award Approved (Initials of an tAire or AG),
- Citation,
- Action / Service / Achievement,
- Iris Oifigiúil, General Routine Orders (GRO), Routine Orders.

Both commissioned officers and NCOs of 'A' Company initiated the 'Recommendation for Recognition of Meritorious Service' proforma, in respect of personnel in Company Headquarters and personnel in the respective Platoons. This involved the inclusion of (normally 2) statements, the second provided additional testimony to support the first statement. The Independent Review Group has identified a misconception that exists among 'A' Company's Veterans' Community, that the Company Commander, Comdt Pat Quinlan was directly involved in all such recommendations, see below. Although the Independent Review Group assumes that the company commander submitted the completed proformae to the battalion commander, the Group was unable to locate a covering letter, or a list of names of those recommended by Comdt Quinlan.

Lt Col McNamee did not submit 'Recommendations for Awards under DFR A 10, DFR A15 or DFR A19 in respect of officers filling 'command appointments', namely the Battalion's Second-in-Command, or the Company Commanders of HQ Company (Comdt P.J. Barry), 'A' Company (Comdt Pat Quinlan) 'B' Company (Comdt Alo McMahan), 'C' Company (Comdt Tom O'Neill), and 1 Armoured Car Group (Comdt Pat Cahalane). The Independent Review Group has noted that there were only three instances of officers filling a battalion, or company command appointment, being awarded a Military Medal for Gallantry, or the Distinguished Service Medal on overseas service since 1958.<sup>42</sup>

### ***Evaluation of Medal Files***

A search of service records in Military Archives against the list of names recommended by Lt Col McNamee located thirty-one recommendation forms in the service records of officers, NCOs and men from 'A' Company. Currently, nine 'A' Company service records have yet to be located in

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<sup>42</sup> Distinguished Service Medals 2nd Class were awarded to O.4938 Comdt Patrick P Barry, Coy Comd, B Coy, 33 Inf Bn. O.6378 Comdt Joseph Fitzpatrick, Coy Comd, 36 Inf Bn, and O.4484 Lt Col Michael Hogan, OC 36 Inf Bn.

Military Archives, although the prospect of their recovery must always be borne in mind.<sup>43</sup> These currently misplaced service records include two service records of ‘A’ Company individuals who were recommended for an award by Lt Col McNamee.

Notwithstanding this issue, the Independent Review Group is satisfied that one of these individuals was recommended for a Military Medal for Gallantry and the other was most likely recommended for meritorious service.

From an Independent Review Group’s perspective, the fact that some of ‘A’ Company service files are currently misplaced did not deter from the Group’s deliberations, conclusions and recommendations.

What the thirty-one recommendation forms show is that these personnel from ‘A’ Company were recommended for a variety of awards, the most frequent being a ‘Commendation’.<sup>44</sup> A critical point to remember here, and throughout the medals process, is that these forms advanced recommendations for considerations for an award under DFR A10, A15 and A19. The forms were not recommendations to the Minister for Defence that the subject personnel be awarded medals. That task was the responsibility of a Medals Board when duly convened by the Chief of Staff.

<i><b>Breakdown of awards for thirty-one extant recommendation forms for ‘A’ Company, 35 Inf Bn.</b></i>	
<b>Type of Award</b>	<b>Number Recommended</b>
Commendation	17
Meritorious Service	5
Medal	5
Promotion	3
Unknown	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>

<i><b>Initial proposers of recommendations for awards for ‘A’ Company, 35 Inf Bn and number of awards proposed by each.</b></i>	
<b>Initiation / Witness 1 (Statement)</b>	<b>Number</b>
Comdt Pat Quinlan, Company Commander	11
Capt W.G. Donnelly, Support Platoon	7
Lt Tom Quinlan, No 2 Platoon	5
Lt Joe Leech, No 3 Platoon	3
Lt Noel Carey, No 1 Platoon	4
Lt Kevin Knightly <sup>45</sup>	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>

<sup>43</sup> Full breakdown of the service records for the 156 personnel of ‘A’ Company is contained in Chapter 3 of the IRG’s Report titled Methodology.

<sup>44</sup> By appointment, individual service records can be accessed in Military Archives by veterans of ‘A’ Company, 35 Inf Bn, or by the next-of-kin of a deceased veteran.

<sup>45</sup> 35 Inf Bn Armoured Car Group, attached to ‘A’ Company during their deployment to Jadotville.

Breaking down each award list by name, and adding in details from recommendations on an individual soldier's service record, where this record has been located, shows the process by which recommendations were made. The fact that nine service records are currently missing, and there are some administrative gaps in the documents reviewed, does not detract from the Independent Review Group's overall perception of the 1962 Medals Board process, as outlined below.

### ***Formal Submission to the Adjutant-General***

On 9 February 1962, Lt Col McNamee submitted three lists of names for awards and commendations for members of 35 Inf Bn to the Adjutant-General, Col Hally, for onward submission by him to the soon to be convened Medals Board for adjudication. The three lists were:

- Recommendation for Award of An Bonn Mileata Calmachta,
- Recognition of Meritorious Service, and
- Recommendation for Promotion in recognition of ~~distinguished~~ meritorious service.<sup>46</sup>

In creating these three lists, Lt Col McNamee merged the four original categories of awards identified on the Recommendations for Awards under DFR A10, A15 and A19 proformae, into three categories:

- Medal for Gallantry,
- Recognition of Meritorious Service, and,
- Promotion.

This was in accordance with a guidance note from the Adjutant-General, Col Hally dated 1 February 1962, that indicated that as well as the Military Medal for Gallantry:

- It is proposed to have an award for meritorious conduct which would be in recognition of conduct of a meritorious nature for individual or associated acts displaying conspicuous bravery, courage, leadership or resource arising out of or associated with military service.

Col Hally also indicated that:

- Officers who commanded units serving with ONUC are requested to consider making recommendations under the above regulations. The procedure for submission of recommendations would be in accordance with DFR A19 Part II, paragraphs 15 and 16 and attached proforma. Recommendations should be submitted before 28 February 1962.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> MA, box, 'Jadotville Medal Queries' and MA, Medals Board, Box 1. The word 'distinguished' has been crossed out in the original. Which of the two phrases 'meritorious service' or 'distinguished service' was to be used was under discussion at this point (See MA, 'A' Adm 01/60, 'Medals and Decorations 1961-9', 'Notes for Discussion', undated but February 1962).

<sup>47</sup> MA, Medals Board, Box 2, 'Recommendations for Awards', memorandum by Col Hally, 1 February 1962.

This point indicates that the ‘award for meritorious conduct’ was to be understood as a forthcoming medal which would be awarded by the forthcoming Medals Board.

The ‘pro forma’ Col Hally referred to was the document described above and a set of guidance notes was also given to officers on its compilation. Parts 1 to 8 were to be completed at Unit Headquarters, then ‘statements/reports of eyewitnesses or persons with personal knowledge of the action/service/achievement are to be submitted to the next superior officer when called for.’<sup>48</sup> A senior officer was then to sign the pro forma prior to submission to the Adjutant-General. The final entries on the pro forma concerned the text of any citation recommended and a summary of the action service or achievement for which the award had been approved and details of the publication of the award.

A final instruction was that ‘under NO circumstances was the fact that a recommendation has been made or considered, be made known to the person recommended until the award has been approved.’ The corollary being that if you were not approved for an award you would never be told and should never be told if your recommendation had been unsuccessful. When it came to processing the award, the Adjutant-General had space to do so, and to comment, the Medals Board would then give its recommendation, and the Minister for Defence, or the Adjutant-General, would sign off on the formal approval of the award as appropriate.

Lt Col McNamee thus had considerable guidance on the task before him in February 1962. He took the submissions recorded on the ‘Recommendations for Recognition of Meritorious Service’ proforma, for the 35 Inf Bn, and reorganized them in line with the guidance received from Col Hally.

Lt Col McNamee’s recommendations are named, by individual, in the three tables below:

- Recommendations for the Military Medal for Gallantry,
- Recommendations for ‘recognition of meritorious service’, and
- ‘Recommendation[s] for promotion in recognition of meritorious service’.

The original recommendation for ‘A’ Company personnel, where recorded, is also included in the table. What this shows is that where individuals were recommended for a ‘medal’ this was understood by Lt Col McNamee to be the Military Medal for Gallantry, then the only gallantry award officially in existence in the Defence Forces. ‘Commendation’ or ‘Meritorious Service’ meant the yet to be introduced ‘Meritorious Conduct Medal’, and ‘Promotion’ meant a promotion and not a medal. Where the term ‘Meritorious Service’ was used, it tended to refer to awards proposed in recommendations which arrived late in the 1962 time-frame and use of this term shows some awareness that a ‘Meritorious Conduct Medal’ was in the process of being introduced.

Whatever categorisation Lt Col McNamee gave to these recommendations, he was not saying that these individuals should all be given medals or promotions, rather he was saying that in his opinion, and in the opinion of the officers and NCOs who had filled in ‘Recommendation for Recognition

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<sup>48</sup> MA, Medals Board, Box 2, ‘Notes on Compilation’, undated, but attached to memorandum by Col Hally, 1 February 1962.



of Meritorious Service' proformae, the named individuals had in their view undertaken acts that should be considered by a Medals Board for an award or a medal or a promotion. The act of recommendation for consideration for a medal does not automatically provide an entitlement for a medal.

An examination of the submitted 'Recommendations for Recognition of Meritorious Service' proformae in respect of 'A' Company indicates a varying range of completeness, clarity and content in the statements made by those witnessing a particular event(s) or service. Some 'A' Company forms would have benefitted from the inclusion of further evidence about the actions being described. Notwithstanding this situation, Lt Col McNamee personally recommended, without comment, all of these 'A' Company submissions in Paragraph 9 of the 'Recommendation for Awards under DFR A10, A15, A19' proforma.

Paragraph 10 of the proforma enabled the Adjutant-General to record a 'remark'. In a number of cases an entry was made in this paragraph on behalf of the Adjutant-General, that such cases represented a 'prima facie case'. Under DFR A19 the Adjutant-General was to take the steps to bring cases for consideration before a medals board only if such a prima facie case for an award existed. However, the existence of a prima facie case did not mean that the recommendee was to automatically receive a medal, but that there was a case for the award of a medal based on the first impression of the submission. The case still had to go before a Medals Board who could still decide that an award should not be made in relation to it. Following deliberations, the Medals Board recorded its findings in paragraph 11 'Military Board Recommendations.'

### ***Recommendations for Military Medal for Gallantry***

There are three copies of Lt Col McNamee's list of recommendations for the Military Medal for Gallantry in Military Archives. The only notable points of difference between them are that Sgt Walter Hegarty's name is a handwritten addition by Lt Col McNamee on the top copy that is signed by him, and the name was inserted in an unknown hand on a subsequent carbon copy. Sgt Hegarty's name appears in Irish as 'Ó h-EIGEARTAIGH, U.' on the final copy of the list that was placed before the 1962 Medals Board. Other annotations on the top copy are a list of the proposed awards broken down by rank, before Sgt Hegarty's name was added, dates that files were sought from Officers' Records Section and Enlisted Personnel Section, and on one carbon copy the notation '1st' under the title of the memorandum. When reviewing personal files, it is likely that the Medals Board reviewed sections such as Conduct Rating and overseas tours of duty.

<b>Lt Col McNamee's Recommendations (22) – Military Medal for Gallantry – 9 February 1962</b>							
<b>No.</b>	<b>Army No.</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Surname</b>	<b>Initial</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Sub Unit</b>	<b>Initial Recommendation</b>
1	O. 6397	Comdt	Heffernan	M.	35 Inf Bn	B Coy	
2	O. 7371	Capt	Carroll	M.	35 Inf Bn	Armd Car Gp	
3	O. 6510	Capt	Magennis	A.J.	35 Inf Bn	Armd Car Gp	
4	O. 7551	Capt	Maguire	C.	35 Inf Bn	B Coy	
5	O. 7422	Capt	McCorley	R.E.	35 Inf Bn	C Coy	
6	O. 7280	Capt	Purfield	M.	35 Inf Bn	HQ Coy	
7	82108	CS	Condon	D.	35 Inf Bn	B Coy	

8	87102	Sgt	Norris	P.	35 Inf Bn	HQ Coy	
9	801545	Sgt	Hegarty	W.	35 Inf Bn	A Coy	Meritorious Service Medal / Medal <sup>49</sup>
10	73505	CS	Prendergast	J.	35 Inf Bn	A Coy	Medal <sup>50</sup>
11	86755	Sgt	Maher	M.	35 Inf Bn	B Coy	
12	94808	Sgt	Monaghan	J.	35 Inf Bn	A Coy	Medal <sup>51</sup>
13	801232	Sgt	Rowland	M.	35 Inf Bn	Armd Car Gp	
14	92754	Sgt	Shaughnessy	G.	35 Inf Bn	C Coy	
15	805463	Cpl	Kavanagh	J.	35 Inf Bn	B Coy	
16	809355	Cpl	Parker	M.	35 Inf Bn	B Coy	
17	810264	Cpl	Quinn	T.	35 Inf Bn	A Coy	Medal <sup>52</sup>
18	809687	Pte	Galvin	M.	35 Inf Bn	A Coy	Medal <sup>53</sup>
19	809650	Pte	Hennelly	G.	35 Inf Bn	A Coy	Medal <sup>54</sup>
20	809415	Pte	Milner	C.	35 Inf Bn	B Coy	
21	811285	Gnr	Murphy	P.	35 Inf Bn	B Coy	
22	809183	Pte	McGrath	C.	35 Inf Bn	B Coy	

<i>Lt Col McNamee's Recommendations for Military Medal for Gallantry by Companies/Group</i>	
Sub Unit	Number
HQ Company	2
'A' Company	6
'B' Company	9
'C' Company	2
Armoured Car Group	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>

<i>Lt Col McNamee's Military Medal for Gallantry recommendations by rank.</i> <sup>55</sup>	
Officers	6
NCOs	11
Privates	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>

### ***Recommendations for Recognition of Meritorious Service***

In a handwritten note, dated 28 February 1962, Lt Col McNamee (writing from The Military College) added a further four names to his Recognition of Meritorious Service lists.<sup>56</sup> These additional names were recommendations submitted by Comdt Quinlan, 'A' Company, on 15 February, 1962. They related specifically to engagements during the December 1961 fighting in

<sup>49</sup> Sgt Hegarty was also recommended for an award by Lt Col Mortimer Buckley (MA, Medals Board, 'A' Admin Box 1, Lt Col Buckley to Adjutant-General, 27 February 1962). Verified against personal file.

<sup>50</sup> Verified against personal file.

<sup>51</sup> Verified against personal file.

<sup>52</sup> Verified against personal file.

<sup>53</sup> Verified against personal file.

<sup>54</sup> Not yet verified against personal file as Pte Hennelly's personal file is yet to be located.

<sup>55</sup> This breakdown by rank also tallies with the figures given in the 35 Inf Bn Unit History.

<sup>56</sup> MA, Medals Board, Box 1, Lt Col McNamee to Lt Col Caseley, 28 February 1962.

Elisabethville. Private James Feery's name was added later at an unknown date. Pte Feery was also involved in the December 1961 fighting in Elisabethville.

<i>Lt Col McNamee's Initial recommendations for 'Recognition of Meritorious Service' (39) 9 February 1962 (Later increased by 5 to 44 – see below)</i>						
No	Army No	Rank	First Name	Surname	Sub-Unit	Initial Recommendation
1	O. 6183	Comdt	T.	O'Shea	Bn HQ	
2		Rev	T. J.	Clarke	Bn HQ	
3		Rev	J.	Fagan	Bn HQ	
4	O.7440	Capt	William	Donnelly	A Coy	Commendation
5	O.7444	Capt	E.F.	Whyte	HQ Coy	
6	O.7767	Lt	W.N.	Carey	A Coy	Commendation
7	O.7645	Lt	Kevin	Knightly	Armd Car Gp	Commendation/ Meritorious Service
8	O.7668	Lt	Thomas	Quinlan	A Coy	Commendation
9	415646	CS	Dan	Carroll	Armd Car Gp	
10	96267	Sgt	E.	Keogh	Armd Car Gp	
11	75746	Sgt	W.	Hartley	Armd Car Gp	
12	87688	Sgt	T.	Dignan	HQ	
13	90859	Sgt	M.	Leahy	B Coy	
14	421402	Sgt	Tom	Kelly	A Coy	Commendation
15	805649	Cpl	James	Rea	A Coy	Commendation
16	804723	Cpl	James	Lucey	Armd Car Gp	Commendation
17	862515	Cpl	William	Sisk	B Coy	
18	97457	Cpl	J.	Wall	B Coy	
19	805223	Cpl	T.	Moore	C Coy	
20	98807	Cpl (Sgt)	John	McDonagh	A Coy	Commendation
21	94809	Cpl	Tom	McDonnell	A Coy	Commendation
22	810428	Cpl	John	Foley	A Coy	Unknown <sup>57</sup>
23	808117	Pte	Joseph	O'Kane	A Coy	Commendation
24	809016	Pte	Robert	Larkin	A Coy	Commendation
25	88511	Pte	Michael	McCormack	A Coy	Commendation
26	860048	Pte	Tom	Gunn	A Coy	Commendation
27	810219	Pte	Charles	Cooley	A Coy	Unknown <sup>58</sup>
28	809683	Pte	Michael	Brennan	A Coy	Commendation
29	809693	Pte	Noel	Stanley	A Coy	Commendation
30	810143	Pte	Thomas	Flynn	A Coy	Commendation
31	809784	Pte	S.	O'Brien	B Coy	
32	804374	Pte	D.	O'Brien	B Coy	
33	207463	Pte	Joseph	O'Brien	B Coy	Commendation <sup>59</sup>
34	810655	Pte	J.	O'Donovan	B Coy	
35	810812	Pte	P.	French	C Coy	
36	78361	Pte	C.	Doolan	C Coy	
37	804027	Pte	D.	McManus	Armd Car Gp	
38	96057	Pte	Patrick	Wall	HQ	
39	91387	Cpl	T.	Dignan	HQ	

<sup>57</sup> Unclear from documentation located.

<sup>58</sup> Not yet verified against personal file as Private Cooley's personal file is yet to be located.

<sup>59</sup> On 10 September, Pte O'Brien B Coy, volunteered to drive A Coy's saloon from Lufira Bridge to Jadotville and remained with A Coy.

<i>Lt Col McNamee's Recommendations for Recognition of Meritorious Service by Companies/Group</i>	
A Coy	16
B Coy	7
HQ	6
Armoured Car Group	6
C Coy	3
HQ Coy	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>

<i>Lt Col McNamee's Recommendations for Recognition of Meritorious Service by Rank (figures also tallies with Unit History of the 35 Infantry Battalion)</i>	
Officers	8
NCOs	15
Privates	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>

<i>Five additional names submitted by Lt Col McNamee to Lt Col Caseley on 28 February 1962 - Recognition of Meritorious Service</i>							
40	96739	Cpl	McManus	John	35 Inf Bn	A Coy	Meritorious Service
41	809014	Pte	Tighe	Michael	35 Inf Bn	A Coy	Meritorious Service
42	809856	Pte	Molloy	Daniel	35 Inf Bn	A Coy	Meritorious Service
43	810214	Pte	Nicell	James	35 Inf Bn	A Coy	Meritorious Service
44	809084	Pte	Feery	James	35 Inf Bn	A Coy	Meritorious Service <sup>60</sup>

### ***Recommendations for Promotion***

As well as recommending individuals for a medal or for a citation, the final option open to award a individual for meritorious service was a promotion. DFR A10 covered the promotion of enlisted personnel for meritorious service or distinguished conduct, and DFR A15 covered the promotion of commissioned officers for distinguished service. The 1961 Medals Board was ultimately responsible for the promotions of Pte A. Johnston to sergeant under DFR A10, and Comdt P.P Barry to lieutenant-colonel under DFR A15.

<i>Recommendations for Promotion in Recognition of Meritorious Service Submitted by Lt Col McNamee, 9 February 1962</i>								
	Army No	Rank	Surname	First Name	Unit	Sub-unit	Promotion to	Award proposed (A Coy only)
1	88010	Sgt	Shannon	Sam	35 Inf Bn	HQ Coy	CS	
2	81154	Cpl	Allen	William	35 Inf Bn	'A' Coy	Sgt	Promotion <sup>61</sup>
3	806088	Cpl	Kielty	Mick	35 Inf Bn	'C' Coy	Sgt	
4	808384	Cpl	O'Hara	Thomas	35 Inf Bn	'C' Coy	Sgt	
5	77210	Cpl	Williams	Francis	35 Inf Bn	'A' Coy	Sgt	Promotion
6	810997	Pte	Quinlan	Matthew	35 Inf Bn	'A' Coy	Cpl	Promotion
7	807759	Pte	Connolly	James	35 Inf Bn	'B' Coy	Cpl	
8	810813	Pte	Moran	M.	35 Inf Bn	'C' Coy	Cpl	

<sup>60</sup> Pte Feery's file was one of the last to be located.

<sup>61</sup> Cpl Allen was awarded a DSM 2nd Class in 1967 for service with the 38 Inf Bn.

On Cpl Williams' and Cpl Allen's pro-formae, Commandant Quinlan recommended both men 'for immediate promotion in addition to any other award the board may make'. This phrase is curious as the Medals Board could only make awards based on recommendations made by the Unit Commander, and there was no automatic step from which a recommendation for promotion would drop down to, if it were unsuccessful, or that the Medals Board could take it upon itself to recommend a soldier for consideration for award which it would then adjudicate on.<sup>62</sup>

Pte Quinlan was initially recommended for promotion by Capt Liam Donnelly, with Cpl Allen and Cpl Williams recommendation for promotion by Commandant Quinlan. What is not evident is why Capt Donnelly and Comdt Quinlan chose to recommend these three men for promotion rather than an award of a medal. What is noticeable about his document on recommendations for promotions, is that it is the only one of Lt Col McNamee's three awards recommendations lists, to state that attached are the two prescribed pro-forma i.e. 'Recommendations for Awards under DFR A10, A15 and A19', and 'Recommendations for Recognition of Meritorious Service in respect of each individual'.<sup>63</sup>

The Independent Review Group noted that the inclusion of these proformae unfortunately led to an opinion, conveyed in responses to Freedom of Information requests in recent years, that those recommended for promotion were recommended for the award of a medal.<sup>64</sup> This matter is discussed further below. However, it is clear from the original recommendation forms that Cpl Williams, Cpl Allen and Pte Quinlan were not recommended for medals by Comdt Quinlan.

### ***Analysis of Recommendations***

Medals recommendation pro formae for submission to Medals Boards on individual service records (personal files) of each individual, allow the recommendations to be further analysed, identifying observations and actions made by a member of the 1962 Medals Board in respect of individuals under consideration for an award. The final table in this section, taken with Lt Col McNamee's recommendations for awards and promotions, shows that no doubt exists that all of the recommendations for Recognition of Meritorious Service originating in 'A' Company were addressed by Lt Col McNamee, and were subsequently forwarded by him to the Adjutant-General, Col Hally.

No record has been located of any individual from the 35 Inf Bn who was recommended for an award, which Lt Col McNamee did not submit to the Adjutant-General. The Independent Review Group undertook a check of available personal files of the remainder of the 156 men of 'A' Company and members of the 35 Inf Bn's Armoured Car Group attached to 'A' Company to see if any other medals recommendations could be located, but none was found. Fr Joseph Fagan does not appear on this list as it is not clear by whom and for what award he was recommended for consideration. There are no relevant details on his service record. Fr Fagan was attached to 35 Inf Bn Hq and there is no evidence before the Independent Review Group to indicate whether he was nominated for award in this capacity or for his time attached to 'A' Company Group.

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<sup>62</sup> MA, Cpl Allen and Cpl Williams medals recommendations pro-formae.

<sup>63</sup> MA, Medals Board, Box 1, Lt Col McNamee to Adjutant-General, February 1962.

<sup>64</sup> The eight names, including three from 'A' Company, recommended for promotion do not appear on the recommendations for an award considered by the 1965 Medals Board.

Lt Col McNamee's recommendations for 'A' Company, 35th Infantry Battalion personnel, as well as personnel attached to 'A' Company during the Battle of Jadotville, broken down by the 'Name of Officer initiating a Recommendation' and witness on the 31 medal folders filed in the Service Records (Personal Files) held by Military Archives												
No.	Army No.	Rank	First Name	Surname	Sub-Unit	Unit	Award Recommendation	Initiating Officer	Date	Supporter – Witness	Recommended by	For
1	810214	Pte	John	Nicell	A Coy	35 Inf Bn	Meritorious Service	Comdt P. Quinlan	9/2/62	CS J. Prendergast	Lt Col McNamee	Elisabethville Dec 1961
2	809683	Pte	Michael	Brennan	A Coy	35 Inf Bn	Commendation	Lt J.A. Leech		Sgt J. Rea	Lt Col McNamee	Jadotville Sept 1961
3	809084	Pte	James	Feery	A Coy	35 Inf Bn	Meritorious Service	Comdt P. Quinlan		Lt T. Quinlan	Lt Col McNamee	Elisabethville Dec 1961
4	810143	Pte	Thomas	Flynn	A Coy	35 Inf Bn	Commendation	Capt W.G. Donnelly	6/11/61	Comdt P. Quinlan	Lt Col McNamee	Jadotville Sept 1961
5	809687	Pte	Michael	Galvin	A Coy	35 Inf Bn	Medal	Lt Carey		Sgt K. McLoughlin	Lt Col McNamee	Jadotville Sept 1961
6	809854	Pte	Daniel	Molloy	A Coy	35 Inf Bn	Meritorious Service	Comdt Pat Quinlan	9/2/62	CS J. Prendergast	Lt Col McNamee	Elisabethville Dec 1961
7	809016	Pte	Robert	Larkin	A Coy	35 Inf Bn	Commendation	Lt J.A. Leech	13/11/61	Sgt P. Joyce	Lt Col McNamee	Jadotville Sept 1961
8	88511	Pte	Michael	McCormack	A Coy	35 Inf Bn	Commendation	Lt T. Quinlan		CS J. Prendergast	Lt Col McNamee	Jadotville Sept 1961
9	809693	Pte	Noel	Stanley	A Coy	35 Inf Bn	Commendation	Lt T. Quinlan		CS J. Prendergast	Lt Col McNamee	Jadotville Sept 1961
10	809014	Pte	Michael	Tighe	A Coy	35 Inf Bn	Meritorious Service	Lt T. Quinlan		Sgt W. Hegarty	Lt Col McNamee	Jadotville Sept 1961 / Elisabethville Dec 1961
11	810997	Pte	Martin (Matt)	Quinlan	A Coy	35 Inf Bn	Promotion	Capt W.G. Donnelly		Comdt P. Quinlan	Lt Col McNamee	Jadotville Sept 1961
12	207463	Pte	Joseph	O'Brien	B Coy	35 Inf Bn	Commendation	Comdt P. Quinlan		Sgt J. Monaghan	Lt Col McNamee	Jadotville Sept 1961
13	808117	Pte	Joseph	O'Kane	A Coy	35 Inf Bn	Commendation	Capt W.G. Donnelly		Lt J.A. Leech	Lt Col McNamee	Jadotville Sept 1961
14	810264	Cpl	Timothy	Quinn	A Coy	35 Inf Bn	Medal	Capt W.G. Donnelly		Lt N. Carey	Lt Col McNamee	Jadotville Sept 1961
15	805649	Cpl	James	Rea	A Coy	35 Inf Bn	Commendation	Lt J.A. Leech		Comdt P. Quinlan	Lt Col McNamee	Jadotville Sept 1961
16	804723	Cpl	James	Lucey	AC Grp	35 Inf Bn	Commendation	Lt K. Knightly		Sgt C. Geary	Lt Col McNamee	Jadotville Sept 1961



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17	800048	Pte	Thomas	Gunn	A Coy	35 Inf Bn	Commendation	Lt W.N. Carey		Sgt K. McLoughlin	Lt Col McNamee	Jadotville Sept 1961
18	77210	Cpl	Frank	Williams	A Coy	35 Inf Bn	Promotion	Comdt P. Quinlan	13/11/61	Capt D. Byrne	Lt Col McNamee	Jadotville Sept 1961
19	98807	Cpl (Sgt)	John	McDonagh	A Coy	35 Inf Bn	Commendation	Lt W.N. Carey		Sgt K. McLoughlin	Lt Col McNamee	Jadotville Sept 1961
20	94809	Cpl	Tom	McDonnell	A Coy	35 Inf Bn	Commendation	Capt W.G. Donnelly		Lt J.A. Leech	Lt Col McNamee	Jadotville Sept 1961
21	810428/ 830384	Cpl	Seán	Foley	A Coy	35 Inf Bn	Unclear documentation provided	Lt W.N. Carey	from	Sgt K. McLoughlin		Jadotville Sept. 1961
22	801545	Sgt	Walter	Hegarty	C Coy A Coy	32 Inf Bn 35 Inf Bn	Meritorious Medal Service Medal	Lt Col. J. Adams Lt T. Quinlan		Comdt P. Croghan; Capt J. Dwyer Comdt P. Quinlan; Capt M. Considine; Capt A. Magennis	Lt Col McNamee	Kamina 1960; Jadotville Sept 1961; Elisabethville Dec 1961
23	81154	Cpl	William	Allen	A Coy	35 Inf Bn	Promotion	Comdt P. Quinlan		Capt T. McGuinn	Lt Col McNamee	Jadotville Sept 1961
24	425402	Sgt	Thomas	Kelly	A Coy	35 Inf Bn	Commendation	Capt Liam Donnelly		Comdt P. Quinlan	Lt Col McNamee	Jadotville Sept 1961
25	96739	Cpl	John (F)	McManus	A Coy	35 Inf Bn	Meritorious Service	Lt T. Quinlan		Comdt P. Quinlan	Lt Col McNamee	Elisabethville Dec 1961
26	94808	Sgt	John	Monaghan	A Coy	35 Inf Bn	Medal	Capt Liam Donnelly		Cpl McEntee	Lt Col McNamee	Jadotville Sept 1961
27	73505	Coy Sgt	John	Prendergast	A Coy	35 Inf Bn	Medal	Comdt P. Quinlan		Lt T. Quinlan	Lt Col McNamee	Jadotville Sept 1961
28	O.7440	Capt	William	Donnelly	A Coy	35 Inf Bn	Commendation	Comdt P. Quinlan	17/11/61	Sgt J. Monaghan	Lt Col McNamee	Jadotville Sept 1961
29	O.7767	Lt	W.N.	Carey	A Coy	35 Inf Bn	Commendation	Comdt P. Quinlan	17/11/61	Sgt K. McLoughlin	Lt Col McNamee	Jadotville Sept 1961
30	O.7645	Lt	Kevin	Knightly	AC Grp	35 Inf Bn	Commendation/Meritorious Service	Comdt P. Quinlan	14/11/61	Blank	Lt Col McNamee	Jadotville
31	O.7668	Lt	Thomas	Quinlan	A Coy	35 Inf Bn	Commendation	Comdt P. Quinlan		CS J. Prendergast; Sgt W. Hegarty; Cpt A. Magennis; Capt M. Considine	Lt Col McNamee	Jadotville Sept 1961; Elisabethville Dec 1961

**The 1962 Medals Board**

On 19 March 1962, the Adjutant-General Col Hally wrote to the Chief of Staff Maj Gen Collins-Powell, enclosing details of ‘the number of recommendations for awards and promotions for acts and achievements on service with ONUC’ from 1960 to 1961.<sup>65</sup> Col Hally’s accompanying table included recommendations for the Military Medal for Gallantry and ‘awards for meritorious conduct for which it is proposed to have a medal.’ A further table, with slightly different figures, was drawn up giving returns by unit for ‘Gallantry’, ‘Distinguished Service’ and ‘Promotions’.

<b>Recommendations for Awards.</b> (Note on original: ‘There may be a few more recommendations as a result of reports on some included above’). <sup>66</sup>						
Unit	MMG		‘MCM’		Promotions	
	Officers	Men	Officers	Men	Officers	Men
32 Inf Bn	0	0	3	2	0	0
33 Inf Bn	0	0	15	25	0	0
34 Inf Bn	0	0	0	0	0	0
35 Inf Bn	6	15	8	35	0	8
1 Inf Grp	0	0	4	9	1	2
ONUHQ	0	0	0	3	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>10</b>

<b>Recommendations for Awards under DFR A10, A15, A19</b>				
Unit	Gallantry	Distinguished Service	Promotions	Total
32 Inf Bn	0	5	0	5
33 Inf Bn	0	0	0	0
34 Inf Bn	0	0	0	0
35 Inf Bn	22	44	8	74
1 Inf Gp	0	14 <sup>67</sup>	0	14
ONUHQ	0	4	0	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>97</b>

**NB: These tables show inconsistent numbers when compared and have been reproduced as found. Undated, they represent snapshots of the recommending process.**

Col Hally added that the regulations covering the ‘MCM’ (i.e. Meritorious Conduct Medal) ‘will not be promulgated for some time’. He accordingly recommended that the 1962 Medals Board ‘could also be authorised to examine [the] other recommendations and have their report ready on the meritorious conduct medal and so avoid a long lapse of time between now and actual award.’ Col Hally expected that the awards would not be delayed beyond six months.

<sup>65</sup> MA, Medals Board, Box 1, Col Hally to Maj Gen Collins-Powell, 19 March 1962.

<sup>66</sup> MA, ‘A’ Adm, 01/60, Medals and Decorations, 1961-1969, ‘Recommendations for Awards, etc.’ There was one more award for an MMG from 35 Inf Bn, possibly Sgt Walter Hegarty, and five more for DSMs, these names are given in the text below.

<sup>67</sup> Includes three recommended for promotion.

Finally, Col Hally submitted to Maj Gen Collins-Powell a list of officers which he, as Chief of Staff, should consider selecting the members of the 1962 Medals Board. The Adjutant-General's recommendations were:

President (1)	Col J.K. Cogan
	Col J.H. Byrne
Members (2)	Lt Col R. O'Sullivan
	Lt Col R.F. Dalton
	Lt Col P. Hayes
Secretary (1)	Comdt F. Neill

Maj Gen Collins-Powell selected Col J.K. Cogan, Lt Col R. O'Sullivan and Lt Col R.F. Dalton.

On 29 March 1962, the Chief of Staff, Maj Gen Seán Collins-Powell issued a Convening Order under the provisions of the terms of paragraph 17 of DFR A19, for a Board of Officers to examine recommendations for the award of the Military Medal for Gallantry in respect of twenty-two personnel and the 'Good Conduct Medal' (sic) for 101 personnel. It was one of Maj Gen Collins-Powell's final acts as Chief of Staff. He stepped down from the appointment on 31 March 1962. He was succeeded by Lt Gen Seán MacEoin, who was returning to Ireland following his tour of duty as Force Commander, ONUC.<sup>68</sup>

On 2 April 1962, the Convening Order and the current recommendations were provided to the Medals Board.<sup>69</sup> The Medals Board consisted of Director of Cavalry, Col James K. Cogan, who was the Board's President, and the other members were Lt Col R.F. Dalton and Lt Col R. O'Sullivan. Comdt Frank Neill was the Medals Board's Secretary.

The Medals Board was instructed to assemble at Army Headquarters at 1000hrs on 9 April 1962. All recommendations submitted to the Medals Board by the Adjutant-General for award of the Military Medal for Gallantry were to be examined. In addition, it was to 'examine and classify recommendations for other awards and submit a preliminary report on its findings to an Ceann Foirne.'<sup>70</sup> This was a development on the earlier instructions to the Medals Board concerning the 'Meritorious Conduct Medal'. The Medals Board's authority to act on recommending the award of this particular medal was limited initially by the lack of promulgated regulations. Accordingly, the 1962 Medals Board's report was deemed to be 'preliminary', and to be submitted to the Chief of Staff for further attention.

In one sense, this could be seen as an administrative holding action, pending the introduction of the regulations for the Meritorious Conduct Medal. As the Chief of Staff was the convening authority of the Medals Board, the Board in effect reported to him, with the ultimate

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<sup>68</sup> Lt Gen MacEoin did not immediately return to the Chief of Staff's office on his return to Ireland. He took leave and Maj Gen Collins-Powell remained Chief of Staff in an acting capacity until mid-April 1962.

<sup>69</sup> MA, box, Jadotville Medal Queries, handwritten minute to Comdt Neill from unidentified Captain, 2 April 1962. Later recommendations included six from the 34 Inf Bn received on 6 April 1962. In specific cases evidence from certain officers was yet to be submitted. One late recommendation of note was that of OC 1 Infantry Group Lt Col C.J. O'Donovan for a 'special commendation' by way of an award for meritorious service. The forms in respect of Lt Col O'Donovan are incomplete and there is no indication the recommendation was ever formally before the Medals Board in its deliberations.

<sup>70</sup> MA, box, 'Jadotville Medal Queries', 'Convening Order' signed by Maj Gen Collins-Powell, 29 March 1962.

recommendations submitted to the Minister for Defence. This provided the Chief of Staff with some legitimate leeway in personally involving himself in the outcome of a Medals Board, in a manner not explicitly prescribed in Defence Forces Regulations.

A handwritten and undated document, 'Guidance of Boards Considering Awards' explained the two medals the 1962 Medals Board was now to consider awards for:

- **Military Medal for Gallantry**
  - For exceptional acts of bravery involving risk to life and limb.
  - The act must be "exceptional". It may be exceptional in relation to the prevailing circumstances or it may be exceptional in any circumstances.
  - There must be a risk to life and limb. The risk may be taken under fire, in water for a poor or non-swimmer, during a conflagration where risk of running[?], falling debris etc. exists, handling of explosives or explosive filled objects which are a danger to life or property.
  - Where the individual believes on account of his inexperience etc. that a risk is involved where in fact it does not his act should be considered for an award, provided always that in performing the act he mentally intended risking life and limb in a brave deed.
  
- **Meritorious Conduct Medal**
  - For acts and service.
  - For acts which are brave or courageous but do not necessarily involve risk to life and limb; for acts displaying a high standard of personal efficiency, initiative and verve, or exceptional devotion to duty.
  - For service over a period in which the individual performs his tasks in a highly commendable manner and with devotion to duty comrades and unit.<sup>71</sup>

### ***Considering Recommendations for the Military Medal for Gallantry***

The first document before the 1962 Medals Board was a list of twenty-two recommendations for the Military Medal for Gallantry. The twenty-two individuals came solely from the 35 Inf Bn. It must be noted that some of these individuals had previous UN service. As previously stated, Lt Col McNamee had submitted this list of twenty-two names on 9 February 1962 directly to the Adjutant-General. The twenty-two names, and their breakdown (officers, NCOs and men), tallies with the details recorded in the 35 Inf Bn's Unit History. The list, in the table below, includes six individuals from 'A' Company who had been deployed in Jadotville, nine individuals from 'B' Company, and two individuals from 'C' Company, 35 Inf Bn, and three individuals from the Armoured Car Group, who were also proposed for the Military Medal for Gallantry.

When these cases were before the 1962 Medals Board, each case was held in a separate numbered file running from 1A to 22A.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> MA, Medals Board, Box 1, 'Guidance of Boards Considering Awards', undated.

<sup>72</sup> See carbon copy list in MA, Medals Board, Box 1. The list is undated.

Some insight into the work of the 1962 Medals Board regarding the Military Medal for Gallantry emerges from an undated A3 size sheet titled ‘Recommendations for award of Bonn Mileata Calmachta’.<sup>73</sup> It shows in seventeen cases, a description of the action for which the medal was recommended for consideration, a preliminary assessment, and an assessment of the evidence provided to the Board. Looking at ‘A’ Company alone, the Medals Board considered the evidence required to be ‘Vague’ in two cases, ‘Not Direct’ in another, blank in one case and ‘Further Required’ and ‘More (Direct) Required’ in the final cases. A further sheet placed ‘✓NG’ (Not Gallantry) beside all names on the list except that of Sergeant Walter Hegarty.

Individual recommendations for the award of Bonn Mileata Calmachta, with brief description, preliminary action and evidence as noted by the 1962 Medals Board									
No.	Army No	Rank	Surname	Initial	Unit	Sub-unit	Brief description of action	Preliminary Assessment	Evidence
1	O 6397	Comdt	Heffernan	M.	35 Inf Bn	B Coy	Lufira Bridge	Not G. or D. possibly M.	Direct
2	O 7371	Capt	Carroll	M.	35 Inf Bn	Armd Car Gp	Lufira Bridge	Not G. or D. possibly M.	More Required
3	O 6510	Capt	Magennis	A.J.	35 Inf Bn	Armd Car Gp	Mission re Prisoners	Field empty	More required
4	O 7551	Capt	Maguire	C.	35 Inf Bn	B Coy	Tunnel	Not G. or D. doubtful M.	Direct
5	O 7422	Capt	McCorley	R.E.	35 Inf Bn	C Coy	Tunnel	Not G. or D. possibly M.	OK
6	O 7280	Capt	Purfield	M.	35 Inf Bn	HQ Coy	General Conduct	Field empty	More required
7	82108	CS	Condon	D.	35 Inf Bn	B Coy	Prince Leopold Farm Firm	Not G. or D. possibly M.	Direct
8	87102	CS	Norris	P.	35 Inf Bn	HQ Coy	None given	None given	Blank
9	801545	Sgt	Hegarty	U.	35 Inf Bn	A Coy	Jadotville, Tunnel, Old Airstrip, E/Ville	None given	Further Required (Capt Magennis)
10	73505	CS	Prendergast	J.	35 Inf Bn	A Coy	Jadotville	Not G. possibly D.	More (direct) required
11	86755	Sgt	Maher	M.	35 Inf Bn	B Coy	None given	None given	Blank
12	94808	Sgt	Monaghan	J.	35 Inf Bn	A Coy	None given	None given	Blank
13	801232	Sgt	Rowland	M.	35 Inf Bn	Armd Car Gp	None given	None given	Blank
14	92754	Sgt	Shaughnessy	G.	35 Inf Bn	C Coy	Ave Churchill, E/Ville	Not G. possibly D.	Good
15	805463	Cpl	Kavanagh	J.	35 Inf Bn	B Coy	Lufira Bridge	Not G. possibly D.	Fair
16	809355	Cpl	Parker	M.	35 Inf Bn	B Coy	None given	None given	Blank
17	810264	Cpl	Quinn	T.	35 Inf Bn	A Coy	Jadotville	Not G. or D. possibly M.	Not direct
18	809687	Pte	Galvin	M.	35 Inf Bn	A Coy	Jadotville	Not G. or D. possibly M.	Vague
19	809650	Pte	Hennelly	G.	35 Inf Bn	A Coy	Jadotville	Not G. or D. possibly M.	Vague

<sup>73</sup> MA, box, ‘Jadotville Medal Queries’, ‘Recommendations for award of Bonn Mileata Calmachta’, undated.

20	809415	Pte	Milner	C.	35 Inf Bn	B Coy	Lufira Bridge	Not G. or D. possibly M.	Good
21	811285	Pte	Murphy	P.	35 Inf Bn	B Coy	Lufira Bridge	Not G. or D. possibly M.	Direct
22	809183	Pte	McGrath	C.	35 Inf Bn	B Coy	Lufira Bridge	Not G. or D. possibly M.	Good

What is not evident from the records of the 1962 Medals Board is how the members of the Board actually went about their assigned task, in evaluating the recommendations for consideration before them. The table above contains the only written evidence discovered showing how they came to their conclusions.

It was not plain sailing for the 1962 Medals Board. On 30 April 1962, Col Cogan reported to the Chief of Staff that the Board had ‘made a preliminary review of the recommendations made available to it by its Secretary, with particular reference to those relating to An Bonn Míleata Calmachta.’<sup>74</sup> There were problems caused by the lack of evidence before them in some cases, and by the fact that the necessary regulations for the forthcoming ‘Meritorious Conduct Medal’ were not yet promulgated.

The 1962 Medals Board reported that it was ‘NOT’ empowered to proceed further until notified that the terms of DFR A19, Paragraph 16 (third sub-paragraph) have been complied with in each case’. This meant that it would have been certified by the Adjutant-General to the Board that a *prima facie* case existed, based on his evaluation of each of the submitted recommendations for An Bonn Míleata Calmachta.<sup>75</sup>

The correspondence from Col Cogan, President of the 1962 Medals Board shows that the board found itself in an invidious position. It had to make findings on recommendations that had been simply passed up the chain of command to it without, apparently, the completion of any of the staffing checks normally associated and expected with such a process. To perhaps consider offering the excuse, that this was only the second time such a process had been undertaken, is not tenable as the staffing process is an integral and routine part of the functions and responsibilities of the General Staff and of their staff officers. Why this omission occurred in this instance has not been determined by the Independent Review Group due to lack of documentary evidence.

As a result, recommendations from ‘A’ Company which were in many cases inadequately framed and less than complete, passed through a chain of command involving OC 35 Inf Bn, OIC ‘A’ Administration Section, the Adjutant-General and the Chief of Staff without apparent comment or action being taken to address these obvious shortfalls. These recommendations were eventually placed before the 1962 Medals Board without even, in most cases, a written declaration by the Adjutant-General, required under DFR A19, Paragraph 16 (third subparagraph), that a *prima facie*

<sup>74</sup> MA, box, ‘Jadotville Medal Queries’, Col Cogan to Lt Gen MacEoin, 30 April 1962.

<sup>75</sup> A19 paragraph 16 dealt with the ‘Submission of Recommendations’. Sub-paragraph 3 read: ‘The Adjutant-General, if satisfied that a *prima facie* case exists for the award of the Medal, shall take steps to bring the case before the Military Board referred to in paragraph 17.’ Paragraph 17 concerned ‘Investigation by Military Board’. Sub-paragraph 2 of paragraph 17 read: ‘the Military Board shall, before recommending the award of the Medal, satisfy itself of the proof of the performance of the act and that such act is sufficiently meritorious to merit the award. For these purposes the Board may call for additional evidence or examine witnesses or other persons and may, if necessary, and where practical, visit the scene of the act.’



case existed for that recommendation to be considered by the Medals Board for the award of the Military Medal for Gallantry.

In the normal course of events, many if not most of these recommendations, should have been returned to their originator for further information and testimony. They contained an obvious lack of detail, completeness, and focus that should have been provided before they were placed before the Medals Board.

Instead, and despite the reservations expressed by Col Cogan, the 1962 Medals Board was obliged to try to make some sense of what can only be described as a chaotic situation where the recommendations for the Military Medal for Gallantry, the only award in place at the time, were patently and legally incomplete in many cases.

The 1962 Medals Board also had to deal with trying to make recommendations for the award of a proposed new medal, the terms and scope of which had yet to be fully decided, and where even its title was still under consideration. This would become the Distinguished Service Medal, instituted on 8 February 1964, some two years later. These recommendations, as will be seen later in this report, were largely ignored by the 1965 Medals Board.

Additionally, the 1962 Medals Board found itself having to consider a third category of recommendations which had, as its award, promotion. It would seem this category of recommendation, unlike the other two considered, was not brought forward for consideration to the 1965 Medals Board. However, there appears to be inconsistency surrounding this decision as the Independent Review Group is aware of at least two other cases where recommendations for individuals who were promoted on foot of the deliberations of the 1961 Medals Board, were subsequently placed before the 1965 Medals Board for consideration by it for the recommendation of the award of the Distinguished Service Medal. Both individuals not only received a promotion, on foot of the recommendation of the 1961 Medals Board, but were also presented with the Distinguished Service Medal, arising from the recommendation of the 1965 Medals Board, for the very same action. The Independent Review Group has been unable to ascertain how or why these exceptions were facilitated or why a double award was made.

That the 1962 Medals Board was, in these circumstances, able to arrive at any recommendations is testimony to the perseverance of its members. This matter, however, could not be said to reflect well on the leadership and management of the Defence Forces of the time. Those members of 'A' Company, 35 Inf Bn, who had been recommended by their battalion commander for the consideration of an award, were not well served by the manner in which the award process was initiated by 'A' Company in Elisabethville, through to the determination by the 1962 Medals Board.

Similar obstacles were felt to exist concerning cases recommended for the new 'Meritorious Conduct Medal', which the 1962 Medals Board was sometimes calling the Distinguished Service Medal, but making draft awards as the 'Distinguished Conduct Medal'. Furthermore, because it was proposed that the new medal was to be 'awardable under the various heads of bravery, courage, leadership, resource and devotion to duty', Col Cogan told the Chief of Staff that the situation 'set an impossible task for Military Boards in the matter of consistent intelligible

standards.’

The 1962 Medals Board reported that it ‘may be unequal to the task of deciding’ certain matters:

- How much hard work and self-denial is equivalent to an act of bravery.
- The relative values of consistent devotion to duty and the inspiration and resource which may make a man rise to a difficult situation.
- The board is of the opinion that these problems are complicated, rather than simplified, by the proposal to have three classes of grades of the award.
- Apart from its own difficulties in implementing the draft regulation, the Board feels that it leaves much room for misconception by the general public. An award which might be made alike for a high standard of administrative efficiency or conspicuous courage under fire, could, in individual cases, give room for invidious comment.
- Accordingly, the Board recommends that the draft regulation be reviewed with a view to drawing a clear-cut distinction, in respect of title, between awards for actions involving bravery and those for other forms of meritorious conduct.
- Finally, and again with a view to proper public appreciation, the Board suggests that, even within the same categories of conduct, separate titles for awards are to be preferred to the expedient of classes of the one title.<sup>76</sup>

By way of response, it was noted that:

- Degrees of bravery ... etc. admittedly matters of opinion and differentiation between them is perhaps more so but NOT anymore than that of the United States DSM.
- The standards of the first Board may well set the pattern for all time.
- It was thought that three classes would have helped in arriving at decisions as between “bravery” and say devotion to duty. Likewise, the suggested three classes for gallantry should cover most if not all cases of “bravery”.
- Public opinion would soon be clear on the publication of citations.
- I think the prospect of getting sanction for separate medals very remote.<sup>77</sup>

The 1962 Medals Board concluded this part of its work by finding that only one of the twenty-two Military Medal for Gallantry recommendations before it, merited the award. Accordingly, the 1962 Medals Board proposed that the Military Medal for Gallantry, 2nd Class, be awarded to Capt Arthur J. ‘Art’ Magennis, 4 Motor Squadron, for actions undertaken while serving with the 35 Inf Bn, ONUC, on the night of 15-16 September 1961 during the fighting in Elisabethville during Operation Morthor.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> MA, box, ‘Jadotville Medal Queries’, Col Cogan to Lt Gen MacEoin, 30 April 1962.

<sup>77</sup> MA, box, ‘Jadotville Medal Queries’, handwritten memorandum ‘Re: Para 3’, undated and unsigned.

<sup>78</sup> See MA, Medals Board, Box 1, conclusions of 1962 Medals Board, Col Cogan, Lt Col Dalton and Lt Col O’Sullivan to Chief of Staff, undated. Capt Art Magennis had willingly gone behind enemy lines, unarmed and blindfolded, in the custody of the Gendarmerie to secure the safety and release of officers and men from the Armoured Car Group, 35 Inf Bn, of which he was

The twenty-one remaining recommendations that were not deemed of sufficient merit for the Military Medal for Gallantry were then placed by the Medals Board onto the list for the incoming new medal, the 'Meritorious Conduct Medal', which the board referred to as the 'Distinguished Conduct Medal'. This was not the Distinguished Service Medal. This action explains why lists later drawn up outside the Defence Forces for medals awards for the 35 Inf Bn based on material from the 1962 Medals Board are somewhat inaccurate as it appeared in some cases that individuals had been recommended for two medals, whereas in fact the 1962 Board had moved individuals from Military Medal for Gallantry recommendations into 'Distinguished Conduct Medal' recommendations, thus giving them in effect a second chance at obtaining an award.

The Independent Review Group categorically states that unit commanders, including Lt Col McNamee, did not recommend personnel for two medals, namely the Military Medal for Gallantry and the Meritorious Conduct Medal. As previously stated, the Distinguished Service Medal was instituted in February 1964.

***Recommendations for the Meritorious Conduct Medal (Distinguished Conduct Medal)***

After examining the Military Medal for Gallantry, the 1962 Medals Board thereafter addressed recommendations for the 'Meritorious Conduct Medal', which it was calling the 'Distinguished Conduct Medal' ('DCM'). There are no minutes or papers indicating how the 1962 Medals Board dealt with the individual recommendations for this proposed medal, but we do know that in preparation for the introduction of the new medal it was tasked to make a preliminary report on 'DCM's to be awarded.

The 1962 Medals Board concluded that twenty-three 'DCMs' should be awarded:

- Four First Class,
- Nine Second Class and
- Ten Third Class.

There were ninety-seven 'No award' recommendations.<sup>79</sup>

The Medals Board recommended that thirteen 'DCMs' should be awarded to individuals of the 35 Inf Bn:

- Eight individuals who had served with 'A' Company,
- Three to HQ Company,
- One to 'B' Company, and
- One to 'C' Company.

The Medals Board considered recommendations for awards recommended by ONUC units from the 32 Inf Bn to the 35 Inf Bn, and the 1 Infantry Group. A number of those recommended for

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part, who had been taken prisoner. These men were in danger of imminent execution and Capt Magennis went forward to try to negotiate for their release on behalf of ONUC.

<sup>79</sup> Due to a calculation error, the final report of the 1962 Medals Board's Report gives this figure as ninety-six, the correct figure is ninety-seven.

the award of ‘DCMs’ for service with the 35 Inf Bn had also seen previous ONUC service. It is not explicitly identified in the Medals Board’s recommendations for which ONUC tour or tours and what specific action(s) the medal was to be awarded.

Lt Col McNamee recommended forty-four individuals for ‘Recognition for Meritorious Service’.<sup>80</sup> His initial list of thirty-nine names had five additions because of later submissions of recommendations arising from the December 1961 fighting in Elisabethville. Those on Lt Col McNamee’s Recognition for Meritorious Service list do not appear on his Military Medal for Gallantry list, nor on his promotions list. Where Lt Col McNamee recommended an individual for an award, he recommended them for only one award. This is a very important point when considering the results of the 1962 Medals Board.

Direct numerical comparisons between recommendations made by unit commanders and recommendations addressed by the Medals Board do not tally for the 1962 Medals Board. This is because of the Board’s decision to refer the twenty-one unsuccessful Military Medal for Gallantry recommendations for the new award of the ‘DCM’. As a result, recommendations for the award of ‘DCM’ 2nd Class were made by the 1962 Board to six of the twenty-two individuals from ‘A’ Company, who were initially recommended for the Military Medal for Gallantry.

<b>Breakdown of 35 Infantry Battalion personnel recommended for award of a ‘DCM’ Those in bold were originally recommended for the Military Medal for Gallantry.</b>				
<b>No</b>	<b>Name and Rank</b>	<b>DCM Class</b>	<b>Battalion</b>	<b>Sub-unit</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Capt Michael Purfield</b>	<b>DCM 2</b>	<b>35 Inf Bn</b>	<b>HQ Coy</b>
2	Lt Thomas Quinlan	DCM 2	35 Inf Bn	‘A’ Coy
<b>3</b>	<b>Sgt Walter Hegarty</b>	<b>DCM 2</b>	<b>35 Inf Bn</b>	<b>‘A’ Coy</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Company Sgt Jack Prendergast</b>	<b>DCM 2</b>	<b>35 Inf Bn</b>	<b>‘A’ Coy</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Company Sgt Patrick Norris</b>	<b>DCM 2</b>	<b>35 Inf Bn</b>	<b>HQ Coy</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Sgt M. Maher</b>	<b>DCM 2</b>	<b>35 Inf Bn</b>	<b>‘B’ Coy</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Sgt G. Shaughnessy</b>	<b>DCM 2</b>	<b>35 Inf Bn</b>	<b>‘C’ Coy</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Fr Joe Clarke CF</b>	<b>DCM 3</b>	<b>35 Inf Bn</b>	<b>HQ Coy</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>Private Michael Tighe (also 32 Inf Bn)</b>	<b>DCM 2</b>	<b>35 Inf Bn</b>	<b>‘A’ Coy</b>
10	Private J. Nicell (also 32 Inf Bn)	DCM 3	35 Inf Bn	‘A’ Coy
11	Private T. Flynn		35 Inf Bn	‘A’ Coy
12	Private D. Molloy (also 32 Inf Bn)	DCM 3	35 Inf Bn	‘A’ Coy
13	Private Noel Stanley (also 32 Inf Bn)	DCM 3	35 Inf Bn	‘A’ Coy

The 1962 Medals Board did not approve the award of ‘DCMs’ to fifty-two individuals, who served with 35 Inf Bn, including twenty-two who had seen service at Jadotville with ‘A’ Company and attachments. Non-awards from the 1962 Medals Board were a mixture of those recommended for the Military Medal for Gallantry who were later considered for the ‘DCM’ but

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<sup>80</sup> MA, Medals Board, Box 1, ‘Recognition for Meritorious Service’, Lt Col McNamee to Adjutant-General, February 1962. This document is undated, but Lt Col McNamee submitted his recommendations for the Military Medal for Gallantry on 9 February 1962 and documents acting on his submission are dated between 9 and 16 February 1962.

who were unsuccessful, and those who were proposed for the 'DCM' and who were also unsuccessful.

The breakdown of recommendations and awards shows a general balance between subunits of the 35 Inf Bn. There is little or nothing to suggest that the 1962 Medals Board went about its decision making in a non-standard manner. If there was a problem, it was that the only medal available was the Military Medal for Gallantry and that the proposed 'DCM' did not do justice to the range of awards required, and that a new medals system was required to enable rewards for overseas service.

**Fifty-two personnel from the 35 Inf Bn  
who were not awarded DCMs by the 1962 Medals Board**

HQ	6
A Coy	19
B Coy	15
C Coy	4
Armd Car Gp	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>

Lt Col	0
Comdt	3
Capt	5
Lt	2
CS	2
Sgt	7
Cpl	14
Pte	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>

***Promotions***

Lt Col McNamee recommended eight personnel from the 35 Inf Bn for promotion, one sergeant, four corporals and three privates specifically under the terms of DFR A10, which deals with promotions. The promotions proposed were to the ranks of company sergeant, sergeant and corporal respectively.

Lt Col McNamee's letter to the Adjutant-General named the men and attached to each case was the prescribed proforma: 'Recommendations for Awards under DFR A10, A15 and A19', and the proforma titled 'Recommendations for Recognition of Meritorious Service'. The matter was noted as being taken up by the Enlisted Personnel Section on 16 February 1962.

Regarding 'A' Company, no one of the three recommendations, Cpl Bobby Allen, Cpl Frank Williams and Pte Matt Quinlan, were recommended for promotion by the 1962 Medals Board. Cpl Bobby Allen was awarded a DSM 2nd Class for actions with the 38 Infantry Battalion and was promoted to sergeant in 1971. Cpl Frank Williams was promoted to sergeant by an Interview

Board unconnected to the 1962 Medals Board in May 1962. Pte Matt Quinlan left the Defence Forces without promotion.

It seems the recommendations for promotion may have been dealt with separately to the other recommendations. They are not recorded on any of the sheets of recommendees before the 1962 and 1965 Medals Boards. Cpl Allen's, Pte Quinlan's and Cpl Williams' 'Recommendations for awards' pro-forma each reads 'no award', which in their cases means 'no promotion'. It is as if their awards files existed off the main lists, and were dealt with in a manner of which no record can be found at present.

There are inconsistencies in the conduct of the 1962 and 1965 Medals Boards whereby recommendations for promotions became recommendations for medals. The 1965 Medals Board did consider and did recommend two individuals for the Distinguished Service Medal who had already been promoted for the same actions as a result of the 1961 Medals Board. However, as will be seen in the following chapter, the 1965 Medals Board did not consider for the award of the Distinguished Service Medal those who had been recommended to the 1962 Medals Board for promotion.

Unfortunately, the manner in which information about the conduct of the 1962 and 1965 Medals Boards became known publicly, meant that the exact nature of the award that Cpl Allen, Cpl Williams and Pte Quinlan had been proposed for recommendation for, was unclear. Their names appeared incorrectly on an administrative list from April 1971 which listed the names of NCOs and men who were 'recommended for the DSM' but for whom no award was made. Because this list was used in an attempt to identify those in 'A' Company who had been recommended for medals, this retrospective analysis understandably, though erroneously, suggested that the three had been recommended for the Distinguished Service Medal, when they had in fact been recommended on Comdt Quinlan and Capt Donnelly's recommendation for promotion.

This error, one caused within Defence Forces Headquarters by an incorrect reading of each soldier's awards recommendations, which was in some cases made public either through Freedom of Information Requests, or through information getting into family possession by other means, meant that some relatives were placed under the mistaken impression that their loved ones had been put forward for a medal. The Independent Review Group is very much aware that in seeking to identify the details of recommendations made for consideration for awards for 35 Inf Bn personnel, the Group has uncovered information which, at times, may make for difficult reading.

It is deeply regrettable that in the past, attention to detail was not paid by those consulting awards-related materials, to accurately convey to relatives the actual awards for which individuals were put forward by their unit commander, and to explain to family members that awards proposed by unit commanders in 1961 ranged from medals, to commendations, and to promotions.



### ***Aftermath***

After Col Cogan's memorandum dated 30 April 1962 to the Chief of Staff, the 1962 Medals Board paused its work, awaiting the formal approval of the 'Distinguished Conduct Medal', and the promulgation of the regulations governing the award of the new medal.

Eventually, the Government approved the Distinguished Service Medal on 8 February 1964, with the relevant section of DFR A19 promulgated on 12 March 1964.

However, a most significant point here is that in February 1964, as will be discussed below, it was not the 'Meritorious Conduct Medal' or even the 'Distinguished Conduct Medal' that was agreed, but a different medal entirely, namely the newly approved Distinguished Service Medal. Despite the deliberations of the 1962 Medals Board, the 'Meritorious Conduct Medal' or 'Distinguished Conduct Medal' never existed.

By March 1964, Jadotville, 'A' Company, 35 Inf Bn and even ONUC itself were becoming matters of history. Interest in the Defence Forces was turning to a new peacekeeping mission in Cyprus: UNFICYP. But to the veterans of 'A' Company, 35 Inf Bn, what had happened at Jadotville and afterwards, remained part of their lives. Increasingly ignored, feeling marginalised and with no one other than themselves to turn to, they felt let down within the Defence Forces. Ever more they and their families felt 'under a sort of cloud'.<sup>81</sup>

### ***A New Medal is Approved***

Having set the bar extremely high for the award of the Military Medal for Gallantry, which is to this day essentially Ireland's equivalent of the United States Congressional Medal of Honour or the British Victoria Cross, the 1961 plan for the 'Meritorious Conduct Medal', by 1962 also referred to as the 'Distinguished Conduct Medal', created a medal to recognise acts of bravery or gallantry that might not merit the Military Medal for Gallantry. The new medal was seen potentially as 'a medal that could be awarded for lesser and more varied types of acts' and service than the Military Medal for Gallantry, and was awardable to all ranks.<sup>82</sup>

When the new medal was proposed in October 1961, it needed to have an enabling Defence Forces Regulation. Accordingly, an amendment to DFR A19, initially proposed as Part IV, was drafted in early November 1961. The draft regulation was sent to the Chief of Staff Maj Gen Collins-Powell by the Adjutant-General Col Hally by 7 November 1961 for discussion.<sup>83</sup> By 11 November 1961, the military members of the Council of Defence<sup>84</sup> had approved the draft amendment to DFR A19 to give effect to the new medal.

In a memorandum to Assistant Secretary at the Department of Defence Stephen Kearney on 19 January 1962, Col Hally referred to the new medal as the 'Meritorious Conduct Medal', explaining

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<sup>81</sup> Dáil Éireann debates, 28 March 1963.

<sup>82</sup> MA, box, 'Jadotville Medal Queries', undated memorandum 'Distinguished Service Medal', post-1962.

<sup>83</sup> MA, box, Medals Board, Box 2, Col Hally to Maj Gen Collins-Powell, 7 November 1961.

<sup>84</sup> Chief of Staff, Adjutant-General and Quartermaster-General.

that it encompassed ‘a greater number of occasions and acts of meritorious nature which might deserve recognition but which could NOT be considered for the top award – the MMG.’<sup>85</sup>

In preparation for a further meeting with Mr Kearney, Col Hally considered phraseology in DFR A10 and A15 regarding promotions for ‘Distinguished Service’, ‘Meritorious Service’ and ‘Distinguished Conduct’. He felt that it was better to have the same phrase (Distinguished Service) used in all regulations. However, he still referred to the new medal as the ‘Meritorious Conduct Medal’.<sup>86</sup> As indeed it was in the then current draft of the proposed amendment to DFR A19.

The reference to two different names ‘Meritorious Conduct Medal’ and ‘Distinguished Conduct Medal’ is extremely important because of a seemingly innocuous meeting that took place in the first days of March 1962, and which would as an unintended consequence place the findings of the 1962 Medals Board regarding the ‘MCM’/‘DCM’ in a quandary.

On 2 March 1962, Col Hally, Lt Col Caseley and two senior officials of the Department of Defence, Assistant Secretary Stephen Kearney and Principal Officer Patrick J. Kilcullen met in the Department of Defence to discuss progress on the ‘Meritorious Conduct Medal’ and on the draft regulations governing the medal. The title ‘Meritorious Conduct Medal’ was reconsidered, a sign of progress towards the eventual title given to the medal: The Distinguished Service Medal. This decision, made after the recommendations for awards which were to be discussed at the 1962 Medals Board were submitted, created a new medal entirely because the conditions for the award were redrafted.

Col Hally, Lt Col Caseley, Stephen Kearney and Patrick Kilcullen agreed that ‘the conditions for the award [were] to be reworded, and to include Courage, Leadership, Resource and Devotion to Duty, and to provide for acts and Service over a period of time.’<sup>87</sup> Reference to ‘conspicuous bravery’ was removed in preference to ‘acts of bravery’ in the next draft of DFR A19 Part V.<sup>88</sup> ‘Distinguished’ was used ‘to denote the outstanding and high order feature of the award.’<sup>89</sup> ‘Service’ was now used rather than ‘Conduct’ ‘as meaning both time and action.’<sup>90</sup> This might seem like a small decision, but it was to have important implications for the actions of the 1962 Medals Board, that would only become apparent in the summer of 1964 when the new medal was introduced in its final form.

The meeting on 2 March 1962 agreed that the Distinguished Service Medal would be of three classes, and that the Military Medal for Gallantry would be amended to cover three classes. Most importantly for submissions made by Battalion Commanders from the 32 Inf Bn to the 35 Inf Bn and the 1 Inf Gp for the new medal, ‘it was agreed that preliminary consideration and examination of recommendations could go ahead prior to promulgation but firm recommendations by Board

<sup>85</sup> MA, ‘A’ Adm, 01/60, ‘Meritorious Conduct Medal’, Col Hally to Kearney, 19 January 1962.

<sup>86</sup> MA, ‘A’ Adm, 01/60, ‘Medals and Decorations, 1961-1969’, ‘Notes for Discussion’, undated but passed to Kearney by Hally on 19 February 1962.

<sup>87</sup> MA, ‘A’ Adm, 01/60, ‘Medals’, ‘Notes. Meeting at Mr Kearney’s Office 2/3/62’. This version is a draft typed later which gives the date as 1963, but the date has been queried and corrected.

<sup>88</sup> Comparison of drafts of DFR A19 on MA, file, ‘Medals and Decorations, 1961-1969’.

<sup>89</sup> MA, Medal Board, Box 1, memorandum, ‘The proposed Medal for Distinguished Service’, undated.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

[were] NOT to be made.’ This implied that all recommendations made by battalion commanders for the new medal could certainly be examined and considered by a Medals Board, but no binding recommendations could be made.

Following the 2 March meeting, a draft of the proposed amendment to DFR A19 Part V ‘Awards for Meritorious Conduct’, dated 6 March 1962, referred instead to ‘the Distinguished Service Medal’. In a further sign of the change of title to the ‘DSM’, on 21 March 1962, Lt Col Caseley minuted that the medal was to be ‘Dearsca instead of Tuillte’<sup>91</sup> (‘Distinguished’ rather than ‘Meritorious’).

Perhaps, at this point, recommendations for consideration to the 1962 Medals Board should have been returned to those originally making them, so they could be reframed by them for submission to the follow-on medals board as recommendations for the Distinguished Service Medal. But they were not. The change of title and terms of the award occurred just as the 1962 Medals Board was established. Col Hally seems to have regarded these as simply part of an ongoing process of revision to the terms of the medal, rather than the fundamental changes they were to the draft of DFR A19 Part V.

That the introduction of the new medal was discussed when awards recommendations from ONUC units were being submitted, might perhaps have been seen as a positive concurrence. Here was a chance for recommendations to be made by battalion commanders which might otherwise not get an award, because they did not meet the level of the Military Medal for Gallantry, to be considered for the award of the new medal, albeit at a lesser level. It was in fact far from best practice to have the regulations for a new medal, for which a Medals Board was sitting in adjudication, being revised as the Board set about its work, and with the entire process being undertaken in the hope that the regulations for the new medal might be completed, and the medal agreed by Government for award by the time the Medals Board had accomplished its work.

However, the well-meaning proposal that preliminary consideration and examination could be made of the ‘Meritorious Conduct Medal’ recommendations before the regulations for the medal were in place, was to provide a procedural hurdle that would ultimately impact on the 1962 Medals Board’s actions. The meeting on 2 March 1962 did not seem to realize that in changing the medal’s title and conditions a completely new medal was being created, a medal the award of which was not being considered by the 1962 Medals Board that was about to sit. This became an extremely important factor when the findings of the upcoming 1962 Medals Board were considered in 1964.

Following the 2 March 1962 meeting, a Department of Defence memorandum from Rannóg Rialacháin (R1) stated that ‘the military authorities propose that provision should be made for the award of a Distinguished Service Medal.’<sup>92</sup> This was a totally different medal to the ‘Distinguished Conduct Medal’, even though both, under discussion, covered similar grounds for award. The memorandum explained that:

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<sup>91</sup> MA, ‘A’ Adm, 01/60, ‘Medals and Decorations, 1961-1969’, minute by Lt Col Caseley, 21 March 1962.

<sup>92</sup> MA, Medals Board, Box 1, ‘Memorandum’, March 1962.

- At present the only provision in respect of the award of a medal for an act of bravery or gallantry arising out of, or associated with, military service is that relating to An Bonn Míleata Calmachta – DFR A19, Part II. The military authorities represent that a condition for the award of this medal provides that the act of bravery or gallantry involve risk to life or limb, this restricts the occasions and acts which may be considered for an award. The award of the medal has been recommended only once since its inception.
- The standard required is very high as it should be for the premier award. It has been pointed out, however, that on occasions acts may be performed which might deserve recognition but which could not be considered for the top award viz: An Bonn Míleata Calmachta. The military authorities consider that to cover those there should be a lower award than An Bonn Míleata Calmachta and propose, accordingly, that the award of the Distinguished Service Medal in three classes should be provided for. (They also propose that the Military Board investigating a case for an award may also submit a recommendation for the promotion of an officer or man for distinguished service).
- The attached draft amendment to DFR A19 (new Part V) based on a draft prepared by OIF Riaracháin ‘A’ (OIC ‘A’ Administration Section) is circulated for observations. The details of the classes of the medal and medal ribbon will be prescribed later.
- A consequential amendment to Part II of DFR A19 (An Bonn Míleata Calmachta) to bring certain provisions into line with the proposed new Part V is also attached for observations.<sup>93</sup>

Two sets of draft regulations for the new A19 Part V show how plans for the Distinguished Service Medal evolved. One set dates from before 3 March 1962<sup>94</sup> and the second set was drafted on 6 March 1962.<sup>95</sup> In the period between both drafts, the meeting at the Department of Defence referred to above took place on 2 March 1962. There are important differences between both drafts. By 6 March 1962, the title of the medal had become the Distinguished Service Medal, devotion to duty was included within its terms, with three classes available, and the medal was no longer to be awarded to personnel of foreign armed forces serving with Defence Forces units on peacekeeping missions as had initially been planned. The change of title and terms was to be critically important because the 1962 Medals Board was compiling preliminary or initial views on the ‘Meritorious Conduct Medal’, which it referred to as the ‘Distinguished Conduct Medal’, and not the eventual Distinguished Service Medal.

However, certain points were the same in both drafts of the proposed amendments to the DFR. For example, recommendations for the award would be made by unit officers to their commanding officers, and then sent onwards to the Adjutant-General. The Adjutant-General ‘if satisfied that a

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<sup>93</sup> MA, Medals Board, Box 1, ‘Memorandum’, March 1962.

<sup>94</sup> MA, ‘A’ Adm, 01/60, Medals and Decorations 1961-1969, ‘Proposed Amendment to DFR A19 Medals and Decorations’, undated, March 1962.

<sup>95</sup> MA, Medals Board, Box 1, undated draft attached to ‘Memorandum’, March 1962.

prima facie case exists for an award, shall take steps to bring the case before the Military Board referred to in paragraph 47.’

Paragraph 47 of DFR A19 (which became paragraph 46 in the 6 March 1962 version) covered investigation of recommendations by a Military Board. The paragraph explained that ‘awards shall be made by the Minister for Defence on the recommendation of a Military Board which shall be appointed by the Chief of Staff for the purpose of examining and reporting on every recommendation for an award.’ The 6 March 1962 version of the draft regulation was the same.

Despite the content of the draft regulation for the Distinguished Service Medal, which indicated that the Military Board submits its report to the Minister, an interpretation was obtained which allowed the Chief of Staff to materially engage in the decision-making process.<sup>96</sup> This enabled the Chief of Staff to become integrally involved in the medals awarding process in the years to come. This was of immense importance when decisions were being made on the report of the 1962 Medals Board.

In essence, the 1962 Medals Board could not recommend anyone, even in principle, for the Distinguished Service Medal because officially it was not addressing recommendations for awards for this particular medal, but a different titled medal, the ‘Meritorious Conduct Medal’.

By March 1962, the ‘Meritorious Conduct Medal’ was evolving into the yet to be instituted Distinguished Service Medal. The 1962 Medals Board’s terms of reference were simply to ‘examine and classify recommendations for other awards and submit a preliminary report on its findings’ to the Chief of Staff.<sup>97</sup> In 1962, the term ‘awards’ referred to medals, commendations and promotions. There was also a great lack of clarity about the name and terms of the new medal that was to be awarded for acts which did not qualify for the Military Medal for Gallantry.

It took until February 1964, for the Minister for Defence, Gerald Bartley TD, to submit the proposal for the Distinguished Service Medal to the Government for formal approval by the Taoiseach, Seán Lemass TD and his ministers. This, despite Col Hally stressing to Principal Officer P.J. Kilcullen at the Department of Defence in October 1962 that: ‘the important thing is to issue a medal without delay.’<sup>98</sup> After criticism of the new medal and an unsuccessful blocking manoeuvre by the Department of Finance to stymie ‘yet another medal’,<sup>99</sup> finally, the Minister for Defence submitted a two-and-a-half-page memorandum on the Distinguished Service Medal for consideration by the Government at its meeting on 8 February 1964.

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<sup>96</sup> MA, box, ‘Jadotville Medal Queries’, minute by Comdt Ó’Laoghaire, undated, but marked ‘Fea[bhra]’

<sup>97</sup> MA, box, ‘Jadotville Medal Queries’, convening order for 1962 Medals Board signed by Maj Gen Collins-Powell, 29 March 1962.

<sup>98</sup> MA, DOD, 3/39180, Daly to Kilcullen, 10 October 1962.

<sup>99</sup> MA, DOD, 3/39180, Whitty to Brady, 13 January 1964.

The Memorandum to Government explained the purpose of the Distinguished Service Medal,<sup>100</sup> the conditions of the award, those who were eligible, the three classes of the medal,<sup>101</sup> that there would be a citation, the four-year time limit for the award, its posthumous awarding, publication of the award, its forfeiture, and the register to be kept of Distinguished Service Medals awarded. The Distinguished Service Medal was designed by Oisín Kelly and the medal itself, in silver and in bronze, depicted Cúchulainn on his chariot. The Memorandum to Government explained that ‘the design of the medal will not be prescribed until the medal is actually struck as there may be slight variations between the actual product and the original description.’<sup>102</sup>

The practice in Ireland is that, to ensure collective Government responsibility at meetings, Government and Cabinet minutes do not record any discussion on matters before it. Thus, the minutes of the meeting, simply record that the scheme for the Distinguished Service Medal was approved by the Government at its meeting on 8 February 1964. The Secretary of the Department of the Taoiseach, Dr Nicholas Nolan, wrote the same day to the Private Secretary to the Minister for Defence and senior officials in the Department of Defence to let them know this decision.

Answering a Dáil question on 8 April 1964, Minister for Defence Gerald Bartley TD told the Chamber that ‘Rialacháin Óglaigh na hÉireann providing for the award of An Bonn Seirbhíse Dearsca were promulgated on 12 Márta, 1964, and the question of the design of the medal is under active consideration’.

An undated internal memorandum on the proposed new medal explained that:

- In the Military Medal for Gallantry, “risk to life and limb” is paramount but it is felt that there being degrees of bravery, all brave deeds might not merit this award. Therefore “bravery” is included for this proposed medal.
- Courage: Considered as more mental than physical deserves inclusion for an award.
- Leadership: Though hoped for and perhaps expected from those trained to lead men, may be displayed in higher degree by those so trained, and may come from those not specially trained at all, and should therefore when displayed in an outstanding way should receive recognition.
- Resource: This is a quality we try to inculcate but it is only in times of stress that individuals will display the quality, and those who do so with success in dangerous or

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<sup>100</sup> This medal may be awarded to officers, non-commissioned officers, and privates of the Defence Forces and to members of the Army Nursing and Chaplaincy Services in recognition of individual or associated acts of bravery, courage, leadership, resource or devotion to duty (other than any such acts or duty performed on war service) arising out of, or associated with, service in the Defence Forces and not meriting the award of the MMG.

<sup>101</sup> Like the MMG, the DSM is awarded in three classes, originally referred to as 1st, 2nd and 3rd Class, but since 1984 referred to as with Honour, with Distinction, and with Merit. There is provision for a bar for the DSM. (This is a metal strip attached to the medal ribbon which indicates the subsequent award of the same medal to the individual.) However, if another DSM is awarded in a different class, a second medal will be issued.

<sup>102</sup> MA, Medals Board, Box 1, ‘An Bonn Seirbhíse Dearsca (The Distinguished Service Medal)’, memorandum from Oifig An tAire Cosanta to Government, 8 February 1964.



“tight cornered” situations, or over a period of service deserve a reward.

- Devotion to duty: By an individual may be noticeable even in his routine work and when an individual in “sticking” to his job, serves his commander and colleagues in such a way as to ease the burden of the former, and maintain the morale health and well-being of the latter, over a period and throughout a crisis, such devotion deserves recognition.
- It is felt that the terms of the conditions are such, that all acts which might warrant recognition and which would not merit an award of the military medal for gallantry, can be dealt with under the distinguished service medal.<sup>103</sup>

Shortly after the regulations were promulgated, the *Irish Times* explained that the Distinguished Service Medal ‘fills a big gap in a small list of awards.’<sup>104</sup> It was ‘designed to provide for awards for a variety of acts during military service for which no recognition was heretofore given.’

### ***Reconsidering the Findings of the 1962 Medals Board***

It is unclear on what date the 1962 Medals Board signed off on its findings and submitted its report. The formal Medals Board minutes, signed by the three members of the Board, are undated. Yet there are other ways of making sense of what took place next.

Col Cogan had been told in 1962 to make initial recommendations on the award of the ‘Distinguished Conduct Medal’ pending the formal introduction of a new medal. However, by early 1964, the ‘new medal’ had been formally approved, albeit as the Distinguished Service Medal.

A week after Minister Bartley’s April 1964 Dáil statement on the new medal, OIC ‘A’ Administration Section, Lt Col Caseley reactivated the medals awarding process initiated by the 1962 Medals Board. He explained to Maj Gen Seán Collins-Powell, who, on Lt Gen MacEoin’s returning to the Office of the Chief of Staff on arrival back from ONUC, had succeeded Col Hally as Adjutant-General, that:

- In March 1962 a Board was convened by an C[eann] F[oirne] to consider recommendations for the award of the gallantry medal.
- In the light of pending legislation, it was considered opportune then to request this board to examine and report on cases which they considered merited a Distinguished Service Medal award. This the board did.
- It was understood that on promulgation of the regulations the recommendations would have to be reviewed. The Amendment to ROE A19 governing the award of the Distinguished Service Medal has now been signed, and it is considered necessary

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<sup>103</sup> MA, Medals Board, Box 1, ‘The proposed medal for distinguished service’, undated. The formatting of this quotation had been amended for ease of reading. In the original all points are merged into one long paragraph.

<sup>104</sup> *Irish Times*, 14 March 1964.

under the terms of Paragraph 65 thereof to have a new Board appointed for the specific purpose of making recommendations under this new part of the Regulation.

- It is recommended that same Board as was appointed in 1962 be reappointed, with the exception of Lt Col R. O'Sullivan who is at present in the Congo. Comdt P. Ó Néil, who was secretary of the original Board, can be made combined member and secretary. This arrangement would considerably speed up matters and avoid duplication of work.
- A draft convening order for signature by on C[eann] F[oirne] is attached.<sup>105</sup>

Paragraph 65 of DFR A19 was a four-point paragraph covering 'Investigation by Military Board'. Where it was initially anticipated that the interim recommendations of the 1962 Medals Board would be reviewed by the 1965 Medals Board, paragraph 65(1) instructed that 'Awards shall be made by the Minister on the recommendation of a Military Board which will be appointed by the Chief of Staff for the purpose of examining and reporting on every recommendation for an award.'

The regulations for the Distinguished Service Medal did not prescribe for the reconsideration or review of a previous Board's findings. Simply 'every recommendation', a phrase which also appeared in the equivalent paragraph of the Military Medal for Gallantry regulations, meant that a new Board should be established. On 15 April, 1964, Maj Gen Collins-Powell passed these details on to Lt Gen MacEoin, minuting that 'in view of the completion of the details in the Regulation, I suggest that the recommendation herein should be accepted.'<sup>106</sup> A copy of the original 1962 Medals Board convening order was sent to Comdt O'Leary, PSO to the Chief of Staff, on 4 May 1964.

An undated memorandum 'Award of Medals', was written in the period after the regulation for the Distinguished Service Medal was 'approved but not yet circulated.'<sup>107</sup> Like Lt Col Caseley's memorandum quoted above, with which it may have been contemporaneous, it explained that Col Cogan's Medals Board had 'considered recommendations from 32 Inf Bn to 36 Inf Bn for the Military Medal for Gallantry and examined recommendations for the Distinguished Service Medal. With regard to the Distinguished Service Medal 'the Board was NOT' authorised to make a firm recommendation as the Regulation was not approved at the time.' This is somewhat incorrect, as the 1962 Medals Board had in fact examined recommendations for the Meritorious Conduct Medal.

Thus, it was 'necessary for a Board appointed by C[eann] F[oirne] to consider recommendations already examined by Col Cogan's board and submit recommendations.' Here the use of the word recommendations twice is potentially confusing. The first usage refers to the 'recommendations for consideration for award' submitted to the board; the second time is for recommendations for the award of medals made by the board itself to the awarding authority.

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<sup>105</sup> MA, Medals Board, Box 1, memorandum, 'Distinguished Service Medal', Lt Col Caseley to Maj Gen Collins-Powell, 15 April 1964.

<sup>106</sup> MA, Medals Board, Box 1, minute Maj Gen Collins-Powell to Lt Gen MacEoin, 15 April 1964 on memorandum, 'Distinguished Service Medal', Lt Col Caseley to Maj Gen Collins-Powell, 15 April 1964.

<sup>107</sup> MA, Medals Board, Box 1, 'Award of Medals', undated memorandum.

Two options were open. Col Cogan's Medals Board could be appointed as 'it will speed up the proceedings', even though only two members Comdt F. Neill and Lt Col R. O'Sullivan had served in Congo. On the other hand, 'if a new board of officers who all had service in Congo is appointed the proceedings will take longer but I think recommendations will be made before the medal is available.'

The 'Award of Medals' memorandum quoted above concluded that 'the proceedings of Col Cogan's Medals Board were passed to the C[eann] F[oirne].' A simple brown file jacket titled 'Medals, Finding of Board of Officers (Col Cogan): Appointed 29.3.62' gives some insight into what happened the 1962 Medals Board's findings, and how they were addressed at the highest level in the Defence Forces.

Written on the file jacket is that on 24 May 1964, the file was with Lt Col Caseley at 'A' Administration Section. At some point thereafter, it was sent to the Chief of Staff, Lt Gen MacEoin. This was possibly as soon as 30 May, when the Assistant Chief of Staff, Col Joseph P. Emphy, raised with Lt Gen MacEoin whether the 'award of medals to be done by Planning and Operations Section.'<sup>108</sup> The Director of Plans and Operations was Col Christopher E. 'Ned' Shortall, who had taken up the appointment in 1963. Col Emphy was a former OC of Western Command. He had welcomed 'A' Company on its return to Athlone in December 1961.<sup>109</sup> In 1961 Col Emphy had also been Lt Gen MacEoin's preferred officer for the Assistant Chief of Staff appointment. Col Shortall Director Plans and Operations and Col Emphy would be key figures in the process by which the recommendations of the 1962 Medals Board were addressed by the Chief of Staff and the Adjutant-General through the remainder of 1964.

A note to the Private Secretary to the Minister for Defence on 14 August 1964 explained that 'final consideration of recommendations for awards under ROE A19 have not been concluded.'<sup>110</sup> The reason was that 'Part V ROE A 19 was not then promulgated', and the Department of Defence was 'not in a position to say when a final decision will be made.'<sup>111</sup> Writing under a week later, Col Shortall explained that after investigating, on the Chief of Staff's instructions, as conveyed to him by Col Emphy, the Distinguished Conduct Medal recommendations of the 1962 Board, he found that:

- It appears that the recommendations of the Board for the award of the Distinguished Conduct Medal, an award not in existence when the original board was convened, are invalid.
- A Board is now necessary - to be convened pursuant to the new regulation dealing with the Distinguished Conduct Medals (sic) and covering all units which served in the Congo (the previous board dealt with units up to and including 36 Inf Bn).<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> MA, PC 2016-01, Col Emphy notepad entries.

<sup>109</sup> Col Emphy was Assistant Chief of Staff from 1962 to 1968.

<sup>110</sup> MA, DOD, 3/37397, minute by Lt Col Caseley, 14 August 1964.

<sup>111</sup> MA, DOD, 3/37397, minute, 18 August 1964.

<sup>112</sup> MA, box, Jadotville Medal Queries', Col Shortall to Col Emphy, 20 August 1964.

Col Emphy passed these details on to Lt Gen MacEoin.

All this time, the file of the findings of the 1962 Medals Board was with the Chief of Staff. They were conveyed by the Chief of Staff's Personal Staff Officer to Lt Col Caseley on 3 October 1964, and to the Adjutant-General, Maj Gen Collins-Powell on 5 October 1964.

A similar brown file jacket titled 'Memorandum', which contained 'Proposed Medals Decorations Badges', 'Draft Letter Re Recommendation DSM Congo' and 'Memorandum Reconsideration of Recommendations 1962' also went to 'A' Administration Section and the Adjutant-General on 5 October 1964.

In a pad of notes he kept of matters he wished to bring before the Chief of Staff, Col Emphy's 'Item 15' on 7 October 1964 was 'The Award of Medals', and on 2 November 1964 'Item 12' was 'The Award of Medals'.<sup>113</sup> The award of medals remained an active issue for the Chief of Staff through 1964.

The interim findings of the 1962 Medals Board for recommendations for consideration of the award of the 'Meritorious Conduct Medal' were now considered void. There remained the process by which the Medals Board's single Military Medal for Gallantry recommendation was addressed.

The 1962 Medals Board had recommended Capt Arthur J. 'Art' Magennis for the award of the Military Medal for Gallantry, 2nd Class. Col Emphy also raised concerns with Col Shortall about the 1962 Medals Board's proposal to make this award to Capt Magennis.

Col Shortall, again on Col Emphy's instructions from Lt Gen MacEoin, also reconsidered the award of the Military Medal for Gallantry to Capt Magennis. Col Shortall re-examined the details of the action Capt Magennis had undertaken. As it would be the first award 'to a living recipient' it 'will set the standard for future awards'. Thus, Capt Magennis' Military Medal for Gallantry had to 'stand up to examination and there must be no doubt that the act performed merits the award.' Col Shortall suggested overturning the 1962 Medals Board's recommendation on Capt Magennis' Military Medal for Gallantry. Col Shortall recommended to Col Emphy that a lesser award to Capt Magennis was appropriate as his actions were not in the same way life-threatening as those of Tpr Browne had been at Niemba.

Col Shortall was not necessarily pleased with what he had been asked to undertake or the manner in which he had been asked to do it. In his response to Col Emphy, he also pointed out that:

- In accordance with DFR A19 Part II Para 17, it would appear that the Chief of Staff has no function in the matter other than the appointment of the board, which submits its recommendations to the Minister.

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<sup>113</sup> MA, PC 2016-01, Col Emphy notepad entries.

- GRO 43/1955 places responsibility on the Adjutant-General for medals and decorations, and it is he in the first place in accordance with A19 Part II paragraph 16 who decides if a prima facie case exists for the award.
- The medal may not be awarded in any case after more than two years from the date of the act. (DFR A19 Part II paragraph 19(2)). It is now almost three years since the date of the act.<sup>114</sup>

The provision at the last bullet point above was, by September 1964, being deleted. The other points indicate that Col Shortall felt it correct to raise the appropriateness of the involvement of the Chief of Staff in investigating the recommendations of the 1962 Medals Board. It shows that Col Shortall wished to clearly state that it was the Adjutant-General who was the decision maker on whether a case existed for the award. The case of Private Johnston in 1961, although for a promotion and not for a medal, shows that both the Chief of Staff and the Minister for Defence had, by established precedent, the power to investigate and overturn the decision of a Medals Board.<sup>115</sup>

Col Shortall also doubted ‘whether an C[eann] F[oirne] has power to set aside recommendation of the board’ as ‘DFR says “and shall be made by an tAire on recommendation of a board which shall be appointed by C[eann] F[oirne] on Board’s recommendation.”’

Col Shortall felt that Defence Forces Regulations ‘DFR A19 precluded An Ceann Foirne from reviewing the findings of the Board.’ Lt Gen MacEoin’s Personal Staff Officer Comdt Ó’Laoghaire brought the matter to the attention of the Deputy Judge Advocate-General who responded simply that ‘as C[eann] F[oirne] had convened the Board he was entitled to comment on the findings, in the normal course of events, when forwarding the Report to an tAire.’<sup>116</sup> The Deputy Judge Advocate-General did not say how detailed and towards what end such ‘comment on the findings’ could be, but the structure of the sentence itself indicates that Lt Gen MacEoin had indeed commented on the 1962 Medals Board’s findings.

Further indication of the Chief of Staff’s role in the final stages of the 1962 Medals Board was a marginal note by Adjutant-General Maj Gen Collins-Powell on a minute received from the Department of Defence asking ‘whether any medals are to be awarded’, and ‘what the present position is and what is the likelihood of having the matter, insofar as the Congo operation is concerned, finalised’. Maj Gen Collins-Powell’s note reads ‘this matter should be cleared before end of December [1964]. Files are available in office of C[eann] F[oirne].’<sup>117</sup>

On 5 February 1965, Lt Gen MacEoin informed the Minister for Defence Gerald Bartley TD on the report of the 1962 Medals Board, and on his thoughts on its awarding the Military Medal for

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<sup>114</sup> MA, box, ‘Jadotville Medals Queries’, Col Shortall to Col Emphy, 20 August 1964.

<sup>115</sup> See Chapter 8 of the Independent Review Group’s Report.

<sup>116</sup> MA, box, ‘Jadotville Medal Queries’, minute by Comdt Ó’Laoghaire, undated, but marked ‘Fea[bhra] 65’.

<sup>117</sup> MA, DOD, 3/37397, minute to Maj Gen Collins-Powell, 9 November 1964.

Gallantry.<sup>118</sup> Lt Gen MacEoin explained that he had read the 1962 Medals Board's recommendation for Capt Magennis's award and had critiqued their findings. He quoted to Minister Bartley, Col Shortall's findings to Col Emphy, and emphasised to Minister Bartley his doubt whether Capt Magennis' personal safety was really in danger during the mission he undertook. Lt Gen MacEoin felt that 'in fact the white mercenary officers had pretty good control' of the local gendarmerie under their command and 'it may well be that indiscipline was exaggerated'. Capt Magennis was escorted by a 'white doctor', and had let the local press know of his mission. In the end 'he was treated most correctly'.

Noting that the Military Medal for Gallantry was awarded for 'any act of exceptional bravery or gallantry arising out of or associated with military service and involving risk to life or limb', and assessing Capt Magennis' case against the only previous award of the Military Medal for Gallantry, that awarded to Trooper Browne<sup>119</sup> for putting his own life in danger at Niemba to allow two colleagues to escape, Lt Gen MacEoin was 'satisfied that Capt Magennis' action, meritorious as it was, does not merit the award proposed.' His next line shows the lengths to which Lt Gen MacEoin had decided he could go, when it came to the award of medals: 'I recommend that An Bonn Míleata Calmachta be not awarded to Capt Magennis.' Lt Gen MacEoin next proposed to Minister Bartley that 'if you accept my recommendation above', as a new medals board was shortly to assemble to consider recommendations for the award of the first DSMs, Capt Magennis' case be submitted to this new board.

This exchange of minutes and memoranda and the action taken by Lt Gen MacEoin, running from August 1964 to February 1965, shows that the Chief of Staff had the power to reconsider and overrule a Medals Board's findings, even if the final decision on making the award remained with the Minister for Defence. Minister Bartley could have, but did not, turn down Lt Gen MacEoin's proposal on the 1962 Board's recommendations. Lt Gen MacEoin saw himself as above the findings of a medals board when it came to the 1962 Medals Board recommendation that Capt Magennis receive the Military Medal for Gallantry. As such, the Chief of Staff had the authority on a personal basis to influence the findings of a Medals Board established under Defence Forces Regulations.

As Chief of Staff, Lt Gen MacEoin exerted an influence through Col Emphy, the Assistant Chief of Staff, over the 1962 Medals Board. His actions, through Col Emphy's instructions, and arising from Col Shortall's recommendations, effectively quashed the preliminary recommendations of the 1962 Medals Board on the 'Meritorious Conduct Medal', and also overturned its one definite recommendation on the Military Medal for Gallantry.

Whereas Col Cogan knew his Meritorious Conduct Medal recommendations were at best provisional, and would have to await the promulgation of the regulations for the new medal, it was

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<sup>118</sup> MA, box, 'Jadotville Medals Queries', Lt Gen MacEoin to Bartley, 5 February 1965. The memorandum was seen by Col Emphy and forwarded to Bartley on 12 February 1965. An earlier draft of this letter suggests that it was meant to have been sent by Christmas 1964.

<sup>119</sup> MA, DOD, 3/37397, minutes of Medals Board, 22 September 1961. Tpr Browne's family received his MMG on 8 November 1961. The 1961 Medals Board also considered recommendations for the MMG for Lt Kevin Gleeson and Sgt Hugh Gaynor but did not award either man the medal.



now the position that the 1962 Medals Board's recommendations being provisional was used to quash these recommendations precisely because the regulations for the Distinguished Service Medal were not promulgated at the time the Medals Board's recommendations were made.

Lt Gen MacEoin's decisions negated all the findings from the 1962 Medals Board, not just those related to any unit or company. As recommendations for the Meritorious Conduct Medal were made 'by a Board before the publication of the Defence Forces Regulations authorising the issue of the Distinguished Service Medal', it was now 'necessary to reconvene the board or convene a new board so that it may now make recommendations based on its earlier examination of submissions.'<sup>120</sup> This was a regulations-based measure.

Every recommendation that had been before the 1962 Medals Board for the proposed Meritorious Conduct Medal, and Capt Magennis' recommendation for a Military Medal for Gallantry, which was now downgraded to a recommendation for a Distinguished Service Medal, was to be placed for consideration before a newly convened Medals Board.

Had the Meritorious Conduct Medal been approved by government and regulations for it promulgated before the 1962 Medals Board finalised its recommendations, none of this would have happened. The 1965 Medals Board started the awards process all over again, taking into account only the recommendations for consideration it had before it, regardless of the findings of the 1962 Medals Board.

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<sup>120</sup> MA, DOD, 3/37397, minute by Deputy Adjutant-General, 18 February 1965.

## Chapter 10

### 1965 Medals Board Process

#### *Overview of Chapter 10*

This chapter addresses the following issues:

- 1962 Medals Board's Recommendations,
- Convening Order 27 May 1965,
- Unit Commanders' Recommendations,
- Lt Col McNamee's Recommendations,
- Assembly of 1965 Medals Board,
- Initial Recommendations, Criteria, Standing Medals Boards, Lists of Recommendations,
- Working Guide Distinguished Service Medal Classes, Devotion to Duty, Unit Commanders' Conference 15 October 1965, Insufficient Evidence,
- Draft Report – November 1965,
- Additional Recommendations November 1965, Conduct & Overseas Tours of Duty, Limited Progress,
- Preparation of Report, Submission of Report 10 November 1966,
- Analysis of Personnel Recommended for Distinguished Service Medals,
- Announcement of Awards in March 1967, Media Response, Response from Comdt Pat Quinlan, Response from 1965 Medals Board and Chief of Staff, Media Response – Kerryman, Cpl Reidy's Query,
- Posthumous Medal – Personnel Killed in Action,
- Presentation of Distinguished Service Medals 1968.

#### *1962 Medals Board's Recommendations*

As recorded in Chapter 9, on 29 March 1962, the Chief of Staff, Maj Gen Seán Collins-Powell issued a Convening Order for a Board of Officers to examine recommendations for the award of the Military Medal for Gallantry in respect of twenty-two personnel and the Meritorious Conduct Medal for ninety-nine personnel, a total of 121 cases.

The 1962 Medals Board recommended the award of one Military Medal for Gallantry. However, the recommendations for the award of the Meritorious Conduct Medal, (which it was calling the Distinguished Conduct Medal, to twenty-four individuals, including eight personnel from 'A' Company, were somewhat provisional, as such recommendations would have to await the institution of a new medal under consideration, namely the Distinguished Service Medal. The regulations for the Distinguished Service Medal were promulgated on 8 February 1964, not in time for the implementation of the 1962 Medals Board's recommendations.

### Convening Order – 27 May 1965

On the issue of formalising Medals Boards, in 1965 there was ‘no established system of appointing Boards’ in the Defence Forces.<sup>1</sup> When new recommendations for medals were submitted and when new medals were instituted, a new board had to be appointed each time. Thus, on 30 April 1965 the Adjutant-General, Maj Gen Collins-Powell, submitted a draft convening order to the Chief of Staff Lt Gen Seán MacEoin for a new Medals Board to examine recommendations for consideration for the newly instituted Distinguished Service Medal.

In parallel, the Director of Plans and Operations, Col Shortall, submitted to the Chief of Staff a shortlist of potential Board members.<sup>2</sup> Col J.K. Cogan, Lt Col R.F. Dalton and Lt Col R. O’Sullivan had constituted the 1962 Medals Board. Their names were amongst seven put forward for consideration for the 1965 Medals Board. From these seven names, Lt Gen MacEoin would decide the composition of the 1965 Medals Board.

Proposals by Adjutant-General Major General Collins-Powell for Personnel for the 1965 Medals Board <sup>3</sup>				
President	Col	J.K.	Cogan	Director, Cavalry
	Col	C.E.	Shortall	Director, Plans and Operations
Members	Lt Col	R.F.	Dalton	OIC ‘Q’ Administration
	Lt Col	R.	O’Sullivan	Training Section
	Lt Col	J.J.	Caseley	OIC ‘A’ Administration
	Lt Col	G.V.	Coghlan	Army Headquarters
Secretary	Comdt	F.P.	Neill	‘A’ Administration Section

In late May 1965, Lt Gen MacEoin selected Col Shortall as President, Lt Col O’Sullivan and Lt Col Caseley as members and Comdt F.P. Neill as Secretary.<sup>4</sup> The appointment of both Lt Col O’Sullivan and Comdt Neill provided an element of continuity with the 1962 Medals Board. In addition, Lt Col Caseley and Col Shortall were directly involved in the development and institution of the Distinguished Service Medal, as well as with the aftermath of the 1962 Medals Board.

The 1965 Medals Board was formally appointed by Lt Gen MacEoin on 27 May 1965. He instructed that it was to convene on 24 June 1965. Comdt Neill was responsible for ‘obtaining all necessary supporting records and for the attendance of witnesses, where necessary.’<sup>5</sup> The Medals Board’s ‘report and findings’ were to be submitted to Lt Gen MacEoin within seven days of completing its work.<sup>6</sup> That work would ultimately take until November 1966.

<sup>1</sup> MA, box, ‘Jadotville Medal Queries’, ‘Distinguished Service Medal’, memorandum by Lt Col Caseley(?) to Col Shortall and Comdt Neill. Described by Lt Col Caseley as ‘random notes’. Lt Col Caseley suggested a ‘standing Board’ of the Director of Plans and Operations (President), OIF Riar ‘A’ and OF R Trn (Members) and OF Riar ‘A’ (Secretary). He suggested that these core officer-holders be appointed by the Chief of Staff and the make up of the board could be altered as necessary. Lt Col Caseley also suggested that ‘the function of A Aid, CF and An tÁire via-a-vis the Board itself’ needed ‘rethinking’ in A19 Parts II and IV.

<sup>2</sup> MA, box, ‘Jadotville Medal Queries’, routing and decision sheet, 30 April 1965.

<sup>3</sup> MA, box, ‘Jadotville Medal Queries’, minute to Lt Gen MacEoin, 25 May 1965.

<sup>4</sup> Between 19 and 27 May 1965, see MA, Box, ‘Jadotville Medal Queries’, routing and decision sheet.

<sup>5</sup> MA, box, ‘Jadotville Medal Queries’, Convening Order signed by Lt Gen MacEoin, 27 May 1965.

<sup>6</sup> MA, box, ‘Jadotville Medal Queries’, Convening Order signed by Lt Gen MacEoin, 27 May 1965.

### ***Unit Commanders' Recommendations – ONUC and UNFICYP***

Unit commanders of ONUC and UNFICYP units, and Senior Irish Officers, were 'to submit recommendations in accordance with paragraph 63/64 of DFR A19 Part V', but were informed that 'in the case of recommendations made in 1961 and 1962, prior to the promulgation of [A19] Part V, but which were based on the general terms of paragraph 60, a further recommendation is NOT required.'<sup>7</sup> This meant that the original recommendations made by unit commanders for the 1962 Medals Board, including recommendations submitted by Lt Col McNamee, OC 35 Inf Bn, would go before the 1965 Medals Board for assessment. This was not reassessment, nor was it the further assessment of provisional, or interim recommendations. It was a complete first-time assessment of these documents for a new medal. This was because the 1965 Board was examining recommendations in the context of the Distinguished Service Medal instituted on 8 February 1964, and not the previously proposed 'Meritorious Conduct Medal', which was never introduced, or the superior Military Medal for Gallantry. In other words, the 1962 recommendations were to be placed before the 1965 Medals Board as new documents, and no notice was to be taken of how they had fared in front of the 1962 Medals Board. Maj Gen Collins-Powell confirmed this to unit commanders by stressing that 'in the case of recommendations made in 1961 and 1962, prior to the promulgation of Part V but which were based on the general terms of paragraph 60, a further recommendation is NOT required.'<sup>8</sup>

The situation was confusing, and it is revealing to note that to officers of the 36 Inf Bn responsible for the submission of recommendations for consideration to the 1965 Medals Board 'they had NO idea that Part V of DFR A19 would be applicable to the service of the 36 Inf Bn in the Congo.'<sup>9</sup>

Lt Col McNamee did not at any time submit any additional names to those already on his 1962 list of recommendations from the 35 Inf Bn for consideration for the 1965 Medals Board.<sup>10</sup>

### ***Lt Col McNamee's Recommendations***

As recorded in Chapter 9, 35 Inf Bn's Unit History which was completed in February 1964, cited 'numerous examples of high morale, outstanding bravery, courage, and devotion to duty, by members of the unit during Sept - Dec '61.'<sup>11</sup>

Unusually amongst ONUC Unit Histories, it explicitly stated that recommendations for awards of recognition were made in February 1962 in the following classes:

- Award of Bonn Míleata Calmachta: 6 Officers, 11 NCOs and 5 Privates: 22.
- Recognition of Meritorious Service: 8 Officers 16 NCOs and 19 Privates: 43.
- Promotions: 5 NCOs and 3 Privates: 8.

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<sup>7</sup> MA, box, 'Jadotville Medal Queries', Lt Col Caseley to Col Cooney, 24 May 1965.

<sup>8</sup> MA, Medals Board, Box 1, folder 'Medals Board 1965', Lt Col Caseley, May 1965.

<sup>9</sup> MA, Medal Board, Box 2, 'Recommendations for Awards under DFR A19 Part V, 36 IR Bn ONUC Nov 1961 – May 1962', 26 November 1965.

<sup>10</sup> MA, box, 'Jadotville Medal Queries', 'Recommendations for Distinguished Service Medal', undated and unsigned handwritten memorandum.

<sup>11</sup> MA, Unit History, 35 Inf Bn, p. 29.

As the Distinguished Service Medal had yet to be instituted (it was not instituted until 8 February 1964), at this juncture, no member of 'A' Company was recommended for consideration for the Distinguished Service Medal.

Chapter 9 also records that when individuals were not selected by the 1962 Medals Board for a Military Medal for Gallantry recommendation, such individuals were subsequently reconsidered by the 1962 Board, for a recommendation for the award of the proposed 'Meritorious Conduct Medal'. Regrettably, in recent years, this has led to a misconception that some individuals from 'A' Company recommended for the Military Medal for Gallantry were, in parallel, also recommended for a second medal.

The Independent Review Group is fully satisfied that the cases of all personnel recommended for consideration of either the Military Medal for Gallantry or the 'Meritorious Conduct Medal' by Lt Col McNamee, were evaluated by the 1962 Medals Board, and were included in the cases considered by the 1965 Medals Board.

Unfortunately, in recent years, there has been a misinterpretation in some quarters, including Defence Forces Headquarters that personnel of 'A' Company were actually recommended for the award of the Distinguished Service Medal by Lt Col McNamee.

The accurate situation is that such personnel were recommended for either the Military Medal for Gallantry, or for recognition of meritorious service by Lt Col McNamee. Such personnel were considered for the Military Medal for Gallantry and the 'Meritorious Conduct Medal' by the 1962 Medals Board, and all such personnel were subsequently considered for the Distinguished Service Medal by the 1965 Medals Board.

### ***Assembly of 1965 Medals Board***

The 1965 Medals Board convened, as instructed, on 24 June 1965. The Medals Board was to 'examine all recommendations submitted to it by an tÁrd Aidiúnach for the award of An Bonn Seirbhíse Dearsna.'<sup>12</sup> The Deputy Adjutant-General Colonel John Byrne minuted on 30 July 1965 that the Medals Board 'will take a considerable time to complete its deliberations due to the volume of work involved.'<sup>13</sup>

### ***Initial Recommendations***

On commencement, the 1965 Medals Board had before it 156 initial recommendations for consideration for the Distinguished Service Medal.<sup>14</sup> Further initial recommendations for consideration were expected from ONUC, as unit commanders reconsidered their own initial recommendations. Recommendations were also expected from UNFICYP unit commanders as units rotated back to Ireland.<sup>15</sup> The 1965 Medals Board had to look at all the acts being

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<sup>12</sup> MA, box, 'Jadotville Medal Queries', Convening Order signed by Lt Gen MacEoin, 27 May 1965.

<sup>13</sup> MA, DOD, 3/37397, minute by Deputy Adjutant-General, 30 July 1965.

<sup>14</sup> To be dealt with below, these were the 121 cases previously before the 1962 Board, 29 cases received from the 38 Inf Bn, 4 from the 3 Armd Car Sqn, and the individual cases of two Swedish officers, Lindholm and von Bayer, who had been recommended by the 33 Inf Bn but were ineligible for an Irish medal. The Board also noted the award of the MMG to Trooper Browne.

<sup>15</sup> MA, box, 'Jadotville Medal Queries', minute from Lt Col Caseley to Deputy Adjutant-General, 18 August 1965.

recommended for an award in each case, and ‘satisfy itself of the proof of the act or acts and that such an act or acts are sufficiently meritorious to merit an award.’<sup>16</sup>

### ***Criteria***

There were broader problems facing the 1965 Medals Board than the growing number of initial recommendations for consideration before it. Immediately after the introduction of the Distinguished Service Medal, there were ‘no established criteria under which awards for the various headings might be recommended’ and so the 1965 Medals Board had ‘no guide for unit commanders when making recommendations.’<sup>17</sup> A set of standards was required to guide these ‘initial recommendations’ and also the manner of ‘submitting recommendations to An tAire.’<sup>18</sup>

### ***Standing Medals Board***

Separately, there was also ‘no established system of appointing Boards’.<sup>19</sup> ‘A’ Administration Section recommended the constitution of a standing Medals Board of four members – the Director of Plans and Operations as President, the OIC ‘A’ Administration Section and Staff Officer Training Section as members, and Staff Officer ‘A’ Administration Section as Secretary. Further to this, it was proposed that ‘perhaps this Board will consider suggesting changes – the function of A. Aid., C[eann] F[oirne] and An tAire via-a-vis the Board itself.’<sup>20</sup> These remarks highlight a recurring issue and may be seen in the context of the 1964 discussions surrounding the division of responsibility between the Adjutant-General and the Chief of Staff over the award of medals, and the discussion over exactly where the responsibility of the Chief of Staff lay within the process. The 1965 Medals Board being only the third Medals Board established by the Defence Forces since 1922, there was a considerable amount of procedure and practice to be set down and agreed.

### ***Lists of Recommendations***

Reconstructing the material before the 1965 Medals Board was a challenging task for the Independent Review Group. No full collated set of medal recommendations for consideration by the 1965 Medals Board exists. Piecing together the partial remaining papers from across a range of collections in Military Archives suggests that the 1965 Medals Board had three lists of names before it:

- List of individuals recommended for considerations for the Military Medal for Gallantry in 1962, and now submitted in 1965 for the Distinguished Service Medal only. Containing 22 names, all from the 35 Inf Bn.
- ‘Recommendations for Award of Distinguished Service Medal’. Containing 120 names, covering Congo units from 1960 to 1961, ending with the 36 Inf Bn.
- ‘Recommendations for Award of Distinguished Service Medal (Second List)’. The version of this list found in Military Archives, shows it was a working list consisting of

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<sup>16</sup> MA, DOD, 3/37397, minute, 4 May 1966.

<sup>17</sup> MA, box, ‘Jadotville Medal Queries’, ‘Distinguished Service Medal’, undated memorandum for Col Shortall by Riar ‘A’, probably post-June 1965.

<sup>18</sup> MA, box, ‘Jadotville Medal Queries’, ‘Distinguished Service Medal’, undated memorandum for Col Shortall by Riar ‘A’, probably post-June 1965.

<sup>19</sup> MA, box, ‘Jadotville Medal Queries’, ‘Distinguished Service Medal’, undated memorandum for Col Shortall by Riar ‘A’, probably post-June 1965.

<sup>20</sup> Adjutant-General, Chief of Staff and Minister for Defence.



209 names from ONUC units up to 1964, which included further names submitted from pre 1962 units.<sup>21</sup> This third list subsequently expanded with the inclusion of additional names as the Medals Board conducted its work, and additional recommendations were placed before it for consideration.

All lists before the 1965 Medals Board were not lists of medals to be awarded, they were lists of initial recommendations from unit commanders for consideration for the possible award of a medal. Being named on any one of these documents, did not entitle an individual to a medal. No individual had a right to a Distinguished Service Medal. Medals had to be awarded through initial recommendation for consideration submitted by unit commanders and subsequent recommendations by the Medals Board to the Minister for Defence for his approval of the award. Some names appeared more than once across the lists and they were noted as duplicates.

The three lists detailed the series of individual recommendation files before the 1965 Medals Board:

- The 'former Military Medal for Gallantry list' covered files 1A to 22A,
- The first Distinguished Service Medal list files 1 to 120, and
- The second Distinguished Service Medal list files 200 to 409.

No use seems to have been made of numbers 121 to 199. In adopting this style, it was easy to know immediately on what list an individual recommendation for consideration was located. The eight names on Lt Col McNamee's promotions list do not appear on these 1965 lists. Nor do the names of two senior officers recommended later in 1965 and 1966 for the award of the Distinguished Service Medal: Col Justin MacCarthy and Lt Gen Seán MacEoin.<sup>22</sup>

The number of recommendations for consideration before the 1965 Medals Board at any one time is hard to capture beyond the numbers given in these three lists. Names were continually being added to the third list through 1965 and into 1966. By August 1965, the Medals Board had 188 cases before it. These were the original 121, plus additional recommendations for consideration from the 32, 33 and 34 Inf Bns. Letters from 1965 from unit commanders back up the inference that the second list was a working document that grew as additional recommendations were submitted through the second half of 1965. For example, eighty-two additional names from the 36 Inf Bn were submitted by 26 November 1965.<sup>23</sup> However, as Lt Col McNamee elected not to add any additional names to his 1962 lists, all 35 Inf Bn's recommendations for consideration for medals appear on the lists '1A-22A' and '1-120'. Unlike other unit commanders, Lt Col McNamee did not appear to consider it necessary to review his recommendations for awards.

### ***Working Guide – Classes of Distinguished Service Medal***

In July 1965, the Adjutant-General's Branch issued, under Lt Col Caseley's name, a one-page memorandum of 'working rules and definitions' on award criteria in response to queries from officers who had commanded ONUC units, who had difficulties defining the concepts for which

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<sup>21</sup> This matter will be dealt with below. Some units, such as the 37 Inf Bn, submitted no medal recommendations at all.

<sup>22</sup> Col McCarthy was recommended by Lt Col Ferdia Lee on 21 June 1965, Lt Gen MacEoin was recommended by Col James J. Quinn on 10 October 1966.

<sup>23</sup> MA, Medals Board, Box 2, Comdt Griffin to Lt Col Caseley, 26 November 1965.

the Distinguished Service Medal was being awarded.<sup>24</sup> The memorandum included a paragraph that the 1965 Medals Board had itself proposed and adopted a ‘working guide’ on the three classes of the medal under consideration, namely the Distinguished Service Medal.

<b>Working Guide for Award of Three Classes of Distinguished Service Medal<sup>25</sup></b>	
1st Class	For <b>Acts</b> (Bravery, Courage)
2nd Class	For <b>Leadership</b> and for acts or service meriting awards but not coming within the awards of 1st or 3rd Class
3rd Class	For <b>Service</b> (Resource, Devotion to Duty)

Defining the criteria for award for the 1st Class and 2nd Class Distinguished Service Medal was not problematic. Defining devotion to duty for the 3rd Class Distinguished Service Medal remained a particular problem. The memorandum explained that ‘there will be a wide variation of opinion in what constitutes “devotion to duty” when meriting an award.’ A working rule on ‘devotion to duty’ that the 1965 Medals Board adopted was that it referred to ‘a service period during which a man displays outstanding attention to the performance of his duties, and sets an example to others.’ The 1965 Medals Board qualified this adding that for a tour of duty overseas ‘the individual’s service before the period must be taken into account particularly his military conduct assessment.’ As a result, a working guideline of 5% of a unit was suggested as a limit for the number of recommendations to be submitted under the heading of ‘devotion to duty’. Unit commanders had until 16 August 1965 to submit their recommendations, and were instructed that the expressions in the memorandum were ‘offered as a guide and are not to be taken, at this time, as a firm official attitude.’<sup>26</sup> There was no firm official attitude.

An undated and unsigned memorandum titled ‘Distinguished Service Medal’, offered as a basis for discussion, provided further ‘criteria on which to base awards’ under the various headings mentioned in the regulations for the medal. The memorandum returned to the question of what constituted bravery or courage under the headings of individual action, associated actions (i.e. group actions), leadership, resourcefulness and devotion to duty. The memorandum suggested that awards of the Distinguished Service Medal should be made in the following form:

<b>Class of Award of Distinguished Service Medal by Action<sup>27</sup></b>	
Individual	DSM Class 1 or DSM Class 2
Associated	DSM Class 1 or DSM Class 2
Leadership	DSM Class 1 or DSM Class 2
Resources	DSM Class 3
Devotion to Duty	DSM Class 3

The memorandum noted that ‘determining a Class of award would depend on the degree of danger and perhaps on the experience of the performer’ and it made the significant point that a Medals Board must ‘consider how to award medals. A vote by participants, [or] a fixed number

<sup>24</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 11NFGP, 1/8, ‘Medals and Decorations’, Lt Col Caseley, 15 July 1965.

<sup>25</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 11NFGP, 1/8, ‘Medals and Decorations’, Lt Col Caseley, 15 July 1965.

<sup>26</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 11NFGP, 1/8, ‘Medals and Decorations’, Lt Col Caseley, 15 July 1965.

<sup>27</sup> MA, box, ‘Jadotville Medal Queries’, Distinguished Service Medal, undated and unsigned.

on basis of strength involved. 1 in 10, 2 in 50, 3 in 100.<sup>28</sup> How these two systems of criteria were actually implemented is unclear, but they show explicitly the conceptual problem of the grounds on which to make awards on devotion to duty which faced the 1965 Medals Board.

By the time Dáil Éireann was reconvening after the summer 1965 recess, the 1965 Medals Board had made little progress. The reasons given for this included ‘the number of recommendations, necessity of care in considering each case and the availability at this time of the year of all members of the Board.’<sup>29</sup> However, a Department of Defence minute added that, though formed on 24 June, the Medals Board had by 18 August only met for ‘eight days or part thereof.’<sup>30</sup>

### ***Devotion to Duty***

By October 1965, there was a ‘considerable divergence of opinion’ between board members regarding the purpose of the award of the Distinguished Service Medal. The problem of definition of devotion to duty remained, and had already been pointed out by unit commanders. Commandant Joseph Foley, OC 2 Armoured Car Squadron, expressed the problem succinctly when asked in May 1965 to put forward recommendations for awards:

I had great difficulty in assessing personnel that I had in mind as I had no standard to work from. I feel that although certain individuals were excellent in their appointments, that it was for this very reason that they were originally selected. I therefore came to the conclusion that although certain individuals performed their duties in an excellent manner and set a good example, I would only be recommending the award of this medal for exemplary conduct. I would respectfully suggest that a medal of lower merit, could, with advantage, be struck to cover a great deal of people who otherwise will go unrecognised.

However, if it is felt that I may be too harsh in my assessment in comparison to other units, I am prepared to forward the names of personnel that I feel should be considered.<sup>31</sup>

Exemplary conduct was not, in Comdt Foley’s view, enough to earn a Distinguished Service Medal. He initially submitted no medal recommendations for the personnel of the 2 Armoured Car Squadron.<sup>32</sup> Lt Col Pearse Barry, OC 40 Inf Bn, the Defence Force’s first UNFICYP battalion, felt that ‘perhaps “devotion to duty” needs clarification ... giving an award under this heading detracts from an award under “bravery” or “courage”. Under “devotion to duty” a battalion could have up to 80-100 for award.’<sup>33</sup> Devotion to duty was also a real problem to Lt Col Barry. Was a recommendation to refer to ‘devotion well above the normal call of duty’, such might be grounds for an award? He felt that ‘while “devotion to duty” is included in the DFR, the whole question of awards is in my opinion wide open and perhaps these words would be better left out of the relevant regulation.’ Lt Col Barry was ‘all in favour of the making of awards

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<sup>28</sup> MA, box, ‘Jadotville Medal Queries’, Distinguished Service Medal, undated and unsigned.

<sup>29</sup> MA, DOD, 3/37397, minute, 11 August 1965.

<sup>30</sup> MA, DOD, 3/37397, minute, 18 August 1965.

<sup>31</sup> MA, box, ‘Jadotville Medal Queries’, 16 August 1965.

<sup>32</sup> Foley later submitted two recommendations for consideration. See below.

<sup>33</sup> MA, box, ‘Jadotville Medal Queries’, Lt Col Barry to OIF Riar ‘A’, 26 June 1965.

and of thus building up spirit and tradition, but so as not to detract from the value and merit of an award.’ He made the valid point that perhaps an award to a soldier who showed ‘excessive (sic) “devotion to duty” would come under “meritorious service” for which there is no medal’. Comdt Foley discussed this issue with Colonel Dan Fitzgerald, OC 2 Brigade, who agreed and commented further that in the 2 Armoured Car Squadron:

all ranks of the Unit performed satisfactorily. The devotion to duty, of some, was naturally better than others and as in all Units the exceptional few gave that little bit extra ... in fact Comdt Foley feels that a recommendation based on the Unit’s activities would be tantamount to granting a medal for good conduct.<sup>34</sup>

### ***Unit Commanders’ Conference: 15 October 1965***

So ‘to obtain some form of uniformity on the matter of distinguished service a conference of all ONUC unit commanders was held in the Department of Defence on 15 October 1965.<sup>35</sup> At this meeting, at which Lt Col McNamee was present, ‘all Commanding Officers concerned with service in the Congo discussed in a general way the criteria being followed by the Board.’<sup>36</sup> Unit commanders with one exception, of units which had served with UNFICYP were also present.

Col Shortall opened the meeting. He explained that the 1962 Medals Board had been handicapped by having only one instituted medal to award, namely the Military Medal for Gallantry. He also referred to recent Dáil questions about the progress of the 1965 Medals Board.<sup>37</sup> Col Shortall explained that ‘awards always cause differences, individual opinions - endless variations of opinion.’<sup>38</sup> The 1965 Medals Board had consulted in cases where it was possible, most differences in opinion were regarding third class awards: the ‘devotion to duty’ issue referred to above. Some units had made no submissions and Col Shortall wanted to know if they would like to make some now.<sup>39</sup> OC 2 Inf Gp, Lt Col Redmond O’Sullivan explained that he had made none initially but now felt that some were necessary and maybe others wanted to do the same. He noted that public opinion wanted medals awarded. Lt Col O’Sullivan was a member of the 1965 Medals Board.

Lt Col Caseley also explained the difficulties facing the 1965 Medals Board. Firstly, the statements submitted to support recommendations for consideration were ‘too brief in most cases [and there was a] need for more detail and supporting statements - documentation [was] important’. He continued that a ‘list of names [was] not sufficient’ and ‘if necessary, names should be put in order of priority’. The 1965 Medals Board was ‘trying to set standards’ for future unit commanders. Lt Col Caseley concluded they were ‘anxious [to] finish [the] job’ and any further recommendations were to be made as quickly as possible.

### ***Insufficient Evidence***

It was already clear from Colonel Cogan’s letter to the Chief of Staff in 1962 that unit commanders had sent in insufficient evidence to process recommendations and had not ranked

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<sup>34</sup> MA, box, ‘Jadotville Medal Queries’, Mac Gearailt to OIC Ceann O, 28 August 1965.

<sup>35</sup> MA, box, ‘Jadotville Medal Queries’, Lt Col Caseley to OIC Ceann O, Ceann D, CTC, Aer Chór, Cft Mil Col, 7 October 1965.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> See *Dáil Éireann Debates*, 21 July 1965 for questions on the award of medals raised during the Defence Estimates debate with specific relation to the 1962 and 1965 Medals Boards.

<sup>38</sup> MA, box, ‘Jadotville Medal Queries’, handwritten minutes of meeting, 15 October 1965.

<sup>39</sup> The 37 Inf Bn Battalion made no submissions at any point.

their submissions by order of merit for decoration.<sup>40</sup> The issue remained unresolved in 1965. The criteria for the Distinguished Service Medal itself, particularly the Distinguished Service Medal 3rd Class also remained unclear. If the Board was seeking to establish precedent, then it would wish to do so from recommendations where there was a clear case for an award.

While an individual may well have fought bravely and courageously, and have shown true devotion to duty, if the recommendation at unit level for an award failed to contain sufficient detail, was incomplete or lacked focus, a Medals Board could not be expected to recommend an award. Indeed, such recommendations should not have been placed before the 1962, or of 1965 Medals Boards, but should have been returned to those initiating the recommendations as soon as they were checked. It is surprising that the Adjutant-General's Branch, who had the main responsibility for this, waited until the 1965 Medals Board had commenced its work to draw attention to this problem.

When it came to specific details, many recommendations were too general or too vague. A note on the 22 additional recommendations received from the 32 Inf Bn in 1965 read damningly: '(1) No individual forms (2) Skimpy report in 11 cases (3) impossible to make individual files.'<sup>41</sup> Such cases too should have been weeded out, but they were not. Often, such recommendations covered a routine action carried out with absolute devotion to duty, but which was perhaps not truly above the ordinary.

There is no evidence on file of any additional information being provided to the 1965 Medals Board in respect of personnel from the 35 Inf Bn, though in some cases it was suggested that it be provided. In setting a high standard for the award of medals, the Adjutant-General had a responsibility to ensure the recommendations that were presented to the Medals Board met the required standard. This could not be said to have been achieved in many of the recommendations seen by the Independent Review Group.

### ***Draft Report – November 1965***

After the 15 October meeting, some progress was made by the 1965 Medals Board. On 22 October 1965, Lt Col Caseley told Rannóg 7 in the Department of Defence that the Medals Board was 'compiling a roll of personnel recommended for awards; preparing citations and awaiting additional material on some cases.'<sup>42</sup> He suggested that this additional material would be with the Medals Board by mid-November. After a conference held at the Adjutant-General's Office on 30 October 1965, it emerged that the Medals Board was 'under considerable pressure to complete its investigations and to submit its report.'<sup>43</sup> The final date for the submission of recommendations from Congo service was set as 30 November 1965. If nothing further was heard from unit commanders by this date, it was 'assumed that you have no further recommendations to make.'<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> See Chapter 9.

<sup>41</sup> MA, Medals Board, Box 2, '32nd Bn', minute, undated and unsigned.

<sup>42</sup> MA, DOD, 3/37397, minute, 22 October 1965.

<sup>43</sup> MA, box, 'Jadotville Medal Queries', Col Shortall to Lt Col McNamee, 15 November 1965.

<sup>44</sup> MA, box, 'Jadotville Medal Queries', Col Shortall to Lt Col McNamee, 15 November 1965.

The 1965 Medals Board was evaluating recommendations for one medal, the Distinguished Service Medal, and it could award the medal in one of three classes. There were no Military Medal for Gallantry recommendations before the 1965 Medals Board. By late November 1965, the Medals Board had a draft report ready to submit proposing thirty-three names for recommendation for the award of the Distinguished Service Medal. These names are shown in the table below. They are drawn only from names that were on the first two lists of recommendations for consideration before the 1965 Medals Board.

Little remains of the papers generated by the 1965 Medals Board about the methodology used when considering what would become the initial 142 recommendations made to it, including those from Lt Col McNamee for the 35 Inf Bn. The draft report is the only summary of the 1965 Medals Board's first period of its deliberations. The draft report captures the intentions of the 1965 Medals Board, before it received over 200 further submissions in November and December 1965.

Of the thirty-three Distinguished Service Medals recommended by this draft report, fourteen came from the 35 Inf Bn; next came the 1 Inf Gp and the 33 Inf Bn with six Distinguished Service Medals each. Seven had been on Lt Col McNamee's original 1962 list for a Military Medal for Gallantry, one of whom, Sergeant Walter Hegarty had fought at Jadotville. Five of the thirty-three recommendations for the Distinguished Service Medal were in respect of individuals from 'A' Company, 35 Inf Bn.

Of those on the Military Medal for Gallantry list who were then considered for the 'Meritorious Conduct Medal', the only absentee on the draft 1965 Medals Board report from 'A' Company was CS Jack Prendergast. CS Prendergast was widely considered in 1961 and by many veterans interviewed by the Independent Review Group in 2021, as an exemplary soldier and comrade. A Medals Board, most likely that in 1965, considered his recommendation but felt that 'more direct evidence [was] required'.<sup>45</sup> There is no indication that additional evidence was provided to or sought by the Medals Board.

One soldier who progressed positively through the 1965 Medals Board process was Sgt Michael Rowland, Armd Car Gp, 35 Inf Bn, who had originally been recommended for the Military Medal for Gallantry. He was not considered for a 'Meritorious Conduct Medal by the 1962 Medals Board, but his recommendation for an award was before the 1965 Medals Board, and ultimately Sgt Rowland received a Distinguished Service Medal 2nd Class.

The 1965 Medals Board would ultimately decide not to award eight of the Distinguished Service Medals it listed in its draft report. These are also shown in the table below. Two of the eight were from the 35 Inf Bn, both from 'A' Company. It should be noted that one of these two from 'A' Company was an illegal absentee at the time that the 1965 Medals Board was making decisions. The other 'A' Company individual's recommendation was for action in Elisabethville. The submission of additional recommendations also caused the 1965 Medals Board to lower the class of award it had originally recommended in five other cases, one of which was a member of 'A' Company.

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<sup>45</sup> MA, Service Record CS Prendergast.



**Draft Working Copy of 1965 Medals Board's Recommendations for Award.**  
**Undated, but October to December 1965.**  
**Based on the '1A-22A' and '1 to 120' files list.**  
**Personnel from 'A' Company, 35 Inf Bn, in BOLD**

No.	Rank	Name	DSM Class on draft report	Ultimate DSM Class awarded (Nov 1966)	Home Unit (as per list)	Parent Command	ONUC Battalion /Group	Medals Board file No.
1	Capt	Arthur Magennis	1	1	4 Motor Squadron	Curragh	35	3A
2	Cpl	John Kavanagh	1	2	1 Field Engineer Company	Southern	35	15A
3	Cpl	Charles Connolly	1	1	No 2 Hospital Company	Eastern	36	120
4	Lt Col	Patrick Barry	2	2	4 Inf Bn	Southern	33	63
5	Comdt	Henry Gouldsborough	2		HQ Southern Command	Southern	33	66
6	Comdt	Joseph Fitzpatrick	2	2	Command Training Centre	Eastern	36	117
7	Capt	James Flynn	2	2	Command Training Centre	Curragh	33	73
8	Capt	Roger McCorley	2	2	1 Tank Squadron	Curragh	35	5A
9	Capt	John Kissane	2		1 Inf Bn	Western	32	113
<b>10</b>	<b>Lt</b>	<b>Thomas Quinlan</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Military College</b>	<b>Curragh</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>8</b>
11	Lt	Anthony Murphy	2	2	8 Inf Bn (FCA)	Eastern	1Inf	48
12	Capt	John Norton	2	2	McKee Barracks Company	Eastern	36	118
<b>13</b>	<b>Sgt</b>	<b>Walter Hegarty</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1 Inf Bn</b>	<b>Western</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>9A</b>
14	Sgt	Patrick McCormack	2	3	4 Garrison Ordnance Coy	Western	33	86
15	Sgt Maj	Patrick Norris	2	2	2 Inf Bn	Eastern	35	8A

16	Sgt	George Shaughnessy	2	2	4 Motor Squadron	Curragh	35	14A
17	Sgt	Michael Rowland	2	2	1 Motor Squadron	Southern	35	13A
18	Pte	Anthony Connolly	2	2	1 Field Signal Company	Southern	33	88
19	<b>Cpl</b>	<b>John McManus</b>	2		<b>4 Garrison Company MPC</b>	<b>Western</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>40</b>
20	Cpl	Patrick Gregan	2	2	5 Inf Bn	Eastern	36	119
21	Cpl	M. O'Sullivan	2		Depot Signals	Curragh	1Inf	52
22	<b>Pte</b>	<b>Michael Tighe</b>	2		<b>6 Inf Bn</b>	<b>Western</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>41</b>
23	Cpl	John Keenan	2	3	Air Corps, Gormanston	Air Corps	1Inf	54
24	Sgt	Alfred Johnston	2	2	Depot, Engineer Corps	Curragh	32	No file
25	<b>Pte</b>	<b>James Feery</b>	2	3	<b>6 Inf Bn</b>	<b>Western</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>44</b>
26	Comdt	Thomas Moynihan	3		Depot AOC	Eastern	1Inf	45
27	Comdt	Seán Garvey	3		19 Inf Bn	Western	34	106
28	Sgt	William Hartley	3	3	Depot, Cavalry Corps	Curragh	35	11
29	CS	William McLoughlin	3	2	1 Field Engineer Company	Southern	1Inf	51
30	Sgt	John O'Reilly	3	3	4 Field Engineer Company	Western	33	95
31	Pte	Patrick Wall	3	3	13 Inf Bn (FCA)	Southern	35	39
32	Cpl	Aiden Doyle	3	3	CTD, Southern Command	Southern	1Inf	56
33	Pte	Christopher Doolan	3	3	3 Inf Bn	Curragh	35	37

Breaking down the recommendations for awards by Commands produces a noticeable result in that the 1965 Medals Board in its ‘draft’ report based on 142 recommendations for consideration sought to award decorations equally across Defence Forces Command areas.

If the objective was to ensure no one Command saw itself superior in medal awards, it showed little regard for individual service.

<b>Draft 1965 Medals Board Report broken down by Commands<sup>46</sup></b>	
Curragh Command	9
Southern Command	8
Western Command	8
Eastern Command	7
Air Corps	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>

The draft report of the 1965 Medals Board did not ignore ‘A’ Company 35 Inf Bn, nor did it ignore Jadotville as the table below shows. Five individuals from ‘A’ Company were recommended by the board for the award of Distinguished Service Medals, three explicitly for acts in Jadotville.

<b>‘A’ Company 35 Inf Bn</b>	<b>Recommended for Action In</b>
Sgt Walter Hegarty	Jadotville, Elisabethville (and for service with 32 Inf Bn)
Lt Tom Quinlan	Jadotville, Elisabethville
Cpl John McManus	Elisabethville
Pte James Feery	Elisabethville
Pte Michael Tighe	Elisabethville, with reference also to Jadotville

A comparison between the interim recommendations for the ‘Meritorious Conduct Medal’ made by the 1962 Medals Board, and the draft recommendations for the Distinguished Service Medal made by the 1965 Medals Board in November/December 1965, shows the difference between the outlook of the two boards. Both Medals Boards were working from the same set of files and recommendations, albeit for different medals. Comparing the results for ‘A’ Company, 35 Inf Bn in both cases should show if there was any noticeable ‘Jadotville Effect’.

Working from the 1962 ‘Meritorious Conduct Medal’ recommendations list, the most obvious omission on the 1965 draft list remains CS Jack Prendergast. Recommended initially for consideration for a Military Medal for Gallantry which was not awarded, subsequently recommended for consideration by the 1962 Medals Board for a ‘Meritorious Conduct Medal 2nd Class’, CS Prendergast was subsequently not recommended for any award by the 1965 Medals Board.

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<sup>46</sup> MA, Medals Board, Box 1, ‘Recommendations of Military Board for Award of DSM’.

Lt Thomas Quinlan and Sgt Walter Hegarty were each recommended for a 'Meritorious Conduct Medal 2nd Class' by the 1962 Medals Board. Sgt Hegarty had first been recommended, unsuccessfully, for consideration for the Military Medal for Gallantry, and each ultimately was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal 2nd Class in 1965.

Pte Michael Tighe was recommended by the 1962 Medals Board for a 'Meritorious Conduct Medal 2nd Class', and also for a Distinguished Service Medal by both iterations of the 1965 Medals Board, but he was an illegal absentee at the time of the award, and did not receive it.

Finally, there are the four cases of Pte Noel Stanley, Pte James Nicell, Pte Daniel Molloy and Pte Thomas Flynn. Both Pte Flynn and Pte Stanley were recommended for the 'Meritorious Conduct Medal 3rd Class' by the 1962 Medals Board. Their recommendations specifically related to action in Jadotville. Pte Nicell and Pte Molloy likewise, but this time for acts specifically related to the fighting in Elisabethville in December 1961. No one of the four was subsequently recommended by the 1965 Medals Board in either of its consideration processes for a Distinguished Service Medal.

It should be noted that five other soldiers from the 35 Inf Bn, recommended for the 'Meritorious Conduct Medal' were likewise recommended by the 1962 Medals Board for this medal. However, they did not receive a recommendation for the Distinguished Service Medal from the 1965 Medals Board, in its first and second iterations. In total, ten of the 1962 Medals Board's twenty-three 'Meritorious Conduct Medal' recommendations were not recommended for the Distinguished Service Medal by the 1965 Medals Board in either its initial list of cases (142), or its later expanded list of cases.

These figures show that it was not a case of automatically pushing to one side those who had recommendations for acts in Jadotville.

The issue here is the substance of the recommendations before the 1965 Medals Board and, in particular, the actual assessment of an action meriting an award. This does not in any way reflect on the professional ability and conduct of each man. It is an observation on the medals award process, the manner in which recommendations were initially written, and the level of detail included in each recommendation.

Comparison between the provisional recommendations of the 1962 Medals Board, the draft 1965 Medals Board recommendations, and the final 1965 Medals Board recommendations. Personnel from 'A' Company 35 Inf Bn in BOLD.										
No.	Rank	Name	Initial (unsuccessful) MMG Recommendation	'MCM' Recommendation <sup>47</sup>	DSM Medal Class on draft from Oct-Nov 1965	DSM Class Final Class	Home Unit (as per list)	Parent Command	ONUC Battalion	Board file
1	Comdt	A.J. Beckett		2			No 3 Hospital Company	Southern	33	64
2	Capt	Michael Purfield	Yes	2		2	2 S & T Company	Eastern	35	6A
3	Sgt	J. Daly		1		3	4 Brigade HQ	Western	ONUC HQ	60
4	Capt	C.B. Brown		1		2	Base Workshops S&T	Eastern	ONUC HQ	59
5	Cpl	Edward Nolan		1		3	1 Armoured Squadron	Curragh	ONUC HQ	62
6	Cpl	W. Whelan		1			CTD	Southern	ONUC HQ	61
7	<b>CS</b>	<b>Jack Prendergast</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>2</b>			<b>6 Inf Bn</b>	<b>Western</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>10A</b>
8	Sgt	M. Maher	Yes	2			CTD,	Southern	35	11A
9	Capt	J. Flynn		3	2	2	CC CTC	Curragh	33	73
10	<b>Lt</b>	<b>Thomas Quinlan</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Military College</b>	<b>Curragh</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>8</b>
11	<b>Sgt</b>	<b>Walter Hegarty</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1 Inf Bn</b>	<b>Western</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>9A</b>
12	Sgt Maj	Patrick Norris	Yes	2	2	2	2 Inf Bn	Eastern	35	8A
13	Sgt	George Shaughnessy	Yes	2	2	2	4 Motor Squadron	Curragh	35	14A
14	<b>Pte</b>	<b>Michael Tighe</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3<sup>48</sup></b>	<b>6 Inf Bn</b>	<b>Western</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>41</b>
15	C/S	William McLoughlin		3	3	2	1 Field Engineer Coy	Southern	1 Inf Gp	51
16	Sgt	John O'Reilly		3	3	3	4 Field Engineer Coy	Western	33	95
17	Cpl	Aiden Doyle		3	3	3	CTD	Southern	1 Inf Gp	56
18	<b>Pte</b>	<b>Noel Stanley</b>		<b>3</b>			<b>6 Inf Bn</b>	<b>Western</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>30</b>
19	<b>Pte</b>	<b>James Nicell</b>		<b>3</b>			<b>6 Inf Bn</b>	<b>Western</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>43</b>
20	<b>Pte</b>	<b>Daniel Molloy</b>		<b>3</b>			<b>6 Inf Bn</b>	<b>Western</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>42</b>
21	<b>Pte</b>	<b>Thomas Flynn</b>		<b>3</b>			<b>1 Inf Bn</b>	<b>Western</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>31</b>
22	Comdt	P. Keogh		3			2 Motor Sqn	Eastern	33/1 Inf Gp	49/68
23	Rev	Fr J. Clarke		3			Air Corps, Gormanston	Air Corps	35	2

<sup>47</sup> If recommended for MMG this 'MCM' recommendation is after consideration of the MMG and a decision not to award, rather than in addition to and MMG.

<sup>48</sup> Not awarded.

***Additional Recommendations – November 1965***

A total of 218 recommendations, all from ONUC service, were submitted for consideration from August 1965.<sup>49</sup> Eighty-two came from the 36 Inf Bn. Even Comdt Foley of the 2 Arm Car Sqn, who was initially reluctant to submit any names, submitted Father John Condon and Sgt Thomas Maguire each for consideration for a Distinguished Service Medal. These additional recommendations for consideration were by 30 November 1965 'being dealt with, to be included in the overall submissions to An tAire.'<sup>50</sup> The Department of Defence anticipated that these 'recommendations may have a bearing on some cases already examined.'<sup>51</sup> The draft report based on 142 cases synopsised above shows that this was indeed the case as some names on it were not on the final 1965 Medals Board report and some were downgraded.

The 1965 Medals Board would not report to the Minister for Defence until all the cases before them were evaluated. This is an important point, as it suggests that whatever conclusions the 1965 Medals Board had already come to by late 1965 would be reworked as a result, and that the Board perhaps did not want to be seen to award a large number of medals.

The surviving documentation shows that the 1965 Medals Board had by November 1965 concluded its deliberations over the initial names submitted to it, which included those from the 35 Inf Bn. The Board's Secretary Comdt Neill wrote to Officers' Records Section on 22 November, looking 'as a matter of urgency' for updated service numbers, ranks, names and units of fourteen officers from the 1962 submissions, including Capt Art Magennis, Armd Car Gp, 35 Inf Bn, who was recommended by the 1965 Medals Board for a Distinguished Service Medal 1st Class, and Lt Tom Quinlan 'A' Company, 35 Inf Bn who was recommended for a Distinguished Service Medal 2nd Class.<sup>52</sup>

There were also other names on the list, such as Comdt Henry Gouldsbrough (33 Inf Bn) and Comdt John Garvey (34 Inf Bn) who ultimately did not receive awards, but who appear for a decoration on the draft 1965 Medals Board report. They both also appear on an undated later document titled 'For Review' in which Comdt Gouldsbrough was approved, but Comdt Garvey was not. A further 35 Inf Bn name on the 22 November list and the 'For Review' list was Capt Michael Purfield, whose file was numbered '6A', showing it came from the 1962 Military Medal for Gallantry recommendations, who was initially turned down for a Distinguished Service Medal, and later approved for recommendation for a Distinguished Service Medal 2nd Class.<sup>53</sup> Names seem to have gone on and off the list of approved recommendations over the course of the 1965 Medals Board's work and no reason other than an ongoing process of consideration and recommendation explains this.

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<sup>49</sup> Some ONUC battalions reconvened their recommendations boards at this point and reconsidered their recommendations for award. For example, the 36 Inf Bn did so on 21 October 1965. This figure includes the 209 on the 'Second List'.

<sup>50</sup> MA, DOD, 3/37397, minute by Lt Col Caseley to Rannóg 7, Department of Defence, 30 November 1965.

<sup>51</sup> MA, DOD, 3/37397, minute, 7 December 1965.

<sup>52</sup> MA, box, 'Jadotville Medal Queries', Comdt Neill to Officers' Records, Department of Defence, 22 November 1965.

<sup>53</sup> Father Joseph Fagan, Chaplain to 'A' Company at Jadotville was on the review list, but for service with the 35 Inf Bn. Fr Fagan did not make it past the review process.



### ***Limited Progress***

Christmas 1965 came and went. When inquiries were made in April 1966, by the Department of Defence on progress, the 1965 Medals Board still had not reported, at which stage members of the Board were 'deeply involved in Easter Commemoration Ceremonies.'<sup>54</sup> The Board hoped to deliver its recommendations for awards after Easter 1966, a position noted by the office of the Minister for Defence, and seen by Minister for Defence Michael Hilliard TD on 14 April 1966.

### ***Conduct and Tours of Overseas Duty***

The 1965 Medals Board assessed recommendations for consideration for an award for each individual based on the prescribed pro-forma, and details of the act undertaken. Once it was provisionally decided to award a Distinguished Service Medal, the individual's conduct assessment was considered, together with the number of his overseas service tours. This was important in making a final decision, although the number of tours of duty undertaken was never the sole reason an individual might receive an award. The 1965 Medals Board also noted each individual's conduct assessment and military ability in their deliberations (for example: 'Exemplary', 'Excellent', 'Very Good', 'Good' and in one case 'Unsatisfactory' [in respect of a corporal reduced in rank to a private]).<sup>55</sup> Unfortunately, nearly all the 1965 Medals Board's documentation that remains in Military Archives is undated, but 'Medal File' numbers give an indication from which stage in the process the document is most likely from.

There are multiple copies of draft citations. Some are for individuals who were not ultimately awarded medals. In one case, this was due to an individual from 'A' Company, 35 Inf Bn posted 'at present absent'.<sup>56</sup> In other cases, it is for individuals who were, apparently, at the last minute taken off the list. None of these latter cases were from 'A' Company, 35 Inf Bn.

### ***Preparation of Report***

By July 1966, the Board was having draft lists of awardees typed, but there was no formal end in sight to its work. The Deputy Adjutant-General Col John Byrne wrote to the President of the Medals Board, Col Shortall, on 21 September that a response from the 1965 Medals Board had 'now become urgent'.<sup>57</sup> Col Shortall replied that the 'recommendations of Board of Medals for service in Congo are completed with the exception of two cases which are not finalised pending the receipt of additional information from overseas sources.'<sup>58</sup> 'Noted, thanks. Seen by an tAire', minuted his private secretary.<sup>59</sup>

A month later Col Byrne again asked Col Shortall for a progress report. A note on a routing slip to Col Byrne on 1 November 1966 stated that 'Report of board is now complete and being typed. It will be passed to the convening authority this week.'<sup>60</sup> The convening authority was the Chief of Staff, Lt Gen Seán MacEoin. The routing slip also pointed out that 'the Board President answers to the C[eann] F[oirne]'. Col Shortall signed off on the 1965 Medals Board

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<sup>54</sup> MA, DOD, 3/37397, minute, 4 April 1966.

<sup>55</sup> MA, Medals Board, Box 1, handwritten list of medal awardees, undated.

<sup>56</sup> MA, Medals Board, Box 1, undated handwritten list beginning with Private James Murray.

<sup>57</sup> MA, DOD, 3/37397, Col O'Broin to Col Shortall, 21 September 1966.

<sup>58</sup> MA, DOD, 3/37397, minute, 22 September 1966.

<sup>59</sup> MA, DOD, 3/37397, minute, 28 September 1966.

<sup>60</sup> MA, DOD, 3/37397, minute, 2 November 1966.

report to Lt Gen MacEoin on 10 November 1966, Minister Hilliard having been ‘advised of the position’ the previous day.<sup>61</sup>

***Submission of Report – 10 November 1966***

In his accompanying submission to Lt Gen MacEoin on the 1965 Medals Board’s ‘Report and Recommendations’ Col Shortall explained how he and his colleagues assessed the recommendations before them:

*‘A: 1st Class for acts (Bravery, Courage).*

For award in this class, the Board only considered Recommendations in which evidence of physical bravery and courage was displayed by an individual or group, in an act or action, which entailed grave danger to those performing the act. The act too must be of such a distinguished nature that it set the performer apart from others but still not coming within the terms of paragraph II, Part II – ‘exceptional bravery or gallantry’.

It was conceived by the board that in a position of high authority and responsibility, an individual displaying moral courage or distinction, might also be classified in this category.

*B: 2nd Class for leadership and for acts of service meriting awards but not coming within the awards of 1st Class or 3rd Class.*

The Board felt that it was comparatively easy to categorise acts and service but that the lesser acts of bravery and courage and more distinguished displays of ‘devotion to duty’ and ‘Resource’ should be awarded 2nd class. Leadership as a reason for awarding this class inevitably meant that Officers and NCOs would provide the bulk of recipients.

*C: 3rd Class for Service (Resource and devotion to duty)*

In this class the Board worked on the basis that an award might be made to individuals whose overall service was outstanding in their application to their tasks and set an example to those around them. This view leads to awards in this class being to men generally and so the junior NCO and private whose normal activities give little scope in the exercise of leadership, would not be overlooked. Consequently, awards to officers for this class are not recommended as that standard of service is only to be expected from all officers.<sup>62</sup>

Fighting bravely and with competent skill was to be expected of all men. Being under fire and returning fire was not enough in itself. Officers were expected to show resourcefulness and devotion to duty. It came back to Comdt Foley’s point made in May 1965 that excellence was expected of those chosen, because that was why they were chosen for overseas service in the first place and excellence, in itself, was not enough for a medal.

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<sup>61</sup> MA, DOD, 3/37397, minute by Rúnaí Aire, 9 November 1966.

<sup>62</sup> MA, Medals Board, Box 1, Col Shortall to Lt Gen MacEoin, 10 November 1966.

Col Shortall's covering letter to Lt Gen MacEoin highlighted again two points Col Shortall had already made to the Chief of Staff. The first was that 'since Medals and Decorations are a function of An tArd Aidiúnach, consideration might be given to that officer being the authority for appointing the Board. As it is, the responsibility is split as between An Ceann Foirne and An tArd Aidiúnach.'<sup>63</sup> Since the Chief of Staff had ultimate responsibility for the co-ordination of business at Army Headquarters, it was unlikely he would wish to relinquish this responsibility. In an indication that the process of both the 1962 and 1965 Medals Boards was not what it might have been, Col Shortall recommended 'that a Board of Officers be kept in existence on a permanent basis. This could be done by assigning officers holding definite appointments. This would mean that recommendations could be considered at any time, and in addition continuity and standardization would be established.'<sup>64</sup>

There remained also with the Distinguished Service Medal 'the difficulty of an award which embodied so many features of acts and service.'<sup>65</sup> Even with three classes 'individual cases presented the problem of comparisons – an act of courage versus excellent good service – each getting a Distinguished Service Medal.' The 1965 Medals Board felt that 'more awards seem to be called for and it is recommended that further consideration be given to this'. The Board felt that 'a specific award' was needed for 'long exemplary service.'<sup>66</sup> But it also felt that the recommendations being submitted for consideration by medals boards needed to be based on 'guiding principles on criteria/standards for each award and class of award' in order 'to get officers particularly thinking on similar lines, uniformity in submissions and awards.'

### ***Analysis of Personnel Recommended for Distinguished Service Medal***

Sixty-five personnel were proposed by the 1965 Medals Board to the Minister for Defence for the award of the Distinguished Service Medal for service with ONUC. The medal was to be awarded to eighteen officers, forty NCOs and seven privates.

It is interesting to note that in the case of eighty-five officers, considered by the 1965 Medals Board, no award was made. Their respective ranks were one Colonel, five Lieutenant-Colonels, thirty-one Commandants and forty-eight Captains.<sup>67</sup> Notwithstanding the content of their recommendations, the range and number of non-awards for officers reflects significant moral courage by the 1965 Medals Board, and is indicative of the independence, integrity and credibility expected from Medals Boards.

There is no evidence on paper that any undue influence from any external party was exerted on the 1965 Medals Board. But then there would not be, if this was the case. Some speculated, but none of the Jadotville stakeholders interviewed by the Independent Review Group was able to provide specific proven evidence, that there had been undue external influence on the 1962 or 1965 Medals Boards. An assumption was that there 'had to have been' such influence, perhaps via the Chief of Staff. Without any doubt, as Chief of Staff, Lt Gen MacEoin had an influence

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> MA, Medals Board, Box 1, Annex C to 1965 Medals Board Report, 'Recommendations – General'.

<sup>65</sup> MA, Medals Board, Box 1, Annex C to 1965 Medals Board Report, 'Recommendations – General'. All footnotes in this paragraph are from this source.

<sup>66</sup> MA, Medals Board, Box 1, Annex C to 1965 Medals Board Report, 'Recommendations – General'.

<sup>67</sup> MA, Medals Board, Box 1, list attached to Lt Col S. O'Béara to OIC Officers' Records Section, 18 June 1971.

on the medals processes in 1962 and 1965. As the convening authority, as the officer to whom Medals Boards reported and, as shown in the case of Capt Magennis, in bestowing upon himself the authority to overturn the findings of a Medals Board, the Chief of Staff, Lt Gen MacEoin managed every aspect of the award of medals from ONUC.

A suggestion was made to the Independent Review Group that the Distinguished Service Medals awarded by the 1965 Medals Board were given out in a manner to ensure an equal divide across the four command areas. This was shown to be accurate for the initial 1965 Medals Board's draft report. The allocation is less clear for the Board's final report. Western Command the Command from which a large proportion of 'A' Company 35 Inf Bn had been drawn, fared noticeably worse than the three other Command areas. Was this due to Jadotville? Quite simply, there is no evidence to suggest this, and the result comes from a simple breakdown of numbers.

Final awards of the DSM by the 1965 Medals Board by Command	
AHQ	2
Eastern Command	18
Curragh Command	18
Southern Command	16
Western Command	9
Air Corps	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>

Final awards of the DSM by the 1965 Medals Board <sup>68</sup>				
Rank	Name	DSM Class	Parent Unit	Parent Command
Lt Gen	Seán MacEoin	1	Army Headquarters	AHQ
Comdt	Kevin Nunan	1	1 Tank Squadron	Curragh
Capt	Arthur Magennis	1	4 Motor Squadron	Curragh
Cpl	Charles Connolly	1	No 2 Hospital Company	Eastern
CS	Walter Hegarty	2	1 Infantry Battalion	Western
CS	William McLoughlin	2	1 Field Engineer Coy	Southern
Cpl	John Kavanagh	2	1 Field Engineer Coy	Southern
Pte	Anthony Connolly	2	1 Field Signal Company	Southern
CS	Daniel Carroll	2	1 Motor Squadron	Southern
Sgt	Michael Rowland	2	1 Motor Squadron	Southern
Capt	Roger McCorley	2	1 Tank Squadron	Curragh
Capt	James Lavery	2	11 Motor Squadron (FCA)	Eastern
Sgt Maj	Patrick Norris	2	2 Infantry Battalion	Eastern
Lt	Peter Feely	2	2 Garrison Ordnance Company	Eastern
Comdt	Columba Browne	2	2 Garrison Supply and Transport Company	Eastern
Lt Col	Patrick Barry	2	4 Infantry Battalion	Southern
Capt	Thomas Boyle	2	4 Field Artillery Regiment	Western
Cpl	William Allen	2	4 Field Artillery Regiment	Western

<sup>68</sup> This undated list is taken from MA, Medals Board, Box 1.

Sgt	John Quirke	2	4 Field Artillery Regiment	Western
Comdt	James Flynn	2	4 Garrison Company, MPC	Western
Sgt	George Shaughnessy	2	4 Motor Squadron	Curragh
Cpl	Gerard Francis	2	5 Infantry Battalion	Eastern
Cpl	Patrick Gegan	2	5 Infantry Battalion	Eastern
Lt	Patrick Riordan	2	5 Infantry Battalion	Eastern
Lt	Anthony Murphy	2	8 Infantry Battalion (FCA)	Eastern
Cpl	Michael O'Sullivan	2	Army Apprentice School	Curragh
Col	Justin McCarthy	2	Army HQ	AHQ
Comdt	Joseph Fitzpatrick	2	Command Training Centre (East)	Eastern
Sgt	Alfred Johnston	2	Depot, Engineer Corps	Curragh
CQMS	James Cotter	2	HQ Southern Command	Southern
Lt Col	Michael Hogan	2	HQ Southern Command	Southern
Capt	John Norton	2	McKee Barracks Company	Eastern
Capt	Thomas Quinlan	2	Military College	Curragh
Capt	Michael Purfield	2	Supply and Transport Corps	Eastern
CS	Christopher Walsh	3	1 Anti-Aircraft Regiment	Curragh
Cpl	Edward Nolan	3	1 Armoured Car Squadron	Curragh
Cpl	James Fallon	3	11 Field Engineer Coy	Eastern
CS	Felix Grant	3	12 Infantry Battalion	Southern
Pte	John Murray	3	12 Infantry Battalion	Southern
Sgt	William Whelan	3	12 Infantry Battalion	Southern
Cpl	John Kealy	3	13 Infantry Battalion (FCA)	Southern
Pte	Patrick Wall	3	13 Infantry Battalion (FCA)	Southern
Pte	James Murray	3	2 Infantry Battalion	Eastern
Sgt	Daniel Mannix	3	2 Infantry Battalion	Eastern
Sgt	Patrick Mulcahy	3	2 Field Artillery Regiment	Eastern
Cpl	Anthony Woodcock	3	2 Field Signal Company	Eastern
Pte	Christopher Doolan	3	3 Infantry Battalion	Curragh
Sgt	William O'Sullivan	3	4 Inf Infantry Battalion	Southern
Sgt	John O'Reilly	3	4 Field Engineer Coy	Western
Sgt	Patrick McCormack	3	4 Garrison Ordnance Coy	Western
Sgt	James McCafferty	3	4 Motor Squadron	Curragh
Sgt	Thomas Maguire	3	4 Motor Squadron	Curragh
Cpl	James Feery	3	6 Infantry Battalion	Western
Cpl	John Keenan	3	Air Corps, Gormanston	Air Corps
Sgt	John Ryan	3	Air Squadron Signal Corps	Air Corps
Pte	Peter Madigan	3	CTD, Eastern Command	Eastern
Cpl	Aiden Doyle	3	CTD, Southern Command	Southern
Sgt	Daniel Ahern	3	Depot, Supply and Transport Corps	Curragh
Sgt	Richard Connolly	3	Depot, Artillery Corps	Curragh
Sgt	William Hartley	3	Depot, Cavalry Corps	Curragh
Sgt	Joseph Cashman	3	Depot, MPC	Curragh
Cpl	Francis O'Neill	3	Depot, Supply and Transport Corps	Curragh
Pte	John Clarke	3	Depot, Supply and Transport Corps	Curragh
Sgt	John Daly	3	HQ 4 Brigade	Western
Sgt	Patrick Hayes	3	HQ Southern Command	Southern

Details of the awards of DSM to seventeen individuals who served with 35 Inf Bn. Corporals Allen and Nolan served with the 35 Inf Bn, but were awarded for service with the 38 Inf Bn and 33 Inf Bn respectively. Sgt Hegarty was also recommended for his service with the 32 Inf Bn. Fifteen DSMs were thus awarded to personnel of 35 Inf Bn for distinguished service with that particular Battalion.						
No	Army No.	Rank	Name	Award for	Tours of Duty	Other ONUC units served with, if medal awarded for service with 35 Inf Bn.
1	O.6510	Capt	Arthur Magennis	Outstanding courage in going through hostile territory to negotiate for the lives of captured comrades whose execution had been threatened.	2	2 Inf Gp
2	O.7422	Capt	Roger McCorley	Courage and initiative, to get better observation for mortar fire he frequently exposed himself to danger with complete disregard for his own safety. Wounded in December 1961 fighting in Elisabethville.	2	3 Armd Car Sqn
3	O.7280	Capt	Michael Purfield	Courage and leadership of a high degree on several occasions.	1	35 Inf Bn only
4	O.7668	Capt	Thomas Quinlan	Displayed aggressiveness and spirit of a high degree, which was due to his excellent qualities of leadership and courage during Sep and Dec 1961(at Jadotville and later in Elisabethville)	1	35 Inf Bn only
5	801545	CS	Walter Hegarty	Displayed outstanding leadership, resourcefulness and courage on numerous occasions. Wounded 13 September 1961 at Jadotville.	2	32 Inf Bn
6	415646	Sqn Sgt	Daniel Carroll	Personal courage and coolness under fire at Lufira Bridge and in Elisabethville.	2	3 Armd Car Squadron
7	87182	Sgt Maj	Patrick Norris	Extremely courageous behaviour under fire as an anti-tank gunner. Wounded in Elisabethville Dec 1961.	3	32 Inf Bn 38 Inf Bn
8	94557	Sgt	William O'Sullivan	Devotion to duty. NCO in charge of the pipe band.	3	32 Inf Bn, 38 Inf Bn. <sup>69</sup>
9	75746	Sgt	William Hartley	Resourcefulness and devotion to duty, repaired two battle-damaged AFVs.	1	35 Inf Bn only
10	809084	Cpl	James Feery	During Operation Unokat (Dec 1961) showed great courage by taking up an exposed position to fire with effect 84mm anti-tank gun.	3	32 Inf Bn 39 Inf Bn
11	801232	Sgt	Michael Rowland	Confronted with superior forces and armour and finding all roads blocked, he fought his way through and accomplished his mission. Showed bravery, initiative and leadership of a high quality.	2	3 Armd Car Sqn

<sup>69</sup> Pipe Major Sgt William O'Sullivan was awarded his DSM having served for three tours of duty in Congo and three in Cyprus (*Irish Examiner*, 1 November 1967).



12	92754	Sgt	George Shaughnessy	In charge of a transport escort which was destroyed by armoured cars in Elisabethville. Deliberately exposed himself to fire to get his men to safety. He displayed qualities of leadership and courage in a difficult and dangerous situation. Wounded in Elisabethville 14 Sep 61.	2	38 Inf Bn
13	805463	Cpl	John Kavanagh	Left the protection of an AFV and brought a shocked member of his Section to safety at Lufira Bridge.	2	32 Inf Bn
14	81154	Cpl	William Allen	Leadership and courage. Took part in numerous engagements supporting Indian and Ethiopian troops as well as their own. Award for service with 38 Inf Bn. Previously served with 'A' Coy, 35 Inf Bn and was at Jadotville	2	38 Inf Bn
15	804396	Cpl	Edward Nolan	Devotion to duty at Matadi Port whilst serving with the 33 Inf Bn	2	33 Inf Bn.
16	78361	Pte	Christopher Doolan	He took over the duties of cook when his platoon was cut off from Coy HQ.	3	33 Inf Bn 37 Inf Bn
17	96057	Pte	Patrick Wall	Conor Cruise O'Brien's driver in Elisabethville. Showed resourcefulness and devotion to duty. On one occasion, by his calmness, he succeeded in getting his passenger to safety when they were assaulted by unfriendly soldiers.	2	33 Inf Bn

### ***Jadotville Factor***

Were medals deliberately not awarded for action at Jadotville? It is noteworthy that of the individuals who had fought at Jadotville who were recommended for the proposed 'Military Conduct Medal' in principle, in an interim manner by the 1962 Medals Board only two of these names appear in the recommendations of the 1965 Board: Lt Tom Quinlan and Sgt Walter Hegarty. Sgt Hegarty's draft 1965 citation reads that 'in 1960 and 1961 he displayed outstanding leadership, resource and courage on numerous occasions. His example and efficiency were an inspiration to others and were of great assistance to the morale of his men.' There is no explicit mention of Jadotville, yet to the reader it is contained in the words.

Lt Quinlan's draft citation is even more revealing. It is reproduced in full here with additions underlined and deletions struck through:

~~On a number of occasions~~ For leadership during the period Sept. to Dec. 1961 in Katanga, Lt Quinlan's platoon was engaged in action in ~~Elisabethville and Jadotville~~ Katanga. The high morale, aggressiveness and spirit displayed by the platoon in these actions were favourably commented upon ~~by a number of witnesses~~, and were due to the excellent qualities of leadership and courage displayed by Lt Quinlan himself.<sup>70</sup>

This form of words and their editing shows again that Jadotville is implicit in Lt Quinlan's citation, yet it is not mentioned by name, and steps were taken to remove the location Jadotville

<sup>70</sup> MA, Medals Board, Box 1, entry on undated working draft citation list, p. 5.

from the citation though it is implicit in the insertion 'these actions'. Other draft citations, included reference to Elisabethville, and other towns in Katanga, are mentioned in a number of citations. There was no need to exclude reference to any specific location, unless there was a specific reason for it. Elisabethville was fine, though it only appears explicitly three times for actions in September 1961. Other Katangese locations also appear in citations, but not Jadotville. Corporal John Kavanagh's citation originally referred to his actions 'at Lufira Bridge near Jadotville'. When published it simply read 'at Lufira Bridge'.

These three cases each show that reference to Jadotville could be and was removed from citations. Yet these three individuals still received a Distinguished Service Medal. Which leads to the point that an individual could have fought at Jadotville, or in a Jadotville related event, such as the attempt to relieve 'A' Company through Lufira Bridge, and get an award. Being at Jadotville did not disqualify an individual for an award, it did mean that the name of the town was not going to appear in his citation.

Yet no individual received a Distinguished Service Medal for Jadotville alone. There are two possible reasons for this. Jadotville was, as the environment in the Defence Forces might suggest it was, a battle which was not deemed worthy of award because 'A' Company was forced to surrender. In the atmosphere of the 50th anniversary of the 1916 Rising, 'blood sacrifice' was deemed a positive outcome, and no member of 'A' Company had died at Jadotville.

A less glamorous, but credible reason is that in the context of 360 recommendations, those from 'A' Company, on account of content, were crowded out of consideration. Some were simply vague, others no more than examples of an individual doing his duty, albeit excellently, and the name of 'Jadotville' was tainted by unfounded accusations of cowardice. If the 1965 Medals Board was seeking to send a message on Jadotville, the distribution of awards by Command, with Western Command, by and large the parent Command of 'A' Company, coming a clear second last, and awards to the Curragh, Southern and Eastern Command areas being reasonably equally distributed sent that message.

### ***Announcement of the Awards – March 1967***

Technical and design difficulties occurred with the production of the Distinguished Service Medal dies. These were overcome and finally, on 28 February 1967, the Minister for Defence Michael Hilliard announced in Dáil Éireann that 'a Board of Officers had recommended that the Distinguished Service Medal be awarded to 65 members of the Defence Forces for acts of bravery or gallantry, or distinguished service' in the Congo.<sup>71</sup> When the names were published in the press an additional name had been added: Lt Gen Seán MacEoin<sup>72</sup>. The Medals Board did not include the Chief of Staff's own name in its report to the Chief of Staff, rather it sent Lt Gen MacEoin's name directly to the Minister for Defence via the Adjutant-General Maj Gen Seán Collins-Powell. In doing so, they worked outside their own guidelines and in retrospect reference to a 'position of high authority and responsibility' was incorporated in the Distinguished Service Medal guidelines.<sup>73</sup> However, this action was perhaps closer to the letter

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<sup>71</sup> *Dáil Éireann debates*, 28 February 1967, vol 226.

<sup>72</sup> *Irish Independent*, 7 March, 1967.

<sup>73</sup> MA, 'A' Adm, 01/60, 'Medals and Decorations, 1961-9', Maj Gen Collins-Powell to Hilliard, 9 February 1967.

of the relevant paragraph of DFR A19 on the reporting of Medals Boards. The process whereby retiring Chiefs of Staff since 1981<sup>74</sup> are recommended for an award follows the procedures used by the 1965 Medals Board.

### **Media Response**

The announcement of the 65 awards to 18 officers, 40 NCOs and 7 privates, ‘for courage and devotion to duty while serving the cause of peace’ appeared on the front page of the *Irish Press* and *Irish Independent* of 7 March 1967.<sup>75</sup> Citations were printed in full on the inside pages. Still to be decided was which firm would strike the die to cast the Distinguished Service Medal, how the medals would be distributed, and whether recipients could use ‘Distinguish Service Medal’ after their names.

There were public and private responses to the publication of the names of those awarded the Distinguished Service Medal. Newspapers carried a handful of stories of discontent in messes that those killed at Niemba had not been awarded medals.<sup>76</sup> Lt Kevin Gleeson’s widow Imelda asked Minister Hilliard why in the list ‘my husband and his comrades were not even mentioned’.<sup>77</sup> The curt response from the Department of Defence was that the Medals Board ‘did not and is not required to give detailed reports on cases in which awards were not recommended. It is regretted therefore, that the information requested in your letter is not available.’<sup>78</sup> This became a standard response to queries about the award of medals by the 1965 Medals Board. To the *Irish Times* defence correspondent Tom McCaughren, Lt Gleeson and his fallen comrades were ‘the Forgotten Heroes’.<sup>79</sup> Commenting on other acts that seemed to merit decoration, Tom McCaughren concluded that ‘it may be, of course, that the ambush overshadowed everything else and that acts of bravery performed prior to it did not come up for consideration. If not, it is time they did.’<sup>80</sup>

A letter in the *Evening Press* newspaper asked why only 7 out of 65 medals went to Private soldiers and queried the neutrality of the medal process.<sup>81</sup> A *Sunday Express* article claimed that soldiers were saying that ‘tremendous acts of courage have been overlooked’.<sup>82</sup>

### **Response from Comdt Pat Quinlan**

The most strenuous and trenchant query came from Comdt Pat Quinlan in a letter to Lt Gen MacEoin dated 14 March 1967:

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<sup>74</sup> Lt Gen Carl O’Sullivan DSM on retirement as Chief of Staff, 2 June 1981.

<sup>75</sup> *Irish Independent*, 7 March 1967.

<sup>76</sup> See *Sunday Express*, 12 March 1967.

<sup>77</sup> MA, DOD, 3/37397, Gleeson to Hilliard, 11 March 1967.

<sup>78</sup> MA, DOD, 3/37397, Rúnaí Aire to Gleeson, 16 March 1967. An attempt by Imelda Gleeson in June 1968, via her local TD Joseph Dowling (Fianna Fáil), to have her husband’s case reassessed met with a similar response from the Department of Defence (MA, DOD, 3/37397, Ó Brosnacháin to Dowling, 21 June 1968. Lt Gleeson had been recommended for consideration for a Military Medal for Gallantry by his Battalion Commander Lt Col Richard Bunworth.

<sup>79</sup> *Irish Times*, 8 November 1967. In this article McCaughren was referring back to an earlier article published in March 1967.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>81</sup> *Evening Press*, 9 March 1967.

<sup>82</sup> *Sunday Express*, 12 March 1967.

I am grieved that none of the men who fought so gallantly under my command at Jadotville in Katanga in September 1961, have been awarded a decoration for service during that period.

These men suffered much, physically and mentally, during the fighting and during our subsequent very trying experiences as prisoners. The steadfastness and high morale of the unit enabled it to survive these difficulties. This high morale was apparent after our release and it is significant that three members of the company were awarded decorations for distinguished service during the fighting in Elisabethville in December, 1961.

A number of men were recommended for decorations for distinguished service during the intense fighting in Jadotville. These acts of gallantry are well known to all the men who fought there, and they have long been expecting awards to some of their comrades in recognition of personal acts of bravery which would also be acceptable as recognition for the unit.

The recent award of decorations has revived memories and focused new attention on Jadotville. I know that the men of 'A' Company Group, 35th Battalion, are as disturbed as I am that our efforts at Jadotville have not received recognition.

In the interests of morale, I respectfully request that the recommendations be reviewed, with a view to doing justice to these men and to the Company.<sup>83</sup>

### ***Medals Board's and Chief of Staff's Response***

Comdt Quinlan's submission was brought to Lt Gen MacEoin's attention on 14 March 1967. In writing to Lt Gen MacEoin, Comdt Quinlan was explicitly acknowledging the Chief of Staff's role in the process of awarding the medals, and asking him to ensure that the 1965 Medals Board's conclusions were reviewed. Comdt Quinlan asked specifically for a 'review', he did not ask for the medals to be awarded, though this was implicit in his closing line that such a review should be 'with a view to doing justice to these men and to the Company.'<sup>84</sup>

Comdt Quinlan's request was sent by Lt Gen MacEoin to Col Shortall, President of the 1965 Medals Board. After consulting with the two other board members Lt Col Caseley and Lt Col O'Sullivan, both of whom had 'no comment'<sup>85</sup> to make, Col Shortall replied to Lt Gen MacEoin that 'the Medals Board had already given much consideration to the matters raised by Comdt Quinlan prior to examining its recommendations. The Board does NOT feel that the points mentioned by Comdt Quinlan require any change in its recommendations.'<sup>86</sup>

Lt Gen MacEoin responded that 'as the matter has been fully considered by the Committee appointed for the purpose, he does not intend to take further action in the matter.'<sup>87</sup> Lt Gen

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<sup>83</sup> MA, Medals Board, Box 1, Comdt Quinlan to Lt Gen MacEoin, Tré OIC Ceann I, 14 March 1967 (Confidential).

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., Routing slip, comments dated 8 April 1967 and 10 April 1967.

<sup>86</sup> MA, Medals Board, Box 1, Col Shortall to Lt Gen MacEoin, 10 April 1967.

<sup>87</sup> MA, Medals Board, Box 1, Col Emphy to OIC Ceann I, 6 May 1967.

MacEoin, who had already shown his interest in the actions of Medals Boards, was explicitly responding to the views of the 1965 Medals Board, and indicating also that he had authority to act further on the Board's recommendations should he feel fit to act.

Comdt Quinlan's initial point in his letter to Lt Gen MacEoin was in fact incorrect. Two of his personnel had been awarded medals which in part were for fighting at Jadotville. Sgt Hegarty and Lt Quinlan were specifically awarded medals for actions which included actions at Jadotville. Lt Quinlan's platoon was specifically mentioned in his citation. His No 2 Rifle Platoon, of which Sgt Hegarty was the platoon sergeant, took the brunt of the Gendarmerie infantry attack at Jadotville. Comdt Quinlan then went on to explain that:

A number of men were recommended for decorations for distinguished service during the intense fighting in Jadotville. These acts of gallantry are well known to all the men who fought there, and they have long been expecting awards to some of their comrades in recognition of personal acts of bravery which would also be acceptable as recognition for the unit.

If decorations were expected for 'some of their comrades', was it that two was not enough? Comdt Quinlan maintained that awards for some would be acceptable as recognition for 'A' Company. In other words, decoration for some would be decoration for all. In saying this, he overlooked Sgt Hegarty's and Lt Quinlan's decorations. This letter is important as it is the earliest response by Comdt Quinlan in his own words to the actions of the 1965 Medals Board. It is an explicit statement by Comdt Quinlan of what he expected from the medals process. 'We expected more' is the argument implicit in the letter. So too that they expected Jadotville to be more specifically honoured.

### ***Media Response – The Kerryman***

On 25 March 1967, almost two weeks after Comdt Quinlan wrote to the Chief of Staff, *The Kerryman* newspaper carried an article by Seán Mitchel telling readers that 'the Army is asking why men of Niamba and Jadotville are ignored in awards for meritorious service abroad.'<sup>88</sup> Mitchel wondered was it because in Niamba 'Lt Gleeson and his soldiers, are dead, the authorities considered that medals would be wasted on them?' Over Jadotville Mitchel speculated: 'can it be that the authorities are ashamed because a company of 155 Irish troops, cut off without aid, and outnumbered by more than fourteen to one by well-armed Katangan troops, led by white skilled mercenaries was forced to surrender?' He continued that 'A' Company 'have now been disowned by the Irish defence authorities. Five or six of them received medals for other actions in which they served meritoriously in the Congo. But for the service at Jadotville? Nothing. Not a word of thanks to the commander and officers for bringing their men back alive and well.' Perhaps this last point was the real point of the article? Mitchel concluded drawing comparisons between medals awarded to those who served with ONUC in various capacities, such as Lt Gen Seán MacEoin and those at Jadotville who did not get medals, such as Comdt Pat Quinlan. There were, in Mitchel's words 'rumblings within the army itself over these medals' and they should be brought into the open. To the Irish public 'some form of public explanation is now necessary.'

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<sup>88</sup> *The Kerryman*, 25 March 1967.

### ***Cpl Reidy's Query***

The announcement of the award of the sixty-five Distinguished Service Medals in April 1967 did not lead to a revival of interest in Jadotville. Mitchel's article was a one-off. Cpl William Reidy, who had also served with the 33 Inf Bn and the 36 Inf Bn, was concerned about the overall medals process, writing to the Minister for Defence that 'I would like to know how they were picked'.<sup>89</sup> His main concern was with the fighting in the Tunnel in Elisabethville in December 1961:

I was in the thick of things in the battle for the tunnel in Elisabethville at 4.30am, I would like to know, what did they do that the rest of the company didn't do we all done an equal share. Lt O'Riordan was killed, he is honoured, so was Pte Wickham who was beside him, he gets no medal. I know all the facts if only I got an opportunity of outlining the whole thing. The whole affair is very misleading and it should be reviewed.<sup>90</sup>

Cpl Reidy received the same response from the Department of Defence as did Imelda Gleeson: 'the information requested in your letter is not available'.<sup>91</sup>

### ***Posthumous Medal – Personnel Killed in Action***

Imelda Gleeson's action did spark consideration by Lt Gen MacEoin, Lt Col Caseley, Lt Col O'Sullivan and Comdt Neill, and others in 'A' Administration Section, on whether the Distinguished Service Medals 3rd Class should be automatically awarded posthumously to soldiers killed in action whilst on duty with the United Nations.

Draft amendments to DFR A19 were prepared, but despite ministerial approval in principle, there was no support for the proposal, and it was shelved.<sup>92</sup> The Distinguished Service Medal was not the medal to be awarded in these instances.<sup>93</sup> Comdt F.P. Neill put it strongly but effectively that 'The Distinguished Service Medal is awarded for "individual or associated acts of bravery, courage, leadership, resource or devotion to duty", and to award it, automatically and indiscriminately is to debase the award and to undermine the very reasons for which it was originally established'.<sup>94</sup> An undated minute from this discussion simply recorded 'position of Distinguished Service Medal must be safeguarded. Look for alternative'.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> 77696 Cpl William Reidy, not to be confused with Pte William Ready who served at Jadotville with 'A' Company. Cpl Reidy had left the Defence Forces when he wrote this letter.

<sup>90</sup> MA, DOD, 3/37397, Reidy to Hilliard, 24 March 1967. Private Wickham was posthumously awarded the United Nations Service Medal by Secretary General U Thant on 27 January 1968. The citation recognised and honoured his 'devotion to a cause for which he gave his life' (See MA, box, Medal Board, Box 2, Holmes to Kearney, 1 February 1968).

<sup>91</sup> MA, DOD, 3/37397, Ó Brosnacháin to Reidy, undated, April 1967.

<sup>92</sup> MA, Medals Board, Box 2, 'Memorandum' by Rannóg Rialacháin, undated, but February 1968. See also MA, file, 'Medals and Decorations, 1961-9', 'Award of the DSM to Pers[ons] killed in action – proposed amendment to A19. Summary of points raised by members of the Board', 6 February 1968.

<sup>93</sup> The Military Star was introduced to make awards in these cases.

<sup>94</sup> MA, 'A' Adm, 01/60, 'Medals and Decorations, 1961-9', 'Distinguished Service Medal. Proposed Amendments', memorandum by Ó Néill, 5 February 1968.

<sup>95</sup> MA, 'A' Adm, 01/60, 'Medals and Decorations, 1961-9', 'Medals', handwritten minute, undated.



On 26 February 1968, Lt Gen MacEoin sent Minister for Defence Michael Hilliard a strong rebuttal of the suggestion that the Distinguished Service Medal be awarded to all those killed in action.

Lt Gen MacEoin's letter, while written in the immediate context of the question of the awarding of the Distinguished Service Medal 3rd Class to the soldiers killed in action at Niemba, is revealing of his general attitude to the award of medals. The Chief of Staff began by explaining to Minister Hilliard that the 1961 Medals Board and the 1965 Medals Board 'gave long and full consideration to the case of those who died at Niemba and took into account the emotionalism generated by that unfortunate incident.'<sup>96</sup> The Chief of Staff emphasised that the 'Members of any board would naturally be prepared to stand over their recommendations and take the brunt of any criticism of their findings.' He ventured they did this as:

it is a well-known fact in other armies, even in those with long established procedures on awards of decorations and medals, that some awards are criticised - awards are NOT deserved or that deserving cases are NOT rewarded. It is natural, that people who have NOT all the facts take personal or prejudiced views and express them.

His advice to Minister Hilliard was that he would 'strongly recommend that the Distinguished Service Medal be NOT awarded' in the circumstances proposed. Lt Gen MacEoin was also against 'either a special medal or a memorial at this time' as it was 'almost certain to be treated as a "handout" and some of those who have been critical of what has already been done may start a fresh campaign.' Awards would be made, decisions would be criticised, awarding authorities needed to stand over their findings and that was that.

### ***Presentations of Distinguished Service Medals***

On 4 June 1968, the first Distinguished Service Medals were presented at the Curragh Camp. The first to receive his Distinguished Service Medal was Chief of Staff Lt Gen Seán MacEoin, last were the widows, receiving their husband's posthumous awards.<sup>97</sup> A number of those awarded Distinguished Service Medals could not be present as they were on overseas service, and they received their medals from their unit commanders, or the Senior Irish Officer of an overseas mission.

Comdt Pat Quinlan was promoted to lieutenant-colonel in June 1968.

### ***Aftermath***

The history of the 1965 Medals Board, building on that of the 1962 Board, shows a restrictive attitude towards medals and methods of award, and the failure by the Adjutant-General to establish if prima facie cases for the consideration of the award of medals existed in the first stages of the process.

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<sup>96</sup> MA, 'A' Adm, 01/60, 'Medals and Decorations, 1961-9', Lt Gen MacEoin to Hilliard, 26 February 1968.

<sup>97</sup> *Irish Times*, 5 June 1968.

The temptation is to focus in on 'A' Company 35 Inf Bn in isolation, and conclude that as Jadotville was regarded by many senior officers as 'regrettable', then actions at Jadotville were not going to result in decorations for those put forward for consideration for recommendation under any circumstances. However, a 1974 memorandum on the continuing problem of how to award 'outstanding efficiency' in the performance of duties which proposed either a new medal or 'making more awards of the Distinguished Service Medal under the terms of DFR A19 Part V in the "Devotion to duty" category', explained that within 'the existing limited range of medals' the Defence Forces had 'been most conservative in our attitude to the awarding of the Distinguished Service Medal since its inception in 1964. The award has been made on ONLY sixty-eight occasions.<sup>98</sup> Sixty-five of these had been in the Congo.

In addition, 'Third Class awards have NOT been conferred on Officers' because 'outstanding service was ONLY to be expected from ALL Officers'. Regardless of how 'A' Company had performed in Jadotville, the institutional climate was against awarding medals to Defence Force personnel in the first place. This is affirmed by Lt Gen MacEoin's stance over the award of any type of posthumous decoration for Niemba. It is also affirmed by the actions of the 1962 Board in reducing to a bare minimum the number of its proposed awards.

Writing in 1974, the Adjutant-General Col Harry Byrne added to this that 'it is NOT untrue to say that there is a certain lack of award and decoration consciousness among ALL ranks. The general body of men may well be unaware of the awards that may be earned.'<sup>99</sup> The chance of being awarded a medal was thus low at best because of institutional attitudes, and these chances were reduced by the often insufficient and vague raw material of the recommendations made by officers and NCOs for submissions to Medals Boards in the first place.

Administrative torpor also played its part in reducing the effectiveness of the medals awarding process in 1962 and 1965. Col Thomas McDonald suggested in the context of the 1974 discussion that 'When a recommendation is made by a Commanding Officer, he should be called before a Board to fully justify his recommendation. Previous Commanding Officers should also be consulted. It should be a pretty long and thorough process. Guidelines for Commanding Officers and the Board must be comprehensive.'<sup>100</sup> In short, it should be everything that the 1962 and 1965 Boards had not been.

To suggest that the awards process was interfered with in order to impede the award of medals to personnel from 'A' Company is to lose sight of the fact that many of the initial recommendations for the consideration of awards for personnel of 'A' Company lacked substance, and that the wider dimension of the award process was evolving from the very moment recommendations for consideration for awards were initiated.

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<sup>98</sup> MA, 'A' Adm, 01, 'Annex A', 'Memo' by Adjutant General's Branch, 21 January 1974.

<sup>99</sup> MA, 'A' Adm, 01, memorandum by Col Emphy 'Performance of Duties', to Officers Commanding Eastern, Southern and Western Commands, the Curragh Training Camp and the Air Corps, 14 February 1974.

<sup>100</sup> MA, 'A' Adm, 01, 'Recognition of outstanding performance of duties', Col McDonald to Col Byrne, 13 March 1974.



5. Presentation of An Bonn Jadotville, 2 December 2017, Custume Barracks, Athlone. (Defence Forces Public Relations Section.)

## Chapter 11

# Seeking Recognition for ‘A’ Company: Claiming, writing and mythicising the history of the Battle of Jadotville: 1968 to 2020

‘Knowledge is a powerful weapon.’

Pte James Tahaney,  
‘A’ Company, 35 Inf Bn<sup>1</sup>

‘All wars are fought twice, the first time on the battlefield, the second time in memory.’

Viet Thanh Nguyen<sup>2</sup>

‘I put Jadotville out of my mind, I tried to keep it out of my mind for many years.’

Pte Thomas Flynn,  
‘A’ Company, 35 Inf Bn<sup>3</sup>

‘Don’t ask me about waking up at night-time.’

Pte Noel Stanley,  
‘A’ Company, 35 Inf Bn<sup>4</sup>

‘My father went to his grave with the label of a coward attached to his coffin.’

Deborah Kerr-Flanagan,  
on her father Cpl Seán Kerr, ‘A’ Company, 35 Inf Bn<sup>5</sup>

‘It took a movie to spark the Irish people’s imagination on Jadotville.’

Cpl Michael Whelan, Air Corps<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with IRG, 28 January 2021.

<sup>2</sup> See <https://academic.oup.com/alh/article-abstract/25/1/144/235761> (accessed 18 April 2021).

<sup>3</sup> Interview with IRG, 1 April 2021.

<sup>4</sup> Interview with IRG, 21 January 2021.

<sup>5</sup> Interview with IRG, 28 January 2021.

<sup>6</sup> Interview with IRG, 11 May 2021.

### **Overview of Chapter 11**

This chapter addresses the following:

- Purpose of Chapter,
- ‘Jadotville regrettably happened’,
- Féach and Solar Topee,
- The 1971 Lists,
- Out of public view,
- 50<sup>th</sup> Command and staff Syndicate Study of the Battle of Jadotville,
- Comdt Donnelly seeks answers and awards,
- Comdt Donnelly's 1996 submission to Chief of Staff,
- A changed climate on recalling and analysing the Battle of Jadotville,
- Comdt Donnelly engages Lt Gen Sreenan on Jadotville,
- 2004 Study and Analysis Group,
- Col Chris Moore’s Report,
- Comdt Donnelly and Lt Gen Sreenan discuss commemorating Battle of Jadotville,
- Decorations for ‘A’ Company,
- ‘God Bless Willie O’Dea’ ,
- The commemoration memorial in Athlone is unveiled,
- Histories of the Battle of Jadotville,
- Further official tributes to ‘A’ Company,
- Portraits of Lt Col McNamee and Comdt Quinlan unveiled,
- A feature film on Jadotville,
- 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Battle of Jadotville,
- A one-sided discussion on the Battle of Jadotville,
- Calls for medals to be awarded,
- Netflix and Jamie Dornan: ‘The Catalyst’,
- Fact, fiction and *The Siege of Jadotville*,
- The premiere of *The Siege of Jadotville*: July 2016,
- The Unit Citation,
- *The Siege of Jadotville* is released worldwide,
- Jadotville Day 2016,
- Reinterpreting the Battle of Jadotville through fact and fiction,
- New public and political calls for personalised awards,
- The 2017 Archives Review,
- An Bonn Jadotville: ‘A’ Company has had its honour restored after 56 long years,
- ‘Some magic evidence has come from somewhere, out of the sky, 60 years on’,
- A new public and political campaign for medals,
- The Seanad debate 11 November 2020,
- ‘End the circus’.

### **Purpose of Chapter**

The first purpose of this chapter is to show how the Battle of Jadotville was ignored by the Defence Forces for over thirty years before being (re)discovered and assessed by Defence Forces veterans and Irish academics. It then looks at how ‘A’ Company was belatedly officially recognised for

their action at Jadotville and how the battle they fought was assessed through a growing body of historical research. It then argues that, mainly because of popular misinterpretation of the Netflix film *The Siege of Jadotville*, in recent years understanding of the Battle of Jadotville has been taken to a point where historical fact and fiction have merged to create the unsatisfactory hybrid understanding of the battle that now dominates popular discourse where the Battle of Jadotville is concerned. Finally, it looks at how from 2017 to 2020 the now increasingly distorted history of the Battle of Jadotville became politicised by advocacy groups and elected representatives. This created an environment where some Jadotville veterans and their families felt buoyed up by the greater publicity given to their calls for recognition for 'A' Company while other veterans and their families have felt increasingly marginalised.

The Battle of Jadotville has since 1961 been examined, reconstructed, re-imagined, analysed, commemorated and discussed at varying levels of sophistication with varying results. Some Irish journalists covered the battle in their 1960s stories from the Congo, sometimes Jadotville got a line or two in international histories of the UN, ONUC, Congo and Katanga. From the 1970s to the 1980s there was little coverage of Jadotville and it became an often difficult private and personal story for veterans and their families. Then in the 1990s Defence Forces veterans were the primary moving forces when it came to asking the necessary awkward questions of those in authority as to why 'A' Company were sent to Jadotville and why the battle happened.

Working in a military environment that still wanted to ignore Jadotville, these veterans uncovered the basic facts behind why 'A' Company was sent to Jadotville and what happened during the battle and afterwards. They successfully pressed the initially unyielding Defence Forces and civil service to recognise belatedly the achievements of 'A' Company and publicly award them for those achievements. This phase of understanding the Battle of Jadotville began in the 1990s with the pioneering research work of Comdt Liam Donnelly and Col Terry O'Neill PhD and the lonely public recognition campaigns of Cpl John Gorman. Thanks to their endeavours, from the early 2000s to the mid-2010s a number of written accounts of the battle of Jadotville were published, veterans and relatives of deceased veterans received collective and individual forms of official recognition of the actions of 'A' Company and, any lingering doubts over the actions of 'A' Company in combat were eradicated.

After the Battle of Jadotville became widely known via the 2016 film *The Siege of Jadotville*, fact and fiction merged at a time where it was in vogue to spread unverified individual opinions by social media in the 'fake news' climate of the second half of the 2010s. As the populist agenda is often to doubt the state and authority, the Battle of Jadotville became a suitable trope through which to attack the civil service and the Defence Forces and voice a populist distrust of central government. This was increasingly done without checking the material to hand and so, befitting of the international 'fake news' climate, a growing array of inaccurate figures and facts was put forward about the Battle of Jadotville without regard to historical accuracy.

This became most striking after 2017 when factually distorted and incorrect details purporting to show who from 'A' Company had been recommended by Comdt Pat Quinlan for consideration for award for medals were circulated and were latched onto by politicians, mainstream media and social media. The 'medals for Jadotville veterans' discussion was thus jump-started through the distribution of a factually incorrect allegedly baseline list of those recommended for possible



decoration. This list, drawn up from a variety of sources, gained acceptance unquestioningly as ‘Comdt Quinlan’s list’ (which it was not) and without further interrogation as to its veracity. A further question is the accuracy of the recommendations for consideration for award made, and a final point is whether the recommendations were in themselves relating to actions deserving of award. It is a far more complicated matter than the calls made by those advocating medals that if Comdt Quinlan made a recommendation (and he did not make all ‘A’ Company recommendations) it was automatically worthy of a medal.

‘Confirmation bias’, the way individuals and groups embrace information that bolsters their preconceptions while disregarding information which does not fit, has bred a groupthink over Jadotville. The Seanad Éireann debate of 11 November 2020 on the award of medals, the point on which this chapter concludes, is a striking example of groupthink where an assembled group of public representatives put forward a common agenda which contained errors of fact and interpretation which they uncritically accepted without verification.

### ***Jadotville, regrettably happened’***

To return to the late-1960s. With the last ONUC medals awarded, Defence Forces overseas service concentrated mainly on the UNFICYP mission in Cyprus. Where Jadotville might fit in to this environment is revealed in a letter from Director of Intelligence Col Michael Hefferon to Chief of Staff of the Defence Forces and former ONUC Force Commander Lt Gen Seán MacEoin on 17 February 1969. *Irish Press* journalist Seamus Brady was turning his attention to Jadotville ‘to show that these Irishmen behaved with exceptional courage and honour in a situation which was created solely by bungling and ineptitude in quarters over which the Irish Army and Government had no control.’<sup>7</sup> Seamus Brady sought permission from Col Hefferon to interview Defence Forces personnel on Jadotville and Col Hefferon was ‘in some difficulty’ as regards his recommendation on the point. Brady was ‘reputable’ and ‘shrewd’. Yet Col Hefferon was worried that the Defence Forces, by assisting Brady ‘might be in the invidious position of providing a stout cudgel if the author is so minded for belabouring the UN organization.’ Eamon O’Tuathail at the Department of External Affairs suggested that Brady make contact with the United Nations first to get permission to see United Nations materials. He had in mind that Brady’s ‘comment on the United Nations handling of the Jadotville events could be expected to be generally unfavourable to ONUC though favourable to our troops.’<sup>8</sup> External Affairs’ suggestion was a polite, but effective, way of putting Brady off the scent of Jadotville. The Department of Defence would also directly ‘explain the difficulties relating to interviewing officers’ to Brady.<sup>9</sup>

Col Hefferon was discreet writing to Lt Gen MacEoin as the former Force Commander of ONUC: ‘Jadotville, regrettably happened’.<sup>10</sup> Bearing in mind that Tom McCaughren’s 1966 book on the Niemba ambush<sup>11</sup> had ‘been very helpful both inside and outside the Army in putting this episode in proper perspective’ and Brady was ‘apparently going to write anyway’, the question facing Col Hefferon and Lt Gen MacEoin was ‘whether it is better he does so with our co-operation than without it.’

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<sup>7</sup> MA, PC 2016-01, Col Emphy papers, Col Hefferon to Lt Gen MacEoin, 17 February 1969. Col Hefferon is quoting Brady directly.

<sup>8</sup> DOD, 3/56496, Ó Tuathail to Kearney, 29 January 1969.

<sup>9</sup> DOD, 3/56496, minute by MacConradha, 16 May 1969.

<sup>10</sup> MA, PC 2016-01, Col Emphy papers, Col Hefferon to Lt Gen MacEoin, 17 February 1969

<sup>11</sup> Tom McCaughren, *The Peacemakers of Niemba* (Dublin, 1966).

The date of the letter is significant. Within months the Troubles would erupt in Northern Ireland and Brady's attention would be diverted by the growing violence in the province and ultimately into the Arms Crisis, on which he was one of the first to write a detailed account.<sup>12</sup> Brady's account of the Battle of Jadotville was never written and it seems that he never commenced the project.<sup>13</sup>

Col Hefferon's letter to Lt Gen MacEoin shows a strong desire to refrain from mentioning Jadotville in order not to tarnish the reputation of the United Nations, since 1955 a signature component of Irish foreign policy. It also shows a clear view within the Defence Forces that Jadotville was an unfortunate event that would be better off not explored in any detail.<sup>14</sup> It was an event that was never to be mentioned, when 'A' Company veteran Pte Paul Malone was asked later by his commanding officer where he had served and replied 'Jadotville', the officer sternly replied 'that name isn't to be mentioned in this unit'.<sup>15</sup> Pte Malone continued emphatically 'I don't see what wrong we done.' Pte James Tahaney told the Independent Review Group in 2021 with great intensity, how Jadotville was 'buried' in the army and that accordingly he had to bury it himself: 'I am annoyed over it, but we could do nothing about it, that it was our own high brass who didn't do their job.'<sup>16</sup> Lt Gen Jim Sreenan recalled of his cadet training and his early years in the Defence Forces in the mid-late 1960s that Jadotville

didn't really feature that much in the conversation, it was associated with the question of surrender, it was associated with Pat Quinlan because he was the company commander at the time, we all knew that, if you were to ask us then who was the battalion commander we probably wouldn't have known that the name of the battalion commander was Hugh McNamee, but there was certainly Quinlan – Jadotville – Surrender, they were associated, but I don't think there was any question of blaming Quinlan, it was something, I think, that was packaged away and put to one side.<sup>17</sup>

'We were just hung out to dry', was how Cpl Tadhg Quinn put it.<sup>18</sup> This was already abundantly clear to shunned and insulted Jadotville veterans when Col Hefferon was writing to Lt Gen MacEoin. Over the next thirty-five years they would make the case that they had been purposely forgotten so as to protect the integrity of the United Nations and the reputations of those Irish high ranking Irish military and civilian figures within the United Nations system who took the decisions which sent 'A' Company to Jadotville. Ireland was still 'an adolescent state' and in the 1960s and 1970s was too 'sensitive and insecure', 'we just heard the word "surrender" and we didn't look into the details.'<sup>19</sup> Yet to have investigated the details would have meant the unpalatable action of looking closely at the actions of two significant figures. The first was Defence Forces

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<sup>12</sup> Seamus Brady, *Arms and the Men* (Dublin, 1971).

<sup>13</sup> DOD, 3/56496, memorandum by MacConradha, 26 May 1969.

<sup>14</sup> The correspondence contains the revealing line from the Department of Defence: 'very little material appears on our file' on Jadotville (DOD, 3/37523) (DOD, 3/56496, MacConradha to Col Byrne, Assistant Chief of Staff, 10 February 1969).

<sup>15</sup> Pte Paul Malone, interview with IRG, 2 February 2021.

<sup>16</sup> Pte James Tahaney, interview to IRG, 28 January 2021.

<sup>17</sup> Lt Gen Jim Sreenan (Retd), interview with IRG, 11 May 2021.

<sup>18</sup> Cpl Tadhg Quinn, interview with IRG, 21 January 2021.

<sup>19</sup> Lt Gen Jim Sreenan (Retd), interview with IRG, 11 May 2021.

Chief of Staff Lt Gen Seán MacEoin and the second was Conor Cruise O'Brien who in the 1970s was a political figure and ultimately a prominent journalist and commentator on Irish affairs.<sup>20</sup>

### ***'Féach' and 'Solar Topee'***

Lt Gen MacEoin retired from the Defence Forces as Chief of Staff on 30 March 1971.<sup>21</sup> Less than a month later he appeared on the RTÉ television programme 'Féach' recalling his time with ONUC. What he said on screen was the subject of a pointed letter in the *Evening Herald* 'Jadotville "fact or fiction"?'<sup>22</sup> Scathingly, the correspondent, who signed themselves with the pseudonym 'Solar Topee',<sup>23</sup> lived at 'Retreat Heights, Athlone', and was most likely a Defence Forces officer, and one who knew Lt Gen MacEoin personally, emphasised that

The pictures that accompanied the General's interview must have recalled to many of the veterans their first baptism of fire and the cool ordered way they met it. Virgin soldiers no more as it were. They fought at the tunnel, at the GPO and wherever they were needed. The newspapers of 1961 suggested that there was some action at a place called Jadotville and due no doubt to a lack of available time, the General in his chat seemed to forget it. He of course was the Force Commander and could be expected to remember only the major actions in Katanga.

Lt Gen MacEoin's talk had made 'Solar Topee' realise he was 'a sucker for a reasonably good fairy tale'. He must have been listening to 'romantic tales from soldiers and ex-soldiers' of

Jadotville (and I never want to hear that name again) where an Irish commander gave a copybook lesson on how a military post should be defended, where two hundred young Irishmen fought with outstanding gallantry (sufficiently well to merit recommendations for gallantry awards which they never got), where men were wounded and suffered dreadful privations.

This fairy lore has caught me for many a pint and remember the narrator has only been drinking the national beverage. Perhaps if he was on LSD he might conjure up an attacking jet plane with guns and bombs.

Noel Coward has established for all time that English men and mentally disturbed dogs have very definite immunity from tropical sun and here I wish that my fellow country-men had similar protection. What form of solar heat could cause a man to tell me "we were bombed, mortared, and machine gunned for five days", "We starved for four days", "but for an almost perfect system of trenches the jet would have wiped us all out."

Why a harmless croaking frog could be mistaken for the sound of mortar fire is beyond me and my friend will soon be telling me that the harmless old vulture soaring above was in fact a jet plane.

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<sup>20</sup> The main international figure was former UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld who was killed at Ndola in 1961.

<sup>21</sup> His successor, Maj Gen P.J. Delaney, served for barely four months. Maj Gen Delaney died suddenly on 27 July 1971.

<sup>22</sup> *Evening Herald*, 21 May 1971.

<sup>23</sup> A pith helmet.

Romantic Ireland is not dead and gone and the General has made me very choosy of my drinking company; I never liked fiction anyhow.

Col Hefferon's letter and 'Solar Topee's damning criticism of Lt Gen MacEoin's account of ONUC provide a composite picture that show how within a decade Jadotville had become a 'regrettable' event to be erased from memory. Lt Gen MacEoin had hardly simply forgotten by accident to mention Jadotville. This was deliberate and it was indicative of a culture in the Defence Forces. As Comdt Liam Donnelly's son Aidan pointed out to the Independent Review Group, 'MacEoin came back, did his lap of honour, got his DSM, was back in as Chief of Staff, had a nine year run of it, there is no way this was ever going to see the light of day.'<sup>24</sup> He added, 'this all stems from one man, and that's MacEoin.' 'How do you describe what it felt when your own let you down?', stated Deborah Kerr-Flanagan when telling the Independent Review Group of how her father, Jadotville veteran Cpl Seán Kerr, internalised all that had happened during the Battle of Jadotville.<sup>25</sup>

In a lengthy 1971 criticism of Conor Cruise O'Brien's views on the IRA and the Republican movement, Provisional IRA leader Daithí Ó Conaill caught the prevailing view of Jadotville:

The rout of Commandant Quinlan's column at Jadotville is something best forgotten. The shame suffered by Irish soldiers during that farce was relieved only by the gallant action of Trooper Browne who fought to the last round to save his comrades at Niamba.<sup>26</sup>

Until the 1990s, regardless of a few episodes mentioned below, Jadotville remained 'best forgotten'. Best forgotten not because Comdt Quinlan was forced into surrendering and surrender was anathema, but because the reputations of those who created Jadotville would be under the microscope. The men of 'A' Company were openly insulted. While as shown in Chapter 7 of this report, this slagging began in Elisabethville, it continued in an aggressive and increasingly demeaning form in Ireland. Cpl John Gorman recalled being asked sarcastically 'did you have your gym shoes with you' at Jadotville?<sup>27</sup>

What actually had happened in Jadotville and the experiences of the men of 'A' Company did not matter. No one wanted to hear or listen to them and they kept their heads down. There were no support services available to these men other than the chaplaincy service and nothing to help them normalise what they went through in Jadotville. CQMS Muiris de Barra described similar feelings after returning from Katanga having served with the 1 Inf Gp. He explained to the Independent Review Group that there should have been a person or persons incorporated in each unit to which every soldier could speak after having seen action:

There was no place we could tell any of this. Maybe no one had time. But maybe every unit that goes out foreign should have one person particularly to deal with situations like this, to have information, to gather it, from not just the leaders, but from, the people down the line who might have been in a slightly different position than someone else and seen

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<sup>24</sup> Comdt Aidan Donnelly (Retd), interview with IRG, 3 February 2021.

<sup>25</sup> Deborah Kerr-Flanagan, interview with IRG, 28 January 2021.

<sup>26</sup> *Irish Independent*, 3 September 1971.

<sup>27</sup> Cpl John Gorman, interview with IRG, 19 January 2021.

something happening because it is too much of it that is left and its gone and there's no come back on it.<sup>28</sup>

CQMS de Barra emphasised the importance of such a structure 'because if I told my story on that day, I probably might've let it go, but once that day passed, I felt I could not tell anyone because who would believe me.' He tried to talk to his father, who had served in the Defence Forces during the Second World War: 'I tried to talk to my own father who was in the army during the Emergency, and I just couldn't, I made a few efforts but I told him funny things instead.'

Many could not speak to their families or did not want to speak to their families. As Lt Col Ollie Barbour told the Independent Review Group, some men 'protected their families by not wanting to talk about it, and that's where, I would say, a lot of families got hurt, some [men] would have felt by talking about it they could have harmed their families.'<sup>29</sup> He felt 'some of those young men, boys, would not have had the language to talk to their families about what they saw and what they were involved in.' Sometimes men spoke amongst themselves. Families would only snatch some snippets of stories from the sidelines: 'if you were out with some of dad's friends and mam was with him, they would be chatting and that's how you'd hear, you'd hear more of the stories when they'd be chatting, you'd be kind of listening in.'<sup>30</sup> But some men who had been through Jadotville together never spoke about it to each other. Pte Thomas Flynn explained that

we didn't talk about the Congo, after we got back, and back to Ireland, and I moved on and went to London, and, I went to London with two other guys that were in the Congo with me and Jadotville with me, and you know we never mentioned it, we never talked about it, you know, one of those subjects we didn't talk about, not even when we were drunk, or partly so, it was never discussed.<sup>31</sup>

To Pte Michael Greene:

we felt entirely used, our lives had no value, we were worthless and let down as a result of the treatment after Jadotville and our release from prison, the stigma of which extended to the broader army and society in general.<sup>32</sup>

The result was that many of their own friends and colleagues in the Defence Forces had no idea of what they experienced in combat with 'A' Company. Michael Williams explained of his father, signaller with 'A' Company Cpl Frank Williams: 'he worked with soldiers in GHQ, you know, in McKee Barracks, AHQ, and the men who worked with my father never knew he was in Jadotville, he had never told them ... my father never spoke about the Congo, not even to close men of his, that he worked side by side [with].'<sup>33</sup> Deborah Kerr-Flanagan's father Cpl Seán Kerr was affectionately known as 'Congo Joe', but 'nobody in our family knew for years that he was in

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<sup>28</sup> CQMS Muiris de Barra, interview with IRG, 16 February 2021.

<sup>29</sup> Lt Col Ollie Barbour (Retd), interview with IRG, 18 March 2021.

<sup>30</sup> Jimmy Redmond and Patricia Redmond, son and wife of Pte Jimmy Redmond, interview with IRG, 15 April 2021.

<sup>31</sup> Pte Thomas Flynn, interview to IRG, 1 April 2021.

<sup>32</sup> Submission by Pte Michael Greene to IRG, 2 February 2021.

<sup>33</sup> Michael Williams, interview with IRG, 19 January 2021.

Jadotville, there was a man living five miles down the road, he never spoke.<sup>34</sup> As Senator Michael McDowell succinctly explained in the Seanad in May 2019:

The Irish soldiers at Jadotville were treated very shabbily and victims of a type of conspiracy to defame and belittle them and make them feel like cowards when they were precisely the opposite. Ireland must collectively make amends to those who remain and the memory of those who have passed on.<sup>35</sup>

Cpl Seán Tiernan summed up the situation he saw in combat with 'A' Company in Katanga: 'I didn't see one man that was a coward in Jadotville, not one, the chips were down and every man stood up to be counted.'<sup>36</sup> To show this and make it widely known has taken sixty years. But Jadotville will always remain for families and for veterans, as BSM P.J. Higgins says of his uncle Jadotville veteran Pte Joe McGuinness, 'Jadotville is living with Joe now sixty years on, and I'm going to bury Joe with Jadotville as a dark cloud in the back of his mind.'<sup>37</sup>

### ***The 1971 lists***

In June 1971, the OIC 'A' Administration in Army Headquarters, Lt Col S. Ó Béara, began a general tidying up of the individual medal recommendation files before the 1962 and 1965 Medals Boards. A file of documents for each of the seventeen officers who were awarded the Distinguished Service Medal was sent to Officers' Records Section, each file to be 'associated with the personal records of the Oifigigh concerned.'<sup>38</sup> A similar letter was sent on the same day, 18 June 1971, with a list of the eighty-five Officers 'who were recommended for the award of the Distinguished Service Medal in whose case the Medals Board recommended that No award should be made.'<sup>39</sup> A further two letters with lists detailing the names of 243 NCOs and privates was also sent to Enlisted Personnel Section. These contained details of forty-seven soldiers who were awarded DSMs and 196 who were not. It is highly significant that these ends of the business of the 1960s Medals Boards were not integrated into individual service records until after Lt Gen MacEoin had retired. They had remained in the Adjutant-General's Branch, where 'A' Administration Section was located, as part of the aftermath of ONUC until Lt Gen MacEoin was no longer involved in the Defence Forces.

These lists returned to prominence after 2017 when it was misinterpreted to draw up an incorrect list of personnel of A' Company, 35 Inf Bn thought to have been recommended by Comdt Quinlan for consideration for an award. The mistake made was to assume an individual from 'A' Company was on the list because he had been recommended for consideration for a Distinguished Service Medal with 'A' Company. As personnel from 'A' Company made additional overseas trips, two soldiers from 'A' Company appear on the 1971 list because of unsuccessful recommendations for service with another ONUC unit. For it to have been said publicly that they were recommended for consideration for a decoration because of actions at Jadotville, when this was not the case as they do not appear on the 1962 list of

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<sup>34</sup> Deboragh Kerr-Flanagan, interview with IRG, 28 January 2021.

<sup>35</sup> <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/seanad/2019-05-22/3> (accessed, 16 April 2021).

<sup>36</sup> Cpl Seán Tiernan, interview with IRG, 20 April 2021.

<sup>37</sup> BSM P.J. Higgins, interview with IRG, 16 February 2021.

<sup>38</sup> MA, Medals Board box 1, Lt Col Ó Béara to OIF Officers' Records, 18 June 1971.

<sup>39</sup> MA, Medals Board box 1, Lt Col Ó Béara to OIF Officers' Records, 18 June 1971.



recommendations for the 35 Inf Bn can only be deeply disappointing to the families of those concerned.

A more concerning result of the misinterpretation of the 1971 list is that a number of those on the eight-name list proposed by Lt Col McNamee for promotion were mistakenly thought to have been put forward for a medal and this was said in public after 2017. To find that family members were not in fact recommended for a medal when it seemed to be the case that they had been is a deeply disappointing outcome for many who thought their loved ones had been recommended for decoration for service at Jadotville.

The misinterpretation of the 1971 list occurred through a lack of understanding and a failure to properly scrutinise the document, rather than any malicious or ill-intended reason. Its use was a sign mainly of how those wishing to support Jadotville veterans jumped at the possibility to do so with some fresh information. However, their actions are also an indication of how it is necessary to be extremely careful with historical source materials as the contents of documents from over half a century ago contain information that still can have a considerable impact today, particularly when they are misunderstood.

***Out of public view: 'We were erased from history from the day we came back.'***<sup>40</sup>

As veterans continued to deal with the personal and professional aftermath of the Battle of Jadotville, the battle and 'A' Company's story faded from public view in the 1970s. Night sweats, alcoholism, domestic abuse and suicide were some of the after-effects of Jadotville on personnel from 'A' Company. 'He used to wake up and you'd think he was in a swimming pool, he'd wake up screaming', Liam Roche's mother told him about her husband Cpl Christy Roche.<sup>41</sup> 'Oh Jesus, I thought I was in such a place, or whatever was happening in his dreams', was how Patricia Redmond, wife of Pte Jimmy Redmond remembered her husband coming to after a nightmare.<sup>42</sup> Such were so frequent to veterans after ONUC service, including those of 'A' Company. Martin O'Connor put it poignantly about his father Sgt Thomas O'Connor: 'my dad was a hero, there's no doubt about that ... but there was one problem, he brought war home, he brought war home to the house.'<sup>43</sup> The impact of combat at Jadotville was ongoing on these men and their families.

'A' Company veterans had gone a wide variety of ways after 1961. Some remained in the Defence Forces, some took up civilian careers in Ireland and many emigrated, some to southern Africa, others to the United States and Australia and many to the United Kingdom. Having intended on a military career, Cpl Seán Tiernan left the Defence Forces after his initial three year contract was up 'on account of the way Commandant Quinlan was treated; he continued 'I loved the Army, but when that happened, I wanted out.'<sup>44</sup> Cpl Tiernan moved to London to begin a new career, but the side-effects of Jadotville were never far away: 'if a car backfired behind me I was jumping up in the air.'<sup>45</sup> On the impetus of his wife Margaret, he sought and received medical help and counselling in the United Kingdom. Again and again, it was like this for 'A' Company

<sup>40</sup> Pte Noel Stanley, interview with IRG, 21 January 2021

<sup>41</sup> Liam Roche, interview with IRG, 20 April 2021.

<sup>42</sup> Patricia Redmond, interview with IRG, 15 April 2021.

<sup>43</sup> Martin O'Connor, interview with IRG, 31 March 2021.

<sup>44</sup> Cpl Seán Tiernan, interview with IRG, 20 April 2021.

<sup>45</sup> Cpl Seán Tiernan, interview with IRG, 20 April 2021.

veterans, it was the wives who had to look after their husbands in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s and up to today. As they treated the wives and mothers of 1961, indeed the families of Jadotville veterans, the Defence Forces did nothing to assist them as they sought help to get treatment for their husbands and sons. While they sought to give support, no one in authority gave them support. CQMS Muiris de Barra who served with B Coy, 1 Inf Gp at Kamina said simply and straightforwardly: 'My wife, without her I would be lost sometimes'.<sup>46</sup>

And it was this support from their wives that was vital to for so many men from 'A' Company in coming to terms with Jadotville. When Pte Danny Hegarty woke up at night screaming from nightmares it was his wife Rita who had to calm him down and make him walk around the house to leave his dreams of the Congo behind.<sup>47</sup> Talking to the Independent Review Group, Elizabeth Hennelly said of her husband Gerald Hennelly, who had severe personal repercussions from Jadotville: 'when I started understanding what he went through and then he started sort of chilling more and getting more, let's say he grew up and he thought well I'm not fighting a war anymore, I'd better just pull myself together.'<sup>48</sup>

'A' Company's company commander Comdt Pat Quinlan continued to run through the events of 13 to 18 September 1961. Lt Col Seán Hennessy recalled meeting Pat Quinlan, now a Lt Col, in the bar of a barracks while he, Lt Col Hennessy, was en route to the border for duty during the early years of the Troubles. Lt Col Pat Quinlan said to him, in the presence of two young officers:

"I often wondered should I have surrendered", d'you see, so I didn't know what to say because I didn't want to put him in a bad light with his two young Lieutenants, so what I did say to him was "Sir", I said, "you brought all your men back", and he was delighted with that and that should never be forgotten because in some way I felt that the UN were left in the lurch there, we could have got more help from outside from somewhere."<sup>49</sup>

During the mid-1970s, Col Quinlan was Commandant of the Infantry School at the Curragh. He took 'a pretty active part in instructional matters', Lt Gen Jim Sreenan recalled Col Pat Quinlan holding weekly conferences and 'there was nothing he liked more than to get an argument going', setting up discussions and debates between those schooled in American military doctrine and British military doctrine. He was 'a pretty effective chairman' of these discussions, 'that was his main input into the instruction'. He never talked about Jadotville, but Lt Gen Jim Sreenan considered that perhaps Col Pat Quinlan, while not looking for decoration, felt 'hard done by as this was a significant and serious operation and people were inclined to airbrush it out of existence.'<sup>50</sup>

Cpl Michael Whelan, who wrote and published one of the first accounts of the Battle of Jadotville in 2005,<sup>51</sup> told the Independent Review Group of a story he heard about Lt Col Pat Quinlan which he retold with due warning as to the accuracy of its contents and whether it was a true story or

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<sup>46</sup> CQMS Muiris de Barra, interview with IRG, 16 February 2021.

<sup>47</sup> Nicola Toolan, daughter of Pte Hegarty, interview with IRG, 1 June 2021.

<sup>48</sup> Elizabeth Hennelly and Geraldine Armstrong, interview with IRG, 26 February 2021.

<sup>49</sup> Lt Col Seán Hennessy (Retd), interview with IRG, 30 March 2021.

<sup>50</sup> Lt Gen Jim Sreenan (Retd), interview with IRG, 11 May 2021.

<sup>51</sup> Michael Whelan, *The Battle of Jadotville: Irish soldiers in combat in the Congo, 1961* (Dublin, 2005).

not. Cpl Whelan said that at coffee time in the Officers' Mess 'all the officers would walk out of his [Lt Col Quinlan's] way and he'd go and get coffee on his own and they wouldn't talk to him. I don't know how factual that is, but if it is true, that's terrible.'<sup>52</sup> Even if the story is not true, the fact that such a tale would emerge is an indication of how some viewed Jadotville.

Comdt Quinlan never forgot the men of 'A' Company. In 1985, Liam Roche bumped into Col Pat Quinlan in a bar in Athlone the day of his own father, Cpl Christy Roche's funeral

I didn't know who he was at the time, he was in a pub actually, and I went in myself for a drink and he was at the bar having a whiskey. And I just got talking to him, as you do in Ireland, everybody talks to everybody in Ireland ... And I was just asking, and I just said "how's your day been?" And he said "not good, I've just buried one of my boys", and he was talking about my dad ... we had a few drinks together.<sup>53</sup>

Where the UN fitted into the Battle of Jadotville remained a concern. A Dáil Éireann question by Joseph Dowling TD (Labour) to Minister for Foreign Affairs Garret FitzGerald on 4 March 1976 asked

in relation to the Elisabethville situation whether the action was authorised by civilians or by the military personnel - on whose authority did the fighting start? Was the decision taken as a result of information available from intelligence sources and was such information acted upon?<sup>54</sup>

It was a direct punch by Joseph Dowling at his party colleague Conor Cruise O'Brien. He was by 1976 a TD and a ministerial colleague of Garret FitzGerald's as Minister for Posts and Telegraphs. Garret FitzGerald explained that UN military operations operated under civilian control and retorted 'If the Deputy wishes to pursue the matter further perhaps he would be more open with the House as to what he is getting at rather than proceed by a process of insinuation.' To which Joseph Dowling pointedly responded: 'For far too long you have been protecting Ministers in this House.' Another clear reference to Cruise O'Brien. Accused of 'gross insinuation' by the Ceann Comhairle, Deputy Dowling refused to withdraw his remark and chose instead to leave the chamber.

Joseph Dowling returned to the Defence Forces involvement in the Congo on 5 May 1976 and sought 'additional information in relation to Irish soldiers killed or wounded in Elisabethville and Jadotville from the United Nations as distinct from that contained in the UN reports placed in the Library'.<sup>55</sup> Joseph Dowling considered there to be errors in the UN reports and drew attention to the difference between UN official reports and the information contained in Conor Cruise O'Brien's book *To Katanga and Back*. Garret FitzGerald replied that 'all available information from UN sources has been placed at the disposal of the Deputy'. There was no additional information to be provided from the UN or from the Department of Defence, to which Joseph Dowling replied 'It is not a coverup job, is it?' Garret FitzGerald made it quite clear there was material

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<sup>52</sup> Cpl Michael Whelan, interview with IRG, 11 May 2021.

<sup>53</sup> Liam Roche, interview with IRG, 20 Apr. 2021.

<sup>54</sup> *Dáil Éireann debates*, vol 288, no. 9, 4 March 1976 (<https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/1976-03-04/5/>).

<sup>55</sup> *Dáil Éireann debates*, vol. 290, no. 5, 5 May 1976 (<https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/1976-05-05/17/>).

relevant to UN actions in Elisabethville and Jadotville at the UN in New York, but it would not be released for many years:

they have no further information they can make available. The information they have is information which will not be published for a long period, probably not during the lifetime of the people who were involved in these events, events that affect the lives and deaths of the particular people concerned.

Much of this information is now available at UN Archives in New York and is one of the chief archival sources used in the writing of the Independent Review Group's report.

In December 1977, Chief of Staff Maj Gen Carl O'Sullivan instructed a Board, under the Presidency of Assistant Chief of Staff Col Richard Bunworth, to examine 'all DFRs, GROs, Instructions, relating to the award of medals and thereafter to report on all existing recommendations for the award of medals to individuals'.<sup>56</sup> It was 'to make any recommendations it feels necessary to more clearly define criteria for the award of medals'. A permanent medal board was also to be set up. The Board felt it 'would be better to devote the Military Medal for Gallantry to acts of gallantry, bravery, courage linked, if necessary to leadership, and to devote the Distinguished Service Medal to varying degrees of distinguished service linked with leadership, devotion to duty, moral courage and so on'.<sup>57</sup> It recommended a change in the regulations concerning the Distinguished Service Medal and the Military Medal for Gallantry. Preferring instead 'a liberal interpretation by the Board' of these points, the Deputy Adjutant-General presented the case against changing the regulations: 'seeming diminishment of the existing awards, reversal of Army attitude from the past, delay in getting agreement of 2 ministers, etc'.<sup>58</sup> Decisions had been taken in the past and they could not be reversed. It was indicative of the attitude that since the 1960s had also been followed across the Defence Forces over Jadotville and in respect of the award of medals over Jadotville. It was regulations-based, narrow and unreflective, showing an institutional inability to take initiative and think freely outside rules and regulations.

Jadotville blended into the narrative of the Defence Force's deployment to UNIFIL in Lebanon which began in 1978. There was continuity in overseas service. Nineteen years after Jadotville C/S John Foster, who had been a Corporal with 'A' Company in 1961, was serving with the 47 Inf Bn in Lebanon. He described to journalist Tom Brady of the *Evening Press* being in captivity after the battle of Jadotville in a longer recounting of his military career that appeared under the by-line 'old stagers – new stage'.<sup>59</sup> Where Jadotville blended in too was in the experience it gave men from 'A' Company who went on further overseas missions in Congo, Cyprus and particularly in Lebanon with UNIFIL from 1978. Having experienced combat gave 'A' Company veterans, particularly men who were now NCOs that necessary combat experience when leading younger personnel who themselves were in difficult and dangerous situations.<sup>60</sup> There may have been an enforced silence in the Defence Forces on Jadotville, but there was also an awareness amongst

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<sup>56</sup> MA, Medals Board Box 1, Convening Order signed by Maj Gen O'Sullivan, 23 December 1977.

<sup>57</sup> MA, Medals Board Box 1, Col Bunworth to Maj Gen O'Sullivan, 20 February 1978.

<sup>58</sup> MA, Medals Board Box 1, Deputy Adjutant-General to Adjutant-General, 21 February 1978.

<sup>59</sup> *Evening Press*, 21 May 1980.

<sup>60</sup> This point was made by Cpl Seán Foley to the IRG in an interview on 9 February 2021.

personnel of the experience having been at Jadotville brought with it and that when it mattered this experience was vital.

It is important to underline that while Jadotville and its aftermath was a reason why many personnel from 'A' Company left the Defence Forces, it proved no impediment to officers and NCOs who remained in the Defence Forces. Pat Quinlan retired as a colonel on 2 March 1979, having commanded the 2 Inf Bn, the Observer Corps and been Commandant of the Infantry School. While Noel Carey and Liam Donnelly left the Defence Forces for civilian careers, Dermot Byrne retired as Quartermaster-General in the rank of major-general, Tom Quinlan retired as GOC Southern Command in the rank of brigadier-general while Joe Leech, Joe Clune and Kevin Knightly retired as colonels. 'A' Company's CS Jack Prendergast and CQMS Patrick Neville attained senior NCO ranks respectively as battalion sergeant-major and battalion quartermaster-sergeant.

Journalist Raymond Smith's book *Under the Blue Flag*, published in December 1980, covered Jadotville in detail. It reached number 4 in the Irish bestseller's list after being in print for only a week.<sup>61</sup> The book received positive reviews across the Irish print media through the early months of 1981. During the 1980s, Lebanon and UNIFIL dominated what public comment there was on Defence Forces involvement in peacekeeping. Niemba still received passing coverage, but Jadotville and Elisabethville received next to no coverage and the actions of the 1 Inf Gp at Kamina were completely forgotten.

Very occasional references to Jadotville occurred from time to time in print media. In the Galway newspaper *City Tribune* on 31 March 1989 the former second-in-command of 'A' Company, 35 Inf Bn, Maj Gen Dermot Byrne, gave an interview on his Defence Forces career. He had retired in 1986 as Quarter Master-General of the Defence Forces. Maj Gen Byrne covered Jadotville in a significant portion of his interview. As a military decision, he felt 'A' Company's deployment to Jadotville 'stank, but the company felt it might have been for political reasons'.<sup>62</sup> His conclusion was correct.

Looking back, Maj Gen Byrne felt that 'A' Company 'had no option but to submit'. He suggested that Comdt Quinlan's decision to surrender 'was made in order to avoid casualties in the first instance', though Maj Gen Byrne added 'somehow the Irish knew that if their enemy were intent on killing them they would have done so sooner.' Maj Gen Byrne mentioned only one comrade from Jadotville, he described Sgt Walter Hegarty as 'the finest NCO he served with in the Congo.'

### ***The 50th Command and Staff Course Syndicate study of the Battle of Jadotville***

The first comprehensive study of the Battle of Jadotville was carried out in 1993 by a group of officers attending the Defence Forces' 50th Command and Staff Course at the Military College.<sup>63</sup> The Command and Staff course is a nine-month, in-house, intensive course taken by officers at the rank of commandant providing qualifications for lieutenant-colonel rank and filling staff appointments at brigade and higher echelons.

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<sup>61</sup> *Limerick Leader*, 27 December 1980.

<sup>62</sup> *City Tribune*, 31 March 1989.

<sup>63</sup> 'The Battle of Jadotville. Congo: 1961. A UN case study by students of the 50th Command and Staff Course 1993'.

Members of the syndicate, in essence a 'study group', were four officers: Comdt Padraic McDunphy, Comdt Seamus Rouine, Comdt Andrew Richardson and Comdt Ollie Barbour. Their report, researched and written under the mentoring of Comdt Jim Roche, was part of their studies in a module on 'Low-intensity Conflicts'. It was a five chapter, fifty-six page analysis, a UN case study, entitled 'A detailed study of all aspects of the Jadotville incident, September 1961'.<sup>64</sup> It was never designed to be published, being presented and written as a key element of the module to ensure a pass mark and get the members of the syndicate through this part of their course.

The four officers' study on Jadotville was just one of several large-scale, in-depth projects the officers on the 50th Command and Staff Course were undertaking. Other syndicates were researching and preparing to present on other military topics at the same time.<sup>65</sup> The four officers who would study the Battle of Jadotville were brought together at random and also assigned their group topic of Jadotville at random by their instructor. However all later recalled that they had some connection by family or otherwise to the ONUC deployment and each had strong childhood memories of Jadotville and of Niamba.<sup>66</sup> They introduced their findings to the Command and Staff School on 18 May 1993 in a two-hour presentation covering all aspects of the Battle of Jadotville.<sup>67</sup>

That the syndicate was given Jadotville to assess was at the time considered controversial and sensitive. There was a great deal of interest within the Defence Forces in their work. At one stage it was thought that the newly appointed Chief of Staff, Lt Gen Noel Bergin, might attend, a possibility which put the syndicate under considerable pressure.<sup>68</sup>

Despite such high-level interest, the syndicate found no obstacles put in the way of their work. There was no pressure placed on them in conducting their research or to conduct it with a specific outcome in mind. They were nevertheless advised to handle their topic sensitively, 'to be careful what we were putting in it, that there were serving people, [people who had] just served and were still serving ... the influence was under-tone rather than overt.'<sup>69</sup> There were many Jadotville and Congo veterans still alive, some then being in, or just having retired from, senior positions in the Defence Forces. There was also the consideration of family members of Jadotville veterans to be aware of and the syndicate was aware there were lingering political, personal and military issues over Jadotville that remained live over thirty years later. 'The syndicate members knew well that in the Western Command there were 'subliminal deep-seated emotions' over Jadotville 'surrounding the surrender versus the attempt to rescue.'<sup>70</sup> Nevertheless, they wished to get as close to

<sup>64</sup> Chapter one covered the political history of the Congo; Chapter two the 35 Inf Bn and its operational environment; Chapter three the Battle of Jadotville; Chapter four the efforts to relieve 'A' Company and the aftermath of the Battle of Jadotville and Chapter five was an 'epilogue' which made observations and conclusions. Aspects of the document have been worked at appropriate places into the report of the IRG.

<sup>65</sup> The Jadotville syndicate mentioned in their report that other syndicates were working on the 'Ohio military leadership grid' and on the 1989 ruling by Mr Justice Barr in 'Ryan v the State' on duty of care towards personnel.

<sup>66</sup> Lt Col Ollie Barbour (Retd) recalled in particular: 'I lived in the barracks in Renmore in Galway, the Western Command, and Sgt Walter Hegarty, one of the lads that was injured actually [at Jadotville] ... when we played games everybody wanted to be Sgt Hegarty ... when there was war games, there was great stories about how many Baluba he had killed, we thought they were stories.' (Comment during presentation by Jadotville Syndicate to the IRG, 18 March 2021).

<sup>67</sup> The presentation was videoed, but the tape was not located by the IRG.

<sup>68</sup> Lt Col Andrew Richardson (Retd) recalled to the IRG that the syndicate had mentioned to senior people in the Military College the possibility of inviting Col Pat Quinlan, but this was not pursued, and the audience was limited to persons from within the Military College (Comment during presentation by Jadotville Syndicate to the IRG, 18 March 2021).

<sup>69</sup> Lt Col Ollie Barbour (Retd), comment during presentation by Jadotville Syndicate to the IRG, 18 March 2021.

<sup>70</sup> Comdt Padraig McDunphy (Retd), comment during presentation by Jadotville Syndicate to the IRG, 18 March 2021.



the truth as possible, given the constraints concerning research materials, technology and in particular time constraints they were working under.

Recalling their work to the Independent Review Group, Comdt Pádraig McDunphy (Retd) explained that the Jadotville presentation was purposely situated at the end of the 50th Command and Staff Course. ‘There was a big deal made about it’, it was ‘going to be the crescendo, the crowning glory of the course, this was going to be the big thing’.<sup>71</sup> Either that, or as everyone knew, the members of the syndicate were ‘going to scatter to the four winds’ very soon afterwards as the Command and Staff course would be over within a matter of days of their presentation being delivered.<sup>72</sup> Lt Col Seamus Rouine (Retd) and Lt Col Ollie Barbour (Retd) added that one reason they might have been towards the end of the course was that there was always the possibility that they might be told to ‘stand down’ and not deliver their presentation.<sup>73</sup>

Unusually, and a sign of the real sensitivity surrounding the syndicate’s research, they had to present their work for assessment before presenting it to their classmates. In undertaking their research, the syndicate felt unlimited in what they could do. No pressure was placed on them not to delve too deeply. However, they had no funding to enable them to travel to interview Jadotville veterans; they could have interviewed more with funding and with greater time. They were also in effect limited by the lack of published material on Jadotville in the then very resource-limited Military College Library and elsewhere.<sup>74</sup> In discussing their research in 2021, the syndicate members felt they had not seen the 35 Inf Bn Unit History, nor had they visited Military Archives.<sup>75</sup>

The syndicate was able to undertake a limited number of interviews. Lt Col Seamus Rouine and Lt Col Andrew Richardson spoke with Lt Col Seán Barrett (Retd) with Comdt Liam Donnelly (Retd) and Col Mick Shannon (Retd).<sup>76</sup> The syndicate interviewed Col Pat Quinlan (Retd) in the mess in Galway.<sup>77</sup> Sharp and ready to talk, this was the first time, they felt, that Col Quinlan had spoken about Jadotville and certainly the first time he had spoken to serving members of the Defence Forces outside ‘A’ Company. Lt Col Ollie Barbour recalled that Col Quinlan got angry if the term ‘surrender’ was used, his preferred term was a ‘negotiated ceasefire’. Col Quinlan was ‘emotional’ in recounting his memories of Jadotville to his interviewers. He was particularly compassionate and considerate towards his men, saying ‘how could I come home to Athlone and tell the mothers and the wives of their husbands and sons that I left them to the Balubas.’<sup>78</sup>

To the recollection of the syndicate, the issue of medals did not come up in the interviews and Col Quinlan did not mention to the syndicate if he had recommended people for medals. Comdt Quinlan was concerned about how ‘A’ Company had been treated and why Jadotville had been pushed under the carpet and wanted it to come out into the public domain. He did not, to their recollection, seem concerned about medals. In their conclusions, the syndicate covered the medals

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<sup>71</sup> Comdt Pádraig McDunphy (Retd), comment during presentation by Jadotville Syndicate to the IRG, 18 March 2021.

<sup>72</sup> Comdt Pádraig McDunphy (Retd), comment during presentation by Jadotville Syndicate to the IRG, 18 March 2021.

<sup>73</sup> Lt Col Seamus Rouine (Retd) and Lt Col Ollie Barbour, (Retd) comment during presentation by Jadotville Syndicate to the IRG, 18 March 2021.

<sup>74</sup> Books used included Conor Cruise O’Brien, *To Katanga and Back* (London, 1962), Raymond Smith, *The fighting Irish in the Congo* (Dublin, 1962).

<sup>75</sup> The view of the syndicate was that, rightly or wrongly, Military Archives was in effect closed to them.

<sup>76</sup> These interviews were taped, but the tapes were later erased by accident.

<sup>77</sup> Col Quinlan was not in good health and was accompanied by his son Pat, who was also an officer in the Defence Forces.

<sup>78</sup> Lt Col Ollie Barbour (Retd), comment during presentation by Jadotville Syndicate to the IRG, 18 March 2021.

question very lightly, pointing out that 'from our interviews of officers it is to be noted that there were many individual acts of bravery under fire – yet no awards were made in respect of this action. It must be viewed in the context of circumstances in which other Congo awards were made.'<sup>79</sup>

In Lt Col Ollie Barbour's memory, Col Quinlan's 'number one consideration, to the best of my recollection, was always he had to bring everyone home safe, he was a real commander.'<sup>80</sup> Col Quinlan said specifically that after 'A' Company returned to Ireland he kept up contact with the men and families of 'A' Company because the Defence Forces did not; Lt Col Ollie Barbour (Retd) felt that there was 'a sense of abandonment there'.<sup>81</sup> Col Quinlan spoke about the shortages of food and water 'A' Company faced at Jadotville, the need to keep his men's morale up, and the work of 'A' Company's medical officer, Comdt Joe Clune. In addition, Comdt Pádraig McDunphy (Retd) emphasised that 'force protection of his company and for his Company was certainly what came across to us as being one of his priorities'.<sup>82</sup> This was shown by Col Quinlan's early insistence that 'A' Company dig in, even if it was 'textbook stuff' that Quinlan followed.<sup>83</sup> The attacks by the Fouga jet were mentioned only in passing.

The syndicate's conclusions took the form of a set of questions put to their audience and readers of their presentation. They emphasised that the Battle of Jadotville was then over thirty years ago in a very different environment and that the concept of the 'duty of care' of commanders and military authorities towards their personnel had not been established. First the syndicate explored the range of military, political, communications, intelligence, and logistics problems facing the UN in the Congo; they emphasised flaws, tactical and strategic, in ONUC's understanding of the military and political situation in Katanga in August and September 1961. These flaws led to ONUC being 'duped' and 'A' Company being led 'into what must be considered a carefully planned trap'.<sup>84</sup> Specifically, 'how sound is it to station an unsupported company in hostile terrain over 80 miles from its HQ?'<sup>85</sup> The UN thus 'created a hostage opportunity' for Katanga of its own making, allowing 'A' Company 'to be used as a propaganda tool and a negotiating ploy'.<sup>86</sup> The syndicate felt that 'the "surrender" of the coy was brought about by [the] possible duping of the Coy Comd' into entering into an agreement for joint patrols and for food and water supplies. They concluded that 'given the fatigue of the personnel, and [the] tactical situation it must have looked like an attractive and reasonable option to Comdt Quinlan at the time'.<sup>87</sup> On the margins of the copy of the Command and Staff Course syndicate paper seen by the Independent Review Group, Col Joe Leech (Retd) has at this point in the text written 'Correct'.

When discussing their own memories of serving in later years with Jadotville veterans and with those who had been involved in Force Kane I and II, Comdt Pádraig McDunphy (Retd) recalled that in Columb Barracks, Mullingar there was 'an underlying bone of contention' and that discussion of Jadotville was

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<sup>79</sup> 'The Battle of Jadotville. Congo: 1961. A UN case study by students of the 50th Command and Staff Course 1993', p. 55.

<sup>80</sup> Lt Col Ollie Barbour (Retd), comment during presentation by Jadotville Syndicate to the IRG, 18 March 2021.

<sup>81</sup> Lt Col Ollie Barbour (Retd), comment during presentation by Jadotville Syndicate to the IRG, 18 March 2021.

<sup>82</sup> Comdt Pádraig McDunphy (Retd), comments during presentation by Jadotville Syndicate to the IRG, 18 March 2021.

<sup>83</sup> Comdt Pádraig McDunphy (Retd), comments during presentation by Jadotville Syndicate to the IRG, 18 March 2021.

<sup>84</sup> 'The Battle of Jadotville. Congo: 1961. A UN case study by students of the 50th Command and Staff Course 1993', p. 54.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 54.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 54.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 54.

sub judice, that it wasn't something they were shouting from the rooftops ... and that is in the light of the way, the perception of how the rest of the Army treated them, or the perception of 'A' Company ... they kind of went insular, they closed in on themselves, they didn't really talk about it ... I think they felt very let down and isolated and that they hadn't been supported and that other people had got on with their careers and their life and all the rest of it ... and what they had been through wasn't recognised.<sup>88</sup>

### ***Comdt Donnelly seeks answers and awards***

Comdt Liam Donnelly, Support Platoon commander with 'A' Company, was one of those interviewed by the 1993 Command and Staff course syndicate. He retired from the Defence Forces in 1975. Comdt Donnelly wrote to Col Pat Quinlan in February 1993 that his return to civilian life 'did reduce the interest, the opportunity and the need to give the "Congo Service" particular attention'.<sup>89</sup> Comdt Donnelly and Col Quinlan had met some weeks earlier at a 'send off' for Col Kevin Knightly and they had begun to discuss the Congo. Comdt Donnelly felt that 'the manner in which officialdom reacted (or acted) to all of "A Coy's" situation was grossly unfair.' He suggested that 'now that key protagonists to the establishment of the truth have moved out of military service this may be an opportune time to balance the scales.'<sup>90</sup> These conversations seem to have been going on in parallel with the work of the 50th Command and Staff Course and without, at this stage, knowledge of what the Jadotville syndicate were investigating and researching.

Independently Col Quinlan had been working on a detailed history of 'A' Company and it was almost complete by 1993.<sup>91</sup> He wanted to prepare 'a more detailed report on all aspects of our campaign in the Congo 1961' and proposed to Comdt Donnelly that they meet.<sup>92</sup> Comdt Donnelly agreed and said that when next visiting Galway he would contact Col Quinlan 'and have a good chat'. Col Quinlan hoped to get detailed information from Donnelly on the actions of the Mortar Section in Jadotville. He wrote that Comdt Donnelly's section 'was just marvellous.'<sup>93</sup> Col Quinlan added a postscript to his letter that he did not intend to rewrite the history of 'A' Company. Giving more detail about Jadotville, expressed in diplomatic language, was his objective. As 'the main participants – in fact all except Sean Barrett - in 35th Bn are all dead', Col Quinlan explained that 'it is not my intention to hurt anyone dead or alive – the dead especially'. He was not, however, 'too concerned about hurting Cruise O'Brien or McKeown, and they are alive and have escaped the criticism they should have faced. They were possibly, and I believe they were, the main culprits. We were the scapegoats when their stupid plan misfired.' In September 1993, Col Quinlan deposited a small collection of personal material in Military Archives which included a copy of the 'A' Company history he had recently completed.<sup>94</sup>

Comdt Liam Donnelly began to re-examine Jadotville. He had been one of the first, over thirty years earlier, to lecture on Jadotville in public, giving a slide show on his experiences in early 1962.

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<sup>88</sup> Comdt Padraig McDunphy (Retd), comment during presentation by Jadotville Syndicate to the IRG, 18 March 2021.

<sup>89</sup> Comdt Liam Donnelly private papers, Comdt Liam Donnelly to Col Pat Quinlan, 2 February 1993.

<sup>90</sup> While he could have been referring to a number of figures, it is noticeable that Lt Gen James Parker, who as a captain had been an intelligence officer with 35 Inf Bn, and later a Staff Officer in HQ Sector B, had retired as Chief of Staff in April 1992.

<sup>91</sup> Comdt Pat Quinlan, *History "A" Company Group – 35 Irish Battalion*.

<sup>92</sup> Comdt Liam Donnelly private papers, Col Quinlan to Comdt Donnelly, 20 January 1993.

<sup>93</sup> Comdt Liam Donnelly private papers, Col Quinlan to Comdt Donnelly, 20 January 1993.

<sup>94</sup> MA, PRCN 304, Note by Capt Victor Laing, Military Archives, 13 September 1993.

By the early 1990s. Comdt Donnelly was extremely frustrated about the lack of attention being given to Jadotville as 'it was getting ignored, people were dying, the numbers were decreasing.'<sup>95</sup> However, there was 'a bit more talk going on between' the veterans and he was in close contact with Capt Noel Carey on how to make progress getting recognition for 'A' Company. Comdt Donnelly 'took a room in the back of the house and set up a desk writing and researching ... it became an obsession with him'. Comdt Donnelly explained to Col Quinlan that 1993 would be a busy year for him as he had several commitments and would be retiring in 1994. On retirement, Comdt Donnelly took up researching Jadotville and by winter 1996 had completed a detailed assessment of what happened at Jadotville with suggestions of why it happened.<sup>96</sup>

### ***Comdt Donnelly's 1996 Submission to the Chief of Staff***

Writing in December 1996 to Lt Gen Noel Bergin's successor as Chief of Staff of the Defence Forces, Lt Gen Gerry McMahon, Comdt Liam Donnelly explained that through his ongoing research he found it 'somewhat disturbing to find out after 35 years that "A" Company of the 35th Infantry Bn was used as a pawn at "Jadotville". The evidence, which he enclosed in a submission to Lt Gen McMahon, was 'indeed very strong to suggest that "A" Company was used to justify the illegal use of military force in the furtherance of political and personal objectives.'<sup>97</sup> He felt that if 'A' Company had suffered heavy casualties it would have justified Operation Morthor, but as it turned out to refer to 'A' Company afterwards would expose 'the near total incompetence at higher levels both political and military' within ONUC.

Comdt Donnelly was incorrect on the relationship between 'A' Company being sent to Jadotville and Operation Morthor, which would not be fully scoped until after 'A' Company were sent to Jadotville. But he was correct that there was a 'political and military smokescreen' in place surrounding Jadotville; 'A' Company had been used 'for the purpose of appeasing guilty minds and briefing the uninformed'. It would take close on two decades for the necessary archives to be released for an open in-depth examination of Jadotville and, as Comdt Donnelly was about to find out, the time was not yet suitable for many to allow Jadotville to be the subject of open examination.

Turning to Col Pat Quinlan, Comdt Donnelly said it had been 'a wonderful experience and honour' to serve under Col Quinlan and he resented the 'lack of support which Commandant Quinlan and his unit received before, during and after "Jadotville".' It was 'a great injustice' to Col Quinlan that 'his service and bravery in Katanga in 1961 – not just at Jadotville – has never been acknowledged by the Irish Military Authorities.' He strongly recommended to Lt Gen McMahon 'that Comdt P. Quinlan's service in the Congo and that of his "A" Company be reassessed.' Comdt Donnelly emphasised that 'the righting of injustice often required an independent and brave decision.'

There was no immediate response. Comdt Donnelly wrote again to Lt Gen McMahon in February 1997, reminding him of his submission and doing so 'in the knowledge that the health and medical condition of Pat Quinlan gives cause for concern.'<sup>98</sup> Lt Gen McMahon and Comdt Donnelly met,

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<sup>95</sup> Comdt Aidan Donnelly (Retd), interview with IRG, 3 Feb 2021.

<sup>96</sup> Comdt Liam Donnelly, *Congo – 1961. Submission to Chief of Staff, December 1996.*

<sup>97</sup> Comdt Liam Donnelly private papers, Comdt Donnelly to Lt Gen McMahon, 9 December 1996.

<sup>98</sup> Comdt Liam Donnelly private papers, Comdt Donnelly to Lt Gen McMahon, 12 February 1997.

but Comdt Donnelly felt that ‘at a meeting with him I was verbally side-stepped.’<sup>99</sup> Lt Gen McMahon may have wanted Jadotville left alone, he had also served in Athlone and knew many of those who had fought at Jadotville. Comdt Donnelly later recalled that ‘I was given a verbal reply which reflected a lack of interest and a lack of critical examination of the problem. Needless to remark, I was amazed and disappointed. How could I inform any member of ‘A’ Company of that situation?’<sup>100</sup>

Col Pat Quinlan died on 2 April 1997, aged 78.

Speaking in February 2017, Lt Gen McMahon recalled that he attended Col Quinlan’s funeral in his official capacity as Chief of Staff ‘because I really feel that Pat Quinlan and his company were not properly recognised.’<sup>101</sup> He continued that he had followed up on Comdt Donnelly’s initiative and had read correspondence from Pat Quinlan, the ‘A’ Company radio log and other documents from the Quinlan family and was ‘appalled.’ Lt Gen McMahon asked Comdt Donnelly what ‘A’ Company really wanted and he replied recognition, but really the Distinguished Service Medals that Pat Quinlan had recommended should be granted. Lt Gen McMahon cited legal DFRs as a reason why the medals cases could not be reopened.

Lt Gen McMahon recalled that he then contacted Comdt Donnelly about what now could be done ‘outside the DSMs’ and Comdt Donnelly said he would reply on this matter after checking with and had spoken to ‘various people’, but that Lt Gen McMahon had received no reply by the time he retired as Chief of Staff approximately some six months later, and as far as he knew Comdt Donnelly did not submit material to either of his subsequent two successors Lt Gen David Stapleton or Lt Gen Colm Mangan.

It is important to point out that Lt Gen McMahon, who served in ONUC in 1962 as part of the 37 Inf Bn with men who had served in Jadotville, felt that he had taken a positive active role when it came to Jadotville. One might say that he took a legalistic approach, but he felt he had tried to take up the case. In a Military Archives Oral History Project interview in February 2017, he made the point very strongly that he felt he was named in Rose Doyle’s *Heroes of Jadotville* as ‘a man who didn’t do anything about this, this is patently untrue, and I was very annoyed about it at the time.’<sup>102</sup> After considering legal avenues or contacting the Quinlan family on advice ‘eventually I just let it lie, and that’s where it lies now, but I’m still ripping mad about it to be quite honest.’ He used the interview to state for the record that ‘The only thing I had to do with the follow-up from Jadotville was positive – I took up the cudgels, but ran out of time, as they ran out of time getting back to me.’

### ***A changed climate on recalling and analysing the Battle of Jadotville***

In March 2004, Comdt Donnelly resubmitted his analysis of Jadotville to Lt Gen Mangan’s successor as Chief of Staff, Lt Gen Jim Sreenan. He was resubmitting in a changed environment. Capt Mick O’Fearall’s account of his Defence Forces service *Tough at the Bottom*, published in 1999

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<sup>99</sup> Comdt Liam Donnelly private papers, Comdt Donnelly to Lt Gen Sreenan, 2 March and 23 March 2004.

<sup>100</sup> *Westmeath Independent*, 3 December 2005.

<sup>101</sup> MA, MAOHP-0005, Lt Gen Gerry McMahon, 10 February 2017.

<sup>102</sup> MA, MAOHP-0005, Lt Gen Gerry McMahon, 10 February 2017.

contained calls for a full-scale investigation into Jadotville. Press coverage mentioned that the 'last chapters in the book reveal for the very first time the controversial story of the Battle of Jadotville' and how 'A' Company 'having fought bravely, were subsequently shamefully treated and callously ignored.'<sup>103</sup> Capt O'Fearall wrote of a 'policy of forgetfulness' fuelling 'the clouds of suspicion and innuendo' which hung over Jadotville. A short piece in the *Sunday Independent*, while containing many errors, took up Comdt O'Fearall's story and quoted him that 'the good name of the men involved demands no less than a full inquiry even at this late stage', the official history 'chooses to gloss over these issues, contenting itself with giving a sanitised version of the events involved.'<sup>104</sup>

The 40th anniversary of Jadotville saw renewed criticism in the local and national press of the failure of the Department of Defence and the Defence Forces 'to recognise the sacrifices ['A' Company, 35th Battalion] made in the name of peace' in Katanga.<sup>105</sup> Sgt Bobby Allen DSM, Sgt Bill Ready, Gnr Tom Cunningham and Pte Jim Flynn, all 'A' Company veterans, criticised the 'disgraceful' treatment they and their comrades received from the Department of Defence and the Defence Forces for forgetting Jadotville and the Defence Force's Congo deployment'. The *Westmeath Examiner* reported 'the bitterness of the four former soldiers at the lack of recognition' at formal official level, particularly as the four men had been recognised with a medallion by their IUNVA Post 20 in Mullingar. Sgt Ready spoke for the four telling the newspaper that they had been 'forgotten', as had Comdt Pat Quinlan who deserved recognition for saving the lives of all in 'A' Company. Post 20 also honoured the late Pte Matt Quinlan of 'A' Company with an IUNVA medallion and memorial certificate, which was presented to his mother Alice Quinlan in Mullingar in November 2002.<sup>106</sup> The *Leitrim Observer* carried a lengthy account of the presentation, with a poignant quote from a letter written by Pte Matt Quinlan that 'I have cried, pained and hoped, but most of all, I have lived times that others would say are best forgotten. At least someday I will be able to say that I was proud to be a soldier.'<sup>107</sup>

The process of seeking to reassess Jadotville was moving from the view that official silence was to protect the reputations of senior figures to criticising the official silence and that the military authorities and the state had never sought to recognise the Battle of Jadotville, how 'A' Company had fought and how many from 'A' Company had suffered afterwards as a result of accusations of cowardice or as a result of trauma.

The next step was recognition for bravery and setting the record straight on 'A' Company's military achievements. The men of 'A' Company wanted to clear the slurs against their names. Some wanted to tell their stories on the record. In late May 2002, BSM Jack Prendergast, Sgt Bobby Allen DSM, BQMS Patrick Neville and Cpl John Gorman were to meet with Comdt Pat Brennan of Military Archives in Custume Barracks, Athlone, to record their experiences with ONUC.<sup>108</sup> The meeting had been suggested by John Gorman. Jack Prendergast ultimately withdrew 'for personal reasons.'<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> *Longford Leader*, 24 December 1999.

<sup>104</sup> *Sunday Independent*, 23 January 2000.

<sup>105</sup> *Irish Times*, 4 October 2001 and *Westmeath Express*, 6 October 2001. The *Westmeath Examiner* carried a special report on the anniversary and the IUNVA Post 20 medallion in its 6 October 2001 edition.

<sup>106</sup> *Leitrim Observer*, 20 November 2002.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>108</sup> MA, box, Jadotville Medal Queries, Brennan to Neville, 24 April 2002.

<sup>109</sup> MA, box, Jadotville Medal Queries, note by Comdt Brennan, 10 May 2002 on letter to BSM Jack Prendergast of 24 April 2002.



Col Terry O'Neill's in-depth assessment of why 'A' Company had been sent to Jadotville was published in the journal *International Peacekeeping* in late 2002.<sup>110</sup> Col O'Neill had served with the 34 Inf Bn in Katanga and had considerable personal experience of involvement in UN peacekeeping missions. His article was the first detailed academic assessment of Jadotville, placing it in the wider context of UN peacekeeping operations. It remains the most in-depth and academically sound investigation into the fate of 'A' Company. Col O'Neill argued that 'the decision to send 'A' Company into what had been recognised as a highly dangerous situation indicated that personnel in New York were either unaware of developments in the field or totally indifferent to the welfare of the Irish company.'<sup>111</sup> Col O'Neill's article and an award-winning 2004 RTE Radio Documentary 'The Siege of Jadotville' by Tom McGuire, in which Col O'Neill and members of 'A' Company were interviewed, gave Comdt Liam Donnelly a chance to renew his interest in Jadotville.<sup>112</sup>

Comdt Liam Donnelly and Capt Noel Carey had met for lunch with Col Joe Leech at Leech's house in Athlone, and had agreed to get involved in the documentary in order to bring Jadotville 'to light' as 'what actually happened [at Jadotville] was not documented anywhere.'<sup>113</sup> Liam Donnelly felt this was 'the opportunity to do something about' Jadotville, though Col Leech's wife Lola Leech was not happy with the plan as it would resurrect the hurt of Jadotville. Col Leech's son, Lt Cmdr John Leech (Retd) felt that the three men were interested not in decorations, but in government recognition of 'A' Company's actions at Jadotville. Lt Cmdr Leech felt the three had no idea what the documentary would ultimately lead to in terms of being a catalyst to increase public interest in the Battle of Jadotville.

### ***Comdt Donnelly engages Lt Gen Sreenan on Jadotville***

Approached by RTE to participate in the programme, Comdt Donnelly told Chief of Staff Lt Gen Jim Sreenan that he was 'energised' by involvement in McGuire's Jadotville documentary.<sup>114</sup> It 'initiated an amazing response' and 'corrected and informed many attitudes, knowledge, and opinions of Army personnel'. Though Col Pat Quinlan was by now dead, the presence of three of his four platoon commanders (Capt Carey, Col Leech and Comdt Donnelly) on the programme as well as the authentic voice of soldiers from all ranks who had fought at Jadotville, and the assessment of a soldier-academic Col Terry O'Neill who had also served in the Congo gave the documentary gold standard credentials.

Comdt Donnelly told Lt Gen Sreenan that 'the survivors of Jadotville are becoming fewer but apparently getting more vocal and more aggressive regarding their need to have the Defence Forces acknowledge their brave contribution in UN Service.' He brought up the issue of medals for Jadotville by pointing out that the veterans were 'particularly disturbed at the fact that some personnel were commended, and where commendations were signed by Comdt P. Quinlan, Lt Col McNamee and the Adjutant-General, no awards were granted.' Was there, Comdt Donnelly

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<sup>110</sup> Col John Terence O'Neill (Retd), 'The Irish Company at Jadotville, Congo, 1961: Soldiers or symbols', *International Peacekeeping*, vol. 9, no. 4 (Winter, 2002), pp127-44.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.* p. 132.

<sup>112</sup> The documentary interviewed Comdt Liam Donnelly, Col Joe Leech, Capt Noel Carey, Sgt Bobby Allen, Gnr Tom Cunningham, Cpl Peter O'Callaghan and Pte Bill Ready, and Col Terry O'Neill.

<sup>113</sup> Lt Cmdr John Leech (Retd), interview with IRG, 23 February 2021.

<sup>114</sup> Comdt Liam Donnelly private papers, Comdt Donnelly to Lt Gen Sreenan, 2 March 2004 and 23 March 2004.

speculated 'a higher authority, UN or Irish, which dictated how A Coy would be treated? Why was all the bravery of Jadotville "air-brushed from official military comment?' Comdt Donnelly signed off, resubmitting his 1996 assessment of Jadotville to Lt Gen Sreenan, emphasising that 'the time is long overdue for "A" Coy of the 35th Battalion to get its due recognition' and with his hope that 'the Defence Forces will bring this outstanding problem to a satisfactory conclusion' having recommended:

- Recognition of Comdt Quinlan's leadership in the particular peculiar circumstances and location in which he was placed.
- "A" Company 35th Battalion, that was left isolated at Jadotville, be recognised for the valiant and brave defence of their position.
- Recommendations on file as mentioned be examined and awarded.
- UN helicopter pilot Bjorn Hovden and crew member Eric Thors be recognised for their bravery.

### ***The 2004 Study and Analysis Groups***

2004 saw a further remarkable change in the tempo and depth of interest in Jadotville. The RTE documentary and Col Terry O'Neill's and Comdt Liam Donnelly's analysis provided the necessary momentum to bring what had been a local and somewhat sporadic campaign to national attention.<sup>115</sup>

Chief of Staff Lt Gen Sreenan recalled that he found Comdt Donnelly 'very sincere [and] genuine' and he sent Comdt Donnelly's correspondence to Deputy Chief of Staff (Support) Maj Gen Dermot Earley for action.<sup>116</sup> Maj Gen Earley summarised Comdt Donnelly's intent as being:

- 'Establish the facts',
- Clear his own 'doubts regarding operational procedures',
- Clear the 'good name and professional integrity and bravery of all the 'A' Company personnel in relation to the Jadotville Affair'.<sup>117</sup>

Maj Gen Earley added that Comdt Donnelly recommended that Comdt Quinlan and 'A' Company be 'acknowledged' for their entire period of service in the Congo. Questions were being tabled in Dáil Éireann for answer by the Minister for Defence highlighting the need to investigate what happened at Jadotville and afterwards. On Lt Gen Sreenan's direction, Maj Gen Earley sent Comdt Donnelly's correspondence and submission to the Defence Forces Training Centre at the Curragh on 5 April 2004. A 'Study Group' under Col Enda Breslin was set up in the Command and Staff School on 5 April 2004 to examine Comdt Donnelly's submission.<sup>118</sup> Col Breslin recalled that he felt that 'we've let this go on long enough, let's do something about it. And that's when

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<sup>115</sup> For example, in January 2004 Athlone town councillor Austin Berry, a former member of the Defence Forces put a motion before the town council for discussion in March 2004 seeking official action from the Minister for Defence and the Chief of Staff to recognise the bravery of those who fought at Jadotville. The motion was passed unanimously (*Westmeath Independent*, 31 January 2004 and 13 March 2004).

<sup>116</sup> Lt Gen Jim Sreenan DSM (Retd), interview with IRG, 11 May 2021.

<sup>117</sup> MA, box, Jadotville Medal Queries, Maj Gen Dermot Earley to Lt Gen Jim Sreenan DSM, 5 July 2004.

<sup>118</sup> Members were Col Breslin, Lt Col John Spierin, Comdt John Phelan and Comdt Michael Dolan and its Secretary was Capt D. Priestly. Lt Col Spierin was also a member of the 2020 – 2021 IRG.

my Study Group was formed.<sup>119</sup> The Study Group was instructed to report ‘recommendations for further action’ and ‘given the short time frame’ was to ‘confine its considerations to the actual submission. At this stage, it should not be necessary to examine any other evidence or witnesses.’<sup>120</sup> The Study Group ‘came under no external influence, either from within or without.’<sup>121</sup> Col Breslin recalled that in 2004

the members of ‘A’ Company were still mainly under a cloud and also there was a feeling that they let the side down, and that’s putting it mildly. It was the first time the Defence Forces were overseas and on active service and we had a company that surrendered, and it wasn’t viewed positively by the Defence Forces at the time. So that had a big bearing on what we looked at.<sup>122</sup>

After examining the growing body of material on ‘A’ Company at Jadotville, Col Breslin brought his group together to get their opinions.<sup>123</sup> Comdt Dillon’s response spoke for all the group: ‘Jesus, Sir, they were mighty men’.<sup>124</sup> The Study Group agreed.

Col Breslin’s group reported on 29 April 2004. The group recommended unanimously that ‘A’ Company should receive Defence Forces recognition for their actions in the form of a memorial located in the Garrison Church in Custume Barracks, or at another location in the barracks. Its report in paragraph 6(a) recommended that there should be an inscription on it to read:

The Defence Forces recognises the leadership, bravery and professional performance of ‘A’ Company 35 Inf Bn and its Irish and Swedish attachments who, under changing circumstances at Jadotville while besieged by overwhelming numbers of Katangese Gendarmerie and cut off from support and reinforcements did valiantly defend their position from 13 September 1961 to 17 September 1961.<sup>125</sup>

There would also be a nominal roll of the personnel of ‘A’ Company plus the names of the attached personnel. On the question of medals,

we hesitated and we didn’t recommend that medals would be awarded to individuals and our thinking at that time, and remember that the environment at that time was mainly to clear the name of the Company, we decided that time was of the essence ... that if we went to study each individual award it could take years, and in every military occasion I have been involved in there have been good guys and bad guys and guys who hid and guys who stood out and if we went into the nitty-gritty it would probably take years to discover who were the heroes and who were not.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> Col Enda Breslin (Retd), interview with IRG, 13 April 2021.

<sup>120</sup> DOD, 532/2004, part 1, study group assembly order signed by Brig Gen O’Sullivan, GOC DTFC, 1 April 2004. Col Breslin did talk informally to Jadotville veteran Pte Tom Gunn as they were long time friends. Pte Gunn let Col Breslin know that in his opinion they were on the right track.

<sup>121</sup> Col Enda Breslin (Retd), interview with IRG, 13 April 2021.

<sup>122</sup> Col Enda Breslin (Retd), interview with IRG, 13 April 2021.

<sup>123</sup> Sources used included the 35th Battalion’s unit history, the 50th C&S course syndicate report, and Col Terry O’Neill’s article in *International Peacekeeping* referenced above. The group did not have access to DFHQ files ‘including files concerning proposals for bravery awards.’ (DOD 532/4, part 1, Brig Gen Pat O’Sullivan to Maj Gen Dermot Earley, 4 May 2004).

<sup>124</sup> Col Enda Breslin (Retd), interview with IRG, 13 April 2021.

<sup>125</sup> From copy of Study Group report provided to IRG. ‘Changing’ may have been meant to read ‘challenging’.

<sup>126</sup> Col Enda Breslin (Retd), interview with IRG, 13 April 2021.

The study group was 'of the opinion that too much time may have elapsed to make a fair judgement on the award of medals etc., and it could be divisive, it therefore recommends that ALL personnel who were at Jadotville receive recognition as suggested in para 6.a above.'<sup>127</sup> The important matter was that 'A' Company be exonerated as soon as possible. Speaking to the Independent Review Group in April 2021, Col Breslin (Retd) 'considered what we did on that board (sic) as one of the highlights of my career, for trying to do something.' He also emphasised that he got 'no response' after his study group submitted its report.

Lt Gen Sreenan, on reading the report of the Study Group, asked Maj Gen Earley to examine 'any other relevant material available in 'A' Admin or elsewhere and bring forward recommendations to the General Staff ASAP.'<sup>128</sup> Maj Gen Earley established a 'Review Group' under Director of Administration, Col Chris Moore, 'to urgently address the issues presented by the material submitted' and review any other material held by the Defence Forces and Defence Forces Archives and 'make recommendations as to any further action that may be open'<sup>129</sup>

Minister for Defence Michael Smith announced the formation of the Review Group in Dáil Éireann in response to a question by Fine Gael spokesman for Defence Dinny McGinley TD on 11 May 2004.<sup>130</sup> Dinny McGinley had been happy to raise the question of Jadotville in the Dáil as the result of an inquiry by Cpl John Gorman if he would take the issue on at parliamentary level.<sup>131</sup> Working separately, but in parallel with Comdt Liam Donnelly, regarding his initiative to raise Jadotville as an issue, Cpl Gorman stated 'I know people laughed at me when I started this campaign, I'm nobody's fool, and I got several bollockings from very senior people, but I was told I'd never get anywhere with Jadotville.'<sup>132</sup>

Unfortunately, the Dáil Éireann report of Minister Smith's announcement contained errors in the popular understanding of the Battle of Jadotville that have remained current since. In replying to Deputy McGinley, Minister Smith said that 'A' Company had been attacked by 4,000 Katangese soldiers under Belgian command. Later research and the accounts of veterans have both shown that while there were 3,000 Katangese Gendarmerie in the wider Jadotville area, the number in attack were between 20 to 30 and 150 or thereabouts at any one time. Interviewed in 2021, Pte Tom Gunn queried the inflated figures 'I think maybe that the numbers might be a bit exaggerated, if they had 2,000 men attacking us we did a great job ... I cannot see that there was 2,000 men, that is my personal opinion, that were attacking us, I think that's exaggerated.'<sup>133</sup> Pte Gunn felt it was more likely attacks of between thirty and forty, though forty was somewhat high. The Dáil record then placed 'A' Company's strength at a similarly inflated 350 rather than the correct figure of 156.

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<sup>127</sup> The word 'divisive' appeared in the typed version of the report as 'decisive'. The IRG were formally advised of the error and the correct word by Col Breslin on 13 April 2021.

<sup>128</sup> Lt Gen Sreenan to Maj Gen Earley, 11 May 2004, quoted in Maj Gen Earley to Lt Gen Sreenan, 5 July 2004.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid. Col Breslin (Retd) did not recall having contact with Col Moore about either his report or Col Moore's later work.

<sup>130</sup> Minister for Defence Smith in response to Dinny McGinley TD, 11 May 2004. (<https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2004-05-11/4/?highlight%5B0%5D=jadotville#s5>). *Irish Times*, 12 May 2004.

<sup>131</sup> Cpl John Gorman, interview with IRG, 19 January 2021.

<sup>132</sup> Cpl John Gorman, interview with IRG, 19 January 2021.

<sup>133</sup> Pte Tom Gunn, interview to IRG, 28 January 2021.

Deputy McGinley emphasised that ‘these people are not looking for money or compensation but for recognition of how bravely they fought and held the fort for five days, until they eventually had to surrender. I would term it the Irish Thermopylae.’ He wondered if the Defence Forces Board might provide ‘some indication as to what mysterious forces were at work which prevented recognition of their valour and bravery for 43 years.’ Minister Smith hoped to have ‘the process completed as quickly as possible to facilitate whatever decisions must be taken on foot of it. I will certainly respond quickly to whatever recommendations are made to me.’ Deputy McGinley brought his intervention to a conclusion by referring to the many ex-Defence Forces personnel who had devoted much time to keeping Jadotville alive and wished to ‘recognise and record the perseverance of people like John Gorman and others, who are still thankfully alive and who participated in that siege. They too hope that no further time is wasted, that there is no foot dragging and that the truth comes out and is officially recognised. I hope the Minister will maintain his interest in the inquiry and ensure this happens.’ Minister Smith gave an assurance to Deputy McGinley that ‘there will be no foot dragging whatsoever.’<sup>134</sup>

In preparation for the work of the Review Group, Lt Col J. Minogue, OIC ‘A’ Admin Sec, sought information from Military Archives on their holdings on the 35 Inf Bn and on any related collections of private papers. Comdt Victor Laing, OIC Military Archives, informed Lt Col Minogue that ‘a thorough inspection of all Medals Board and related material held in the archive was carried out.’<sup>135</sup> Comdt Laing checked the nominal roll of the 35 Inf Bn against the Medals Board material available and informed Lt Col Minogue of the

conflicting information resultant upon the search where, for example, a person may have been recommended for an award, award not recommended and later the award was made. Of course a certain amount of confusion may enter the position where the details of dates of the boards are not recorded on the material held in archives.<sup>136</sup>

This tendency of not recording dates on documents has greatly increased the complexity of the problem of understanding the medals recommendation process undertaken by the 1961 and 1965 Medals Boards.

### ***Col Chris Moore’s report***

Col Moore reported on 6 July 2004 with a nine-page report entitled ‘The Jadotville Affair’, which Maj Gen Earley considered to be ‘comprehensive, fair and balanced.’<sup>137</sup> Maj Gen Earley informed Lt Gen Sreenan that he ‘strongly’ supported the conclusions of the report and its recommendations that an inscribed plaque honouring and recording the bravery of ‘A’ Company, be placed in the Garrison Church at Custume Barracks in Athlone. Col Moore felt that the plaque should also include reference to the efforts of the 35 Inf Bn to assist ‘A’ Company. Maj Gen Earley added his own point of view that paintings or photographs of Comdt Quinlan and Lt Col McNamee be hung in the Congo Room at the United Nations Training School, Ireland. Lt Gen

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<sup>134</sup> Minister for Defence Michael Smith in response to a question by Dinny McGinley TD, 11 May 2004. (<https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2004-05-11/4/?highlight%5B0%5D=jadotville#s5>). Reported in *Irish Times*, 12 May 2004.

<sup>135</sup> MA, box, ‘Jadotville Medal Queries’, Comdt Laing to Lt Col Minogue, 31 May 2004.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>137</sup> MA, box, ‘Jadotville Medal Queries’, Maj Gen Dermot Earley to Lt Gen Jim Sreenan, 5 July 2004. The dates are inconsistent in the original.

Sreenan considered Col Moore's report 'a fair and balanced approach' and sent it to Minister for Defence Smith on 9 August 2004.<sup>138</sup>

Col Moore made an important point in his conclusions:

There is no doubt that all personnel in this incident have suffered over the outcome of the Sept 1961 events in Katanga. This suffering manifested itself in many forms including feelings of guilt at all levels. This guilt in turn has led to recriminations and to apportioning of blame without full access to all the facts. Many closely involved with the incident, for guilt reasons or out of respect and regard for the feelings of those involved, chose a solution that involved consigning these events to memory and getting on with life. Even today it is difficult to formulate a dispassionate view of events, as many of the surviving participants have differing, but sincerely held views. Some of the views passionately expressed by veterans of the 35 Inf Bn are not informed by reference to the available documentation. In many cases, the views of the surviving members have been coloured by discussion of the events over the years.

He added that it was 'necessary to bring closure to the events at Jadotville'.<sup>139</sup>

However, the official actions that followed from 2004 sought to bring closure by commemoration and 'decoration' rather than by explanation and interpretation. These events were situated in the present to mark the past, and not designed to explore it. At no time did the Defence Forces do the one thing that might really have helped: seek to understand and explain the history of what actually happened at Jadotville, and to do so by listening to the veterans themselves, getting them to tell their story and integrating their views with the continual release of archival material on Jadotville and ONUC in Ireland and internationally. It was a real lost opportunity.

### ***Comdt Donnelly and Lt Gen Sreenan discuss commemorating the Battle of Jadotville***

On 24 November 2004 Comdt Donnelly had a lengthy meeting with Lt Gen Sreenan in McKee Barracks, to discuss three issues related to the commemoration of the Battle of Jadotville.<sup>140</sup> Three issues he hoped 'to have resolved to mutual satisfaction' were:

- 1: That 'commendations' for 'A' Company personnel had not been acted upon;
- 2: 'A' Company's 'deserved proper brave status to be established and made public';
- 3: To have 'particular reference' made to the 'commendation' of Comdt Quinlan 'as expressed by General Raja'.<sup>141</sup>

On 'commendations', Lt Gen Sreenan followed Col Moore's conclusion that 'the question of medals was comprehensively addressed in 1965'.<sup>142</sup> It was not going to be re-examined or re-opened and Lt Gen Sreenan explained that

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<sup>138</sup> MA, box, 'Jadotville Medal Queries', Lt Gen Sreenan to Smith, 9 August 2004.

<sup>139</sup> Col Chris Moore, 'The Jadotville Affair', p. 8.

<sup>140</sup> DOD, 532/2004 pt 1, Comdt McCarthy, PSO, COS to O'Doherty, Executive Branch, DOD, 28 November 2004.

<sup>141</sup> Comdt Liam Donnelly private papers, memorandum, 'Jadotville 1961', undated, but November-December 2004.

<sup>142</sup> Col Chris Moore, 'The Jadotville Affair', p. 8.



all commendations made upon 35 Inf Bn personnel were examined for the total service of that unit. The examination was carried out by a board as set out in DFR. There is no mechanism for a review of any other commendations, as such a procedure would entitle all others who served abroad to have recourse to a re-examination. The decision of a board as set out in DFR is final.<sup>143</sup>

While there is no record of their discussion, the nature of it emerges in a letter Comdt Donnelly wrote thanking Lt Gen Sreenan some days after their meeting that while: 'I still maintain that the courage and bravery of some of those commended deserved awards I have to accept that in accordance with DFR there is no mechanism for review.'<sup>144</sup> Col Moore had concluded that it would be unwise to reopen the medals issue and understood, incorrectly as the Independent Review Group has discovered in its own research, that the medals recommendations were no longer available.

Commemorating the performance of 'A' Company and giving them recognition was another matter. Comdt Donnelly's proposal on publicising the bravery of 'A' Company was to have an inscribed plaque placed at a location in Athlone town recalling the events of the Battle of Jadotville and remembering 'A' Company's 'sacrifices in the services of peace' with 'pride'. He noted after meeting Lt Gen Sreenan that he 'would prefer the town location. It would be more public and give those town councillors seeking self-recognition the opportunity to select and give an appropriate location.'<sup>145</sup> To remember Comdt Pat Quinlan, Comdt Donnelly agreed with Maj Gen Earley's recommendation that paintings of both Comdt Quinlan and Lt Col McNamee should be placed in the Congo Room in the United Nations Training School Ireland with reference made on plaques alongside each image to Brig Raja's assessment of both officers.

Comdt Donnelly signed off on his 1 December 2004 letter to Lt Gen Sreenan 'time is passing'. Lt Gen Sreenan felt that these recommendations 'should now be advanced in order to bring closure to the issue in a balanced, dignified and suitable manner.'<sup>146</sup> Minister for Defence Willie O'Dea swiftly approved the proposal for a monument to 'A' Company at a location in Athlone, and for the commissioning of the two portrait paintings for the Congo Room at UNTSI.<sup>147</sup> Conveying this decision to Comdt Donnelly and signing off as 'Jim', Lt Gen Sreenan emphasised that 'we will move on this as speedily as we can in 2005'.<sup>148</sup> Minister O'Dea would, in the coming years, show considerable interest in supporting the veterans of 'A' Company and would ensure that their achievements were publicly commemorated.

That the government was to officially honour 'A' Company 'who were falsely accused of cowardice' was announced in the *Irish Times* on 13 December 2004. While personnel of 'A' Company had been personally insulted over Jadotville and called cowards, the article went on to explain that there never was any formal accusation of cowardice, but rather a 'whispering campaign' within the military establishment.

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<sup>143</sup> Comdt Liam Donnelly private papers, memorandum, 'Jadotville 1961', undated, but November-December 2004.

<sup>144</sup> Comdt Liam Donnelly private papers, Comdt Donnelly to Lt Gen Sreenan, 1 December 2004.

<sup>145</sup> Comdt Liam Donnelly private papers, memorandum, 'Jadotville 1961', undated, but November-December 2004.

<sup>146</sup> DOD, 532/2004 pt 1, Comdt McCarthy to O'Doherty, DOD, 28 November 2004.

<sup>147</sup> The expectation at this stage was that the monument would be in a public place in Athlone (DOD 532/2004 pt 1, Lt Gen Sreenan to O'Dea, 29 November 2004).

<sup>148</sup> Comdt Liam Donnelly private papers, Lt Gen Sreenan to Comdt Donnelly, 17 December 2004.

### ***Decorations for 'A' Company?***

While Col Moore's 2004 report 'exonerated' 'A' Company, the question of decorations emerged in public.<sup>149</sup> Following a January 2004 Freedom of Information Act request, Capt Noel Carey discovered he had been proposed for a decoration but had not in the end been recommended for one by the evaluating medals board.<sup>150</sup> BQMS Paddy Neville wrote inquiring if he had been likewise proposed; he had not been recommended. Michael Williams, son of Sgt Frank Williams wrote similarly on 19 February 2004 asking if his father had been proposed for a DSM. He received the reply in July 2004 that Sgt Francis Williams' name appeared on 'a list of personnel recommended for the award of the Distinguished Service Medal in whose cases the Medals Board recommended that NO award should be made.'<sup>151</sup> However no one had noticed that Sgt Williams was not in fact recommended for a DSM but for a promotion. This error was not corrected until 2020 when it was communicated to the Williams family, who maintained that their father had been recommended for a medal.<sup>152</sup> Sgt Williams was promoted on his own merits to fill a sergeant's vacancy in his unit and was not promoted on foot of recommendations from 35 Inf Bn for meritorious service / distinguished conduct.

Having been ignored and airbrushed out of Irish military history by the Defence Forces and the Department of Defence since 1961, Jadotville veterans saw their lack of decorations as another example of their achievements being disregarded. From 2004, the discussion of Jadotville amongst veterans turned more frequently to the question of medals. That is not to say that all Jadotville veterans wanted medals. Cpl John Gorman, who had fought at Jadotville and who had tirelessly campaigned for the achievements of 'A' Company to be commemorated told the *Westmeath Independent* that he was 'not interested in medal recognition ... we are looking for vindication ... I do not want a medal or money, I just want my name cleared.'<sup>153</sup> A two page spread interview with John Gorman in the *Irish Examiner* on 4 September 2004 began prophetically that the Battle of Jadotville was 'worthy of a movie in its own right'; it ended with the question 'would it be too much to ask the army and the Minister for Defence to honour some real heroes?'

The assumption grew amongst Jadotville veterans and their supporters after 2004 that, having been put forward for awards, their presence at Jadotville automatically ended their chance of a decoration of any kind. Jadotville was to be swept under the carpet. It would never have occurred to any veteran that reasons for their not being awarded a medal included that their award recommendation was a poor written reflection of any meritorious acts they carried out, although they probably realised that the Defence Forces did not favour the widespread award of medals. Nor would they have realised the procedural failings that lay within the medals process.

An unfortunate misunderstanding also emerged that being recommended for consideration for a medal by a unit commander was in effect a recommendation for a medal. It was not, as this was only the first part of a two part process. Being recommended for a medal fell under the remit of a Medals Board.

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<sup>149</sup> *Irish Times*, 13 December 2004.

<sup>150</sup> MA, box, 'Jadotville Medal Queries', Maj Gen Earley to Lt Gen Sreenan, 5 July 2004.

<sup>151</sup> MA, box, 'Jadotville Medal Queries', Lt Col Minogue to Maj Gen Ashe, 14 July 2004.

<sup>152</sup> Following further reviews, the Williams family was made aware of the error in February 2020.

<sup>153</sup> *Westmeath Independent*, 17 April 2004.

Over the following seventeen years, the Defence Forces and the Department of Defence were unable to respond in a meaningful way to public misunderstanding of the medals processes in 1962 and 1965. Information would find its way out into the public, misconceptions would grow and unfortunately in some cases individuals who were not even recommended for consideration for medals at Jadotville were named as having been recommended. A distinct problem here with Defence Forces thinking was that while it explained that every

effort has been made to ensure that the evidence available from the various sources was used to determine all the facts in the awarding of DSMs to 35 Inf Bn. This evidence is not definitive and quite possibly may be erroneous, due to the lack of back-up documentation, its non-availability and the lapse of time,<sup>154</sup>

it did not at this stage take the next obvious step of laying out this information and explaining and interpreting its contents. Whatever the reason for this, perhaps there was a feeling that it would be tantamount to conceding the case for re-opening the question of medals, it meant that the Defence Forces lost the opportunity to openly explain from information it had at hand, and information which was available and beginning to become available internationally, what had happened at Jadotville and the surrounding international context.

### ***‘God Bless Willie O’Dea’***<sup>155</sup>

Speaking in Dáil Éireann on 26 January 2005, Minister for Defence Willie O’Dea said that Col Moore’s report, which he had received in December 2004, fully exonerated ‘A’ Company and Comd Quinlan.<sup>156</sup> He explained that the Government were ‘considering some way of commemorating their bravery and heroism’ and he hoped ‘to be in a position to make an announcement on that within the next couple of weeks’. The *Westmeath Independent*, continuing its coverage of the campaign to get recognition for the bravery of ‘A’ Company, interviewed long-term Jadotville veterans campaigner Cpl John Gorman who, although telling the newspaper that he had recently proposed to Minister for Defence Willie O’Dea that a special Jadotville medal be awarded to all who fought at Jadotville, felt that Minister O’Dea’s statement meant that veterans and their families ‘can now put the ghosts of Jadotville to rest.’<sup>157</sup>

In early March 2005, Minister O’Dea announced in the Dáil the decision to commission portraits of Lt Col McNamee and Comdt Pat Quinlan, and for a commemorative plaque to be situated in Athlone. When it was announced in May 2005 that other 35 Inf Bn sub-units would be commemorated on the Athlone plaque there was some disquiet manifest among ‘A’ Company veterans that it would take away from their specific achievements.<sup>158</sup> Jadotville campaigner Cpl John Gorman felt it was ‘very unfair’ that other 35 Inf Bn units should be mentioned because ‘when we looked for help and reinforcements from the battalion we didn’t get it.’ He argued that ‘This battle was about Jadotville and ‘A’ Company’s part in it. To bring in the entire 35 Inf Bn

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<sup>154</sup> Col Chris Moore, ‘The Jadotville Affair’, p. 8.

<sup>155</sup> Cpl John Gorman, interview with IRG, 19 January 2021.

<sup>156</sup> <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2005-01-26/7/#s11> (accessed 5 April 2021). The Dáil record incorrectly states that it was B Coy, 35 Inf Bn, who were deployed to Jadotville. Minister O’Dea consistently is recorded as referring to B Coy in the Dáil record.

<sup>157</sup> *Westmeath Independent*, 12 February 2005.

<sup>158</sup> *Westmeath Independent*, 21 May 2005.

into it is not fair. They weren't in the battle – they never had to be exonerated or to get recognition.<sup>159</sup>

Lt Gen Sreenan remained in touch with Comdt Donnelly through 2005, and in late September ran a suggestion by Comdt Donnelly that, having got the agreement of Minister for Defence Willie O'Dea, he would bring together as many members of 'A' Company 'as we can muster in Athlone and have a small reception etc and have the Minister "cut the sod" for the memorial.<sup>160</sup> Minister O'Dea announced in mid-October 2005 that the commemorative memorial honouring 'A' Company would be placed within Custume Barracks in Athlone. There was local hope that the plaque or a second plaque would be situated in Athlone itself, but the Urban District Council was unable to secure progress on this and the plan lapsed. This seems to have been because Athlone Urban District Council 'wants to erect a memorial to all those from the locality who served on overseas missions and not just in respect of the Congo or Jadotville' and this was not what Comdt Donnelly and others had in mind.<sup>161</sup>

### ***The commemorative memorial in Custume Barracks is unveiled***

The memorial was unveiled on 19 November 2005 by Minister O'Dea.<sup>162</sup> It acknowledged the courageous action of 'A' Company at Jadotville. The Minister recognised that 'A' Company had shown 'the determination, the belief and the leadership to come safely through their ordeal' and that the memorial plaque would commemorate their 'courage and forbearance, suffering and heroism and would serve as a lasting reminder of their remarkable achievement and enduring legacy.'<sup>163</sup> Cpl John Gorman went up to Minister O'Dea and 'shook his hand and I said "God bless you Minister, for taking us out of hell".<sup>164</sup> Sgt George Tiernan commented to his son Danny: 'I'm going to die happy ... at least now they've recognised what we did, now they've honoured the brave men of Jadotville.'<sup>165</sup>

Speaking at the ceremony Comdt Liam Donnelly told the assembled veterans and their families that Minister O'Dea's actions had 'renewed in them pride in their Defence Forces.' He explained how since 1961 'myths and fairy tales, carefully quoted half-truths and smoke screens, used to airbrush Jadotville out of Irish military history did not permit ... a reasoned, neutral independent critical examination of every aspect of what was called "The Jadotville Affair".<sup>166</sup> Speaking of his respect for Comdt Pat Quinlan, whom he described as 'always steadfast ... hard, but not petty', Comdt Donnelly also thanked Minister O'Dea for his 'positive approach' and Chief of Staff Lt Gen Jim Sreenan for his 'fortitude and assistance'.<sup>167</sup>

One of the twenty-seven Jadotville veterans present at the ceremony, BSM Jack Prendergast felt that 'justice was done, in a way', but he added 'there must have been some reason why it took so long.'<sup>168</sup> Of his feelings on the day, Pte Frank McManus remembered 'you know to stand and look

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<sup>159</sup> *Westmeath Independent*, 21 May 2005.

<sup>160</sup> DOD, 532/2004, Marginal note from Lt Gen Sreenan to Comdt Donnelly, 29 September 2005.

<sup>161</sup> DOD, 532/2004, pt 1, minute by Murphy, Executive Branch, DOD, 29 March 2005.

<sup>162</sup> A briefing note on DOD, 523/2004 pt 1 indicates that Minister O'Dea was to brief the Taoiseach on 17 November 2005.

<sup>163</sup> *Irish Independent*, 25 November 2005.

<sup>164</sup> Cpl John Gorman, interview with IRG, 19 January 2021.

<sup>165</sup> Comdt Danny Tiernan (Retd), interview with IRG, 1 April 2021.

<sup>166</sup> *Westmeath Independent*, 3 December 2005.

<sup>167</sup> *Westmeath Independent*, 3 December 2005.

<sup>168</sup> *Westmeath Independent*, 3 December 2005.

around you and see John Monaghan and Noel Stanley and all these boys who were all with you and around you and behind you for the six months, it was great. It was fucking fabulous.<sup>169</sup> For others it was bittersweet, for Kathleen Lafferty, daughter of Cpl John McAnaney, there was hurt that ‘Dad went to his grave not knowing his name was cleared.’<sup>170</sup> One man was missing said Sgt George Tiernan, ‘the real man was missing there tonight’: Comdt Pat Quinlan.<sup>171</sup>

Four years later, on 21 December 2009, the nominal roll of ‘A’ Company and the soldier’s prayer inscribed on brass plates, were placed on the side of the monument. With this Jadotville veterans’ campaigner Cpl John Gorman, who had funded the roll and asked that it be affixed to the monument, said ‘my mission is now complete ... that’s my Christmas present this year.’<sup>172</sup>

### ***Histories of the Battle of Jadotville***

The first weekend of August 2005 saw the publication of the first edition of a book that would have a profound and serious impact on public perceptions and understanding of the Battle of Jadotville, as it later formed the basis of the 2016 film *The Siege of Jadotville*. Journalist and military commentator Declan Power, who had considerable Defence Forces service to his name in the FCA and the Permanent Defence Force and experience serving on the ground with the United Nations, sought to ‘set the record straight’ in *Siege at Jadotville: The Irish Army’s forgotten battle*<sup>173</sup> and explain how ‘A’ Company held its ground.<sup>174</sup> Declan Power had first heard about Jadotville when serving in Columb Barracks in Mullingar. A long-time student of Irish military history, he used official records and interviewed veterans as the basis of his account.<sup>175</sup> He found that while many veterans’ stories ‘wouldn’t always run parallel to the facts’, a ‘core element of guys had contemporaneous written notes’ and had ‘documented things as they went along’.<sup>176</sup> Recalling writing the book, Declan Power pointed out that there were ‘living people’ and their families were involved in Jadotville and ‘this was not some abstract historical record, there were people’s lives and feelings and reputations’ woven through the whole story.<sup>177</sup> He knew he was writing a very sensitive story. Declan Power’s account, the first book-length account of the Battle of Jadotville, received strong local and national coverage in the press through autumn 2005.

Declan Power’s account of the Battle of Jadotville was joined in March 2006 by Cpl Michael Whelan’s *The Battle of Jadotville: Irish soldiers in combat in the Congo, 1961*,<sup>178</sup> and Rose Doyle’s *The Heroes of Jadotville: the soldier’s story*.<sup>179</sup> Cpl Michael Whelan is a serving member of the Air Corps with considerable overseas experience with the United Nations, including in Kosovo, and his account came directly from research conducted for a degree at Maynooth University. Rose Doyle wrote her

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<sup>169</sup> Pte Frank McManus, interview with IRG, 18 February 2021.

<sup>170</sup> Kathleen Lafferty, interview with IRG, 9 February 2021.

<sup>171</sup> Comdt Danny Tiernan (Retd), interview with IRG, 1 April 2021.

<sup>172</sup> *Westmeath Independent*, 26 December 2009.

<sup>173</sup> Published by Maverick House, Dunboyne, Co. Meath. The book was officially launched by Minister O’Dea in 2005 and a second edition in June 2010 by the Minister for Defence, Tony Killeen at Custume Barracks, Athlone.

<sup>174</sup> *Westmeath Examiner*, 13 August 2005.

<sup>175</sup> Many veterans were initially cautious about being interviewed or wished to be reviewed on the basis of anonymity (Declan Power, interview with IRG, 4 May 2021).

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.* Of help were Brig Gen Tom Quinlan, Comdt Liam Donnelly, Capt Noel Carey, CS Walter Hegarty and Cpl John Gorman.

<sup>177</sup> Declan Power, interview with IRG, 4 May 2021.

<sup>178</sup> Published by South Dublin Libraries, Dublin.

<sup>179</sup> Published by New Island Books, Dublin.

book mainly from Comdt Quinlan's private papers and his report on the Battle of Jadotville and its aftermath. By 2006, a basic public interpretation of the siege of Jadotville was in place through these three books published on the topic, as well as strong continuity in the story of their treatment told by veterans to a variety of media outlets.<sup>180</sup> Tom Prendeville's account in the *Sunday Independent* of 26 November 2006 is a very good example of this interpretation:

The story of their bravery, and cruel treatment when they returned home, is to be the subject of a major new movie. The men who took part in the Battle of Jadotville were forced to surrender after a five-day siege, in which they inflicted heavy casualties on Belgian-led Katangese forces.

The soldiers were later kept as POWs for six weeks, and taunted daily with threats of barbaric deaths.

And on their return home, they were denied a hero's welcome, and ignored by Army top brass, which effectively accused them of cowardice for having surrendered when they ran out of bullets, water and food.

For years afterwards, other soldiers called them cowards. Some were spat at. Several years later a group of them were prevented from having an official reunion.<sup>181</sup>

### ***Further official tributes to 'A' Company***

Further official tribute to 'A' Company came on 24 November 2006 when at a reunion at Custume Barracks, Athlone, wreaths were laid and veterans and the families of deceased members of 'A' Company were presented with scrolls by Minister of State Noel Treacy TD which gave recognition to their service 'with unquestionable loyalty and bravery in Jadotville.'<sup>182</sup>

The idea of the scrolls had been Cpl John Gorman's. He felt that with the Jadotville monument in place in Custume Barracks 'it would be very difficult to be successful' to have a second monument in Athlone town and so he embarked on this new venture being 'sure that it will bring closure to the episode of Jadotville'.<sup>183</sup>

Minister O'Dea was unable to attend the function, but GOC Western Brigade Brig Gen Pdraig O'Callaghan and Chief of Staff of the Defence Forces Lt Gen Jim Sreenan were present and the first filming for the proposed film on Jadotville took place at the ceremony.<sup>184</sup>

### ***Portraits of Lt Col McNamee and Comdt Pat Quinlan***

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<sup>180</sup> David Donoghue's, *The Irish Army in the Congo 1960-1964: The Far Battalions* (Dublin, 2005, contained two chapters on Jadotville, 'Remembering Jadotville' by Swedish interpreter Lars Froberg who had been in Jadotville with 'A' Company and a succinct account of the Battle of Jadotville and 'A' Company 'Fighting for our lives with "Jadotville Jack"' by Pat Dunleavy.

<sup>181</sup> In a 2011 letter to Minister for Defence Alan Shatter, Jadotville veteran Harry Dixon said that 'A' Company 'were forbidden to hold a reunion' up to 2005, though he did not say by whom they were forbidden (DOD 532/2004 pt 1, Dixon to Shatter, 12 July 2011.

<sup>182</sup> *Westmeath Independent*, 2 December 2006.

<sup>183</sup> DOD, 532/2004 pt 1, Gorman to O'Dea, 24 October 2006.

<sup>184</sup> Minister O'Dea also personally ensured that the Department of Defence assisted the Jadotville veterans 'in defraying the costs' incurred 'in preparing and arranging the event' and arranged a subvention to John Gorman of €600 after John Gorman told O'Dea that such a sum 'would assist them greatly' in covering 'the bulk' of their event-related costs (DOD 532/4, Pt 5, O'Dea to O'Doherty, 28 November 2006).



### ***Portraits of Lt Col McNamee and Comdt Pat Quinlan***

The portraits of Lt Col McNamee and Comdt Pat Quinlan by James Hanley RHA were unveiled at UNTSI on 23 February 2007.<sup>185</sup> This was a particularly important moment for Lt Gen Jim Sreenan. Knowing that since Jadotville relations between the McNamee and Quinlan families had been difficult, and knowing that there had now been three generations from the McNamee and Quinlan families in the Defence Forces, he hoped to reconcile both families to past actions over Jadotville: ‘part of my personal mission on this was to bring the two families together. To get a resolution there for the two military families.’<sup>186</sup>

Lt Col Hugh McNamee’s son Brig Gen Liam McNamee and Col Quinlan’s son Comdt Pat Quinlan both spoke at the ceremony. ‘The mood was very positive and very good, we finally, finally, but not of course finally, thought that we had brought the whole business to a satisfactory conclusion.’<sup>187</sup>

### ***A feature film on the Battle of Jadotville***

In May 2006, John Sheridan and Tony Condrón of Wide Shot Productions told journalists they were trying to get money outside Ireland together to turn Declan Power’s book on the Battle of Jadotville into a film.<sup>190</sup> With the working title of ‘The Forgotten’, it was to be ‘the first Irish war movie about the contemporary Army’s foreign adventures.’<sup>191</sup> John Sheridan explained to the *Sunday Independent* that he was ‘astonished’ at reading Declan Power’s book, continuing that it was ‘a phenomenal story, I can’t believe we were the first with this film.’ There were rumours afoot that Liam Neeson and Brendan Gleeson were to star in the film and that it already had a budget of some €6 million behind it.

By February 2007, Wide Shot productions had looked for funding from the Irish Film Institute for their Jadotville film project.<sup>188</sup> Further film interest during the year was the work under way by Brendan Culleton and Irina Maldea of Akajava Films, on a documentary for TG4 on the siege of Jadotville which was to become 2012’s ‘Congo: An Irish Affair’.<sup>189</sup> A two-part episode of the series ‘War Stories’ covered the Battle of Jadotville and was shown on RTÉ 1 television on consecutive weeks in late-March and early-April 2008.

The prospects of the Jadotville story being turned into a feature film, rather than a further documentary, took a major step forward in June 2010. Irish film director Richie Smyth, who had previously directed music videos for U2, was a veteran director of television commercials, and had been involved in several Hollywood films, told the *Irish Independent* that preparatory work for a film was underway after he secured film rights to Declan Power’s 2005 book *The Siege at Jadotville*. Los Angeles-based screenwriter Kevin Brodbin was hired by Richie Smyth to complete the screenplay.

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<sup>185</sup> The portraits can be viewed on <https://www.jameshanley.net/>.

<sup>186</sup> Lt Gen Jim Sreenan DSM (Retd), interview with IRG, 11 May 2021.

<sup>187</sup> Lt Gen Jim Sreenan DSM (Retd), interview with IRG, 11 May 2021.

<sup>188</sup> See *Westmeath Independent*, 24 February 2007.

<sup>189</sup> Culleton was also a former member of the FCA, the Defence Forces reserve. They secured funding from the Irish Film Board for the project in 2007 and also in 2011. See

[https://www.screenireland.ie/images/uploads/general/IFB\\_Annual\\_Report\\_2007\\_1.pdf](https://www.screenireland.ie/images/uploads/general/IFB_Annual_Report_2007_1.pdf) and

[https://www.screenireland.ie/images/uploads/general/IFB\\_Report\\_2011.pdf](https://www.screenireland.ie/images/uploads/general/IFB_Report_2011.pdf) (both accessed 5 April 2021).

<sup>190</sup> *Westmeath Independent*, 20 May 2006.

<sup>191</sup> *Sunday Independent*, 26 November 2006.

It was to be Richie Smyth's first full-scale movie film and the announcement was made to coincide with the fiftieth anniversary of the June 1960 deployment of the 32 Inf Bn to the Congo, the Defence Force's first ONUC deployment. At a ceremony at Casement Aerodrome, Baldonnell in July 2010 to mark the anniversary, Taoiseach Brian Cowen paid a special tribute in his speech to the men of 'A' Company.

Richie Smyth's company, The Cannibal Corporation, received €50,000 of development loans committed with €5,000 pending from the Irish Film Board.<sup>192</sup> 'This is a great story that needs to be told', Smyth told journalist Stephen Dunne. Stephen Dunne's interview with Richie Smyth appeared in greater detail in the *Irish Examiner* under the heading 'Irish "Band of Brothers" destined for big screen'. Richie Smyth explained that while 'filming and casting is some way off', the Irish Film Board funding was 'vital' to place the project 'on track to becoming a reality'.<sup>193</sup> He continued 'of all the movies that I've been working on, this is the one story that every time I have pitched it to somebody they have all said "I'm on board" immediately.' To Richie Smyth, the story of the Battle of Jadotville was 'a stirring and moving story of courage under fire and of bravery against overwhelming odds; these are the components of a great movie.' Commenting on the film project, Declan Power said 'it will be great to see it on the big screen ... it distils it all down into a bit of human drama.'<sup>194</sup> Jadotville veteran CS Walter Hegarty, in 2010 seventy-eight years old, said simply 'this incident was hidden for a long, long time. Now it's coming to the light.'<sup>195</sup> Working with producer Alan Moloney, founder of Parallel Films, Richie Smyth hoped that shooting the film would begin in the spring 2015 in Ireland and South Africa. Looking back, Declan Power felt that 'there was a flutter of attention' concerning the three books on Jadotville published in the mid-2000s, despite media coverage, they 'didn't really capture' the public imagination on Jadotville, 'it took the film to do that.'<sup>196</sup>

### ***The 50th Anniversary of the Battle of Jadotville***

2011 marked the fiftieth anniversary of the siege and battle of Jadotville. The anniversary was to be marked with a special event at Custume Barracks in Athlone. On 17 September veterans and family members of 'A' Company would gather for Mass and a wreath laying ceremony. The event also saw the screening of the Akajava documentary *Congo: An Irish Affair* as well as the launch by Brig Gen Gerard Aherne of Jadotville veteran Seán Ó Foghlú's account of his Defence Forces Service *No White Feather*.<sup>197</sup> Other anniversary events included a lecture by Capt Noel Carey on the battle of Jadotville to the South Tipperary Military History Society, and the limited cinema release of *Congo: An Irish Affair*, the documentary, receiving plaudits as a 'meticulous account' and getting four out of five stars in a review in the *Irish Independent*.<sup>198</sup> It had already been a sell-out event at the Dublin and Galway film festivals, where it received much acclaim, and would in December 2012 be shown over two weeks on TG4 as *Congo 1961*.

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<sup>192</sup> See Irish Film Board annual report for 2010 at [https://www.screenireland.ie/images/uploads/general/IFB\\_Annual\\_Report\\_2010.pdf](https://www.screenireland.ie/images/uploads/general/IFB_Annual_Report_2010.pdf) (accessed 5 April 2021).

<sup>193</sup> *Irish Examiner*, 14 June 2010.

<sup>194</sup> *Irish Examiner*, 14 June 2010.

<sup>195</sup> *Irish Independent*, 30 June 2010.

<sup>196</sup> Declan Power, interview with IRG, 4 May 2021.

<sup>197</sup> *Westmeath Independent*, 10 September 2011.

<sup>198</sup> *Irish Independent*, 16 September 2011.

The *Irish Independent* carried a full-page article on the Battle of Jadotville in its weekend supplement on 8 October 2011. Tom Farrell's account conveyed the views of veterans and their families and how 'the men of 'A' Company are getting recognition'; Comdt Pat Quinlan's son Leo emphasising that two of his father's NCOs 'told me that only for his professional leadership they would not have been alive that day' to see this recognition happen. Tom Farrell explained that 'even today, the legacy of Jadotville is often clouded by hearsay, innuendo and a simple failure to acknowledge that these men held to the UN mandate under extremely challenging conditions.' He concluded 'now, fifty years on, the men of 'A' Company hope their bravery will be acknowledged in Irish military history.'

Yet that bravery had been well acknowledged by 2011. The siege and battle of Jadotville had been the subject of three books and at least two memoirs and a peer-reviewed internationally published academic article as well as an award-winning radio documentary, a TV series and a cinema documentary; filming a major motion picture on the Battle of Jadotville was underway. The men of 'A' Company had been exonerated for their actions (something that should never have been necessary in the first place), their bravery had been acknowledged and their heroism memorialised in the monument in Custume Barracks in Athlone. Granted it had taken far too long to come about and had occurred because of actions taken by veterans such as Comdt Liam Donnelly and Cpl John Gorman, and not organically emerged from within the Department of Defence or the Defence Forces. The siege and battle of Jadotville had by 2011 become one of the most written and talked about chapters in post-war Irish military history, if not in post-1922 Irish military history. Perhaps after the histories of the Anglo-Irish War only the North Strand Bombing and the Niamba Ambush could compare to it in terms of published output.

### ***A one-sided discussion on the Battle of Jadotville***

What is noticeable from 2011 on about writing on the Battle of Jadotville is that no counter-narrative developed. As with the near-contemporaneous campaign to pardon the dwindling number of deserters from the Defence Forces during the Second World War, there was no desire to ask awkward questions about the history of Jadotville. What was so superior about Comdt Pat Quinlan's tactics in Jadotville if digging in was a standard operating procedure for his forces? Could it be argued that 'A' Company were better off alive rather than dead to Tshombe's Katanga and so 'A' Company were never going to be let die and thus it was no achievement of Comdt Quinlan to bring all his men home alive? The Katangese could have attacked 'A' Company in greater numbers had they wished to, they wanted to wear down 'A' Company? Were the casualties 'A' Company inflicted on the Gendarmerie unnecessary? In an army more used to combat, Comdt Quinlan's and 'A' Company's survival might not have seemed so remarkable? These were, and are still perhaps, hurtful questions to some, but no one asked them.

There was instead a developing groupthink, an echo chamber, on Jadotville that centred increasingly around reverence of Comdt Pat Quinlan. There was no stomach to investigate the battle from alternative perspectives such as from the UN, Belgian or even Katangese perspectives. Figures of attacking Gendarmerie were widely varying and inflated up to as many as 5,000, as did

casualties inflicted by 'A' Company, which rose from 150 to 400.<sup>199</sup> A pseudo-history of the Battle of Jadotville grew up in the 2010s which was amplified and added to by the release of the *Siege of Jadotville* film in 2016. Another error introduced being that when 'A' Company were surrounded in Jadotville 'all efforts to extract them were vetoed by UN chiefs' when in fact two rescue missions were sent.<sup>200</sup> It would have been correct instead to say that the Force Commander and the Secretary-General of the UN refused to remove 'A' Company from Jadotville.

Perhaps it simply seemed unfair to the now dwindling band of Jadotville veterans and their families who had been through so much since 1961 to try to unpick and critically discuss 'A' Company's achievements. Perhaps it was also that the history of Jadotville was being written and discussed in a very partisan environment which lacked detachment. There were the 'good guys' 'A' Company and the 'bad guys' the UN, Lt Gen MacEoin and Conor Cruise O'Brien and the 'guys who could have done more' – 35 Inf Bn HQ and Force Kane I and Force Kane II. Perhaps to some, the Defence Forces fell into one or other of the last two categories.

Yet a one-sided discussion is never healthy. It developed into a set and unquestioning narrative history of Jadotville which placed 'A' Company at the centre of events and lacked an understanding of the wider Katangese and Congolese context and in particular that the 35 Inf Bn was in combat in Elisabethville while 'A' Company was fighting in Jadotville, and no mention of concurrent offensive and defensive operations involving 1 Inf Gp in Kamina. This would lead in 2019 to a dangerous misunderstanding of what happened after Jadotville when the supporters of 'A' Company turned their attention to the question of the recommendations for medals for personnel of 'A' Company, submitted in February 1962 by OC 35 Inf Bn Lt Col Hugh McNamee.

### ***Calls for medals to be awarded***

Capt Noel Carey had raised the issue of awards for 'A' Company in 2004 after making a Freedom of Information Act request to see if he had been recommended for a decoration. A correspondent to Minister for Defence Willie O'Dea in July 2007 argued that

in the Ireland of today, where heroes are few and far between, it is now time to give these heroic men the recognition that they deserve and that the award recommendation of the overall Brigade Commander of that time, General Raja be implemented as a matter of urgency. Perhaps a review of the military awards review board would be justified at this time.<sup>201</sup>

However, Brig Raja had made no specific award recommendation to the Defence Forces, he had rather written in highly praiseworthy, if somewhat ambivalent language to Lt Gen MacEoin, about the actions of Lt Col McNamee and Comdt Quinlan. It was 'a pat on the back', and 'the language was not resounding'.<sup>202</sup>

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<sup>199</sup> The figure of 5,000 is quoted in 'A hidden tale of real heroes', *Evening Herald*, 13 December 2012, it reappeared in the *Westmeath Independent* on 6 February 2016 and the *Irish Independent* on 16 September 2016 and the *Sunday Independent* on 23 October 2016. The more subdued 3,000 to 5,000 appeared in the *Derry Journal*, 5 August 2016. It was 5,000 in the *Westmeath Examiner* of 3 October 2020.

<sup>200</sup> *Evening Herald*, 7 May 2014.

<sup>201</sup> DOD, 532/2004 pt 1, letter to Minister O'Dea, name redacted by Department of Defence under GDPR and unknown to IRG.

<sup>202</sup> Col Richard Heaslip (Retd) and Col George Kerton (Retd), interview with IRG, 2 February 2021.

The *Connaught Tribune* in October 2011 carried an article on Private Enda McDonagh, a veteran of 'A' Company, asking why 'No Irish soldier received any decoration for their actions at Jadotville, even though their commanding officer, Comdt Pat Quinlan, recommended many of his men for the Military Medal for Gallantry (MMG), Ireland's highest award for military valour, for their displays of heroism during the battle.'<sup>203</sup> A narrative began to emerge about medals that, as Jadotville veteran Pte Bill Ready put it 'we did earn them'.<sup>204</sup> No one countered this narrative by pointing out that to be recommended for consideration for a medal did not entitle personnel automatically to a medal. It proved all too easy for commentators and public representatives to jump on this factually distorted Jadotville bandwagon. Doing so was made all the easier via social media which then enabled the unmediated expression of views without fact checking.

Writing in the *Evening Herald* in June 2012 Derek Mooney, former Special Advisor to former Minister for Defence Willie O'Dea, explained that

lobbying is about preparation. It is about research. It is about assembling the facts and honestly analysing the implications of what you propose. It is a process – and one more about research, education and communication than it is just about persuasion.

I know, from being on the other side, that a dedicated individual pleading a case that they know and understand deeply can be infinitely more persuasive than the most costly lawyer or public affairs consultant.

This was the case with those who campaigned for formal recognition of the bravery of those who fought at Jadotville in the Congo in 1961. No one knew or understood the complexities of this tragic situation better than they. When presented, their case was undeniable.<sup>205</sup>

The case was undeniable, but it was never subjected to any critical debate or discussion. The medals case became a case in point here. 'One matter still remains unfinished', Leo Quinlan e-mailed Minister for Defence Simon Coveney on New Year's Day 2015, the 'award of medals'.<sup>206</sup> Journalist Pat Stacey's point, also in the *Evening Herald* telescoped the issue: '[Comdt Pat] Quinlan petitioned the Irish Army to honour the men. No medals were forthcoming'.<sup>207</sup> It would have been appropriate for the Defence Forces at this stage to have explained the medals recommendation, evaluation and awarding process and in particular to have dug deep into their own archives to explain what happened. They did not.

A head of steam was building up, continuing to heap praise upon 'A' Company and Comdt Quinlan and doing so with growing expectation of forthcoming decorations. As Comdt Leo Quinlan told Minister Coveney

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<sup>203</sup> *Connaught Tribune*, 28 October 2011. The piece was also carried in that day's *City Tribune*.

<sup>204</sup> *Westmeath Examiner*, 26 November 2011.

<sup>205</sup> *Evening Herald*, 23 June 2012.

<sup>206</sup> DOD, 532/2004, pt 2, Comdt Quinlan to Minister Coveney, 1 January 2015.

<sup>207</sup> *Evening Herald*, 13 December 2012.

my father recommended a number of his Officers and men for medals due to their leadership and bravery under fire. None of these recommendations were ever acted upon and to this day some of those persons recommended do not even know they were in fact recommended by my father. Most of these persons are still alive. In addition my father (as mentioned by the overall UN Commanding Officer in Katanga 1961) would have deserved the highest award possible for his leadership and courage.<sup>208</sup>

Comdt Leo Quinlan and Minister Simon Coveney met in November 2015. Minister Coveney explained that to award medals 'would be unprecedented and a dangerous precedent for him to overturn a recommendation made over 50 years ago by a properly constituted Military Board (that no medal be awarded).<sup>209</sup> Comdt Leo Quinlan expressed the view to the Minister that 'the medal proposals made ... by his father were never acted upon and if they had been medals would certainly have been awarded.' From 2015, the award of medals was 'the sole issue' for Comdt Leo Quinlan.<sup>210</sup>

Yet there were problems with the analysis underpinning this approach. These statements about awards to 'A' Company, doubtless made in good faith, but without examination as to the facts, were misleading and contributed further to the mythification of the history of the Battle of Jadotville and the creation of a fog of inexactitude that was often accepted as correct fact. The recommendations for medals were initiated from a number of 'A' Company personnel not just Comdt Pat Quinlan, they were acted upon by the 1962 Medals Board and 1965 Medals Board, and those who were recommended for consideration for medals were never meant to be told they had been recommended. There is also no evidence that Brig Raja's positive appraisal of Comdt Quinlan was ever meant by Brig Raja to be linked to an award or decoration. There was no evidence as to what award, if any, Brig Raja might have had in mind and he simply wanted his views conveyed to the appropriate authority.

### ***Netflix and Jamie Dornan: 'The Catalyst'***<sup>211</sup>

In February 2015, Netflix acquired global rights to *Siege at Jadotville*. Chief content officer at Netflix Ted Sarandos called the film 'an amazing addition to our global original films initiative'.<sup>212</sup> Filming was scheduled to begin in April 2015 and, having previously been compared to *Band of Brothers*, the forthcoming film was now being compared to *Blackhawk Down* in the press.<sup>213</sup> Initial hopes of filming in Ireland faded as the entire venture was filmed in South Africa.

An announcement was made six months earlier that County-Down born actor Jamie Dornan was to play Comdt Pat Quinlan. Richie Smyth said that 'he is perfectly cast in the lead role as Comdt Quinlan and has been instrumental in bringing this epic story to life.' Jamie Dornan said 'I can't wait to get stuck into Jadotville. It's an unbelievable story and Comdt Pat Quinlan is going to be a treat of a character to tackle.'<sup>214</sup> Declan Power thought

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<sup>208</sup> DOD, 532/2004, pt 2, Quinlan to Coveney, 1 January 2015.

<sup>209</sup> DOD, 532/2004, pt 2, 'note of meeting' Duffy to Quinn and others, 5 November 2015.

<sup>210</sup> DOD, 532/2004, pt 2, 'note of meeting' Duffy to Quinn and others, 5 November 2015.

<sup>211</sup> Capt Noel Carey, interview to IRG, 19 January 2021, describing the influence of the Siege of Jadotville film on knowledge of the battle.

<sup>212</sup> *Westmeath Independent*, 21 March 2015. Netflix paid \$17m for rights to the film.

<sup>213</sup> *Irish Independent*, 18 February 2015.

<sup>214</sup> <http://www.iftn.ie/news/?act1=record&only=1&aid=73&rid=4287434&tpl=archnews&force=1> (accessed 5 April 2021).



Jamie Dornan was ‘the ideal guy’ to play Quinlan.<sup>215</sup> However Declan Power also made it clear that he was not involved in the production of the film based on his book.

Jamie Dornan’s playing the role of Comdt Pat Quinlan proved to be a defining moment in the popular public understanding and portrayal of the siege and battle of Jadotville. Writing the history of the Battle of Jadotville had started off in 1996 with Comdt Liam Donnelly’s submission to the Chief of Staff and questions about what happened at Jadotville, and why ‘A’ Company had been sent to the town had first been publicised internationally in Col Terry O’Neill’s 2002 article in *International Peacekeeping*. Both men’s seeking of answers to long-standing questions over Jadotville paralleled with Cpl John Gorman’s campaign for recognition of the veterans’ bravery. John Gorman felt that the film was ‘brilliant for the survivors of Jadotville and their families and [is] vindication for them.’<sup>216</sup> He told the *Westmeath Independent* that he would be an advisor on the film.<sup>217</sup> Again speaking of ‘closure’ to the Jadotville story John Gorman said: ‘I started the whole thing I suppose, so it is wonderful closure to do it with a film.’<sup>218</sup>

Jamie Dornan’s involvement brought the serious topic of the Battle of Jadotville and its aftermath into the world of celebrity culture and social media. The film was to be important in publicising the Battle of Jadotville, but to an Irish public unused to ‘war films’ on Irish topics and used to watching television output with a strong tradition in documentary-making, fact and fiction began to merge. Jadotville became not the history of Comdt Donnelly or Col O’Neill, but the fictionalised work of Hollywood scriptwriter Kevin Brodbin.<sup>219</sup> Even though Kevin Brodbin’s script made clear that it was based on Declan Power’s book, many viewers did not seemingly realise that the film was a work of fiction based on fact. The film became very important in telling a new audience about the Battle of Jadotville as a key moment in modern Irish military history and it led to a new edition of Declan Power’s *The Siege at Jadotville* being published.

As filming continued through summer 2015, Jamie Dornan appeared in photographs in character across the pages of the Northern Ireland *Sunday Life* newspaper as ‘real-life commander’ Comdt Pat Quinlan with ‘jaunty moustache and dressed for combat action.’<sup>220</sup> The ever-interested *Westmeath Independent* felt that in the ‘epic Congo war story’ Dornan ‘bears an uncanny likeness’ to Comdt Quinlan.<sup>221</sup>

The release of ‘The Siege of Jadotville’, ‘one of the most anticipated releases on the Netflix roster’, came one step closer in April 2016 when the score for the film was recorded by the RTÉ Concert Orchestra.<sup>222</sup> Declan Power told the *Westmeath Independent* that ‘the filming is done, and they’ve

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<sup>215</sup> *Evening Herald*, 11 August 2014.

<sup>216</sup> *Westmeath Independent*, 2 May 2015.

<sup>217</sup> *Westmeath Independent*, 21 March 2015.

<sup>218</sup> *Westmeath Independent*, 21 March 2015. Bill Cunningham, a nephew of Comdt Quinlan wrote to the editors of the *Connaught Tribune* (26 August 2016), the *City Tribune* (19 August 2016) and the *Westmeath Independent* (13 August 2016), highlighting Gorman’s singular role in the Jadotville veterans’ campaign. John Gorman’s was not a one-man campaign as Cunningham suggested, as the pioneering research of Comdt Liam Donnelly was central bringing Jadotville to the attention of Chief of Staff Lt Gen Jim Sreenan. It was another example of how the history of Jadotville was being moulded, even by those who were close to it.

<sup>219</sup> Brodbin was originally from Laghey, County Donegal and had written several film scripts: *The Glimmer Man*, *The A-Team*, *Constantine* and *Mindhunters*.

<sup>220</sup> *Sunday Life*, 28 June 2015.

<sup>221</sup> *Westmeath Independent*, 11 July 2015.

<sup>222</sup> *Irish Examiner*, 23 April 2016.

spent a year editing it'; he also explained that there had been 'strict security around the film to ensure that there are no leakages prior to the launch by Netflix.'<sup>223</sup>

The world premiere screening of *Siege of Jadotville* was held on the penultimate day of the Galway Film Fleadh on the evening of 9 July 2016.<sup>224</sup> A now near iconic picture of Jamie Dornan as Comdt Pat Quinlan, unshaven, carrying an FN rifle and wearing jungle green uniform began appearing in the press and on social media.

### ***Fact, fiction and 'The Siege of Jadotville'***

In anticipation of the film being released, Cpl John Gorman told journalists that it was 'going to bring out a lot of truths.'<sup>225</sup> He did not say what he thought these were. Such comments were to become a real problem for the actual history of the Battle of Jadotville in the following years because the audience and commentators increasingly began to blur fact and fiction and let the fictionalised account speak for the actual historical account provided by Declan Power and others. John Gorman had spoken over the years of each specific step taken to honour the veterans of Jadotville as in itself bringing closure. He returned to this line about the film and in doing so announced his next step in his ongoing Jadotville campaign: 'each survivor should get a medal (from the army) to put a close on it. That was turned down by a board back in 1965.'<sup>226</sup> This was a further blurring of fact and fiction over Jadotville. The 1965 Medals Board, like that in 1962, never discussed a medal for each veteran of the Battle of Jadotville. Like other aspects of the Jadotville story, such as casualties inflicted by 'A' Company and the number of attacking forces, this remark was unquestioningly accepted by media commentators and was not corrected by the Defence Forces press office. Instead, the Defence Forces used dry references to precedent and regulations, suggestions of lack of evidence, and cited bureaucratic time-based limitations to refuse to entertain requests to re-examine the medals issue. However, the Department of Defence also made the point that

given the reviews that have been conducted and the official memorials now in place, it is considered that there is no new compelling reason to change the decisions of the past in relation to the awarding of medals to the members of 'A' Company.<sup>227</sup>

There was, however, a compelling reason to examine the events of Jadotville and its aftermath, and that was because the battle and its aftermath were becoming weaponised in a growing campaign for the decoration of 'A' Company. Comdt Leo Quinlan brought the medals question again to the attention of the Department of Defence in April and June 2016, but the Department considered that 'the men of 'A' Company have received all that can be afforded in terms of official due recognition for their bravery' and the Chief of Staff felt that there were 'no additional ways envisaged in which the service of the men of A Coy can be further acknowledged.'<sup>228</sup> Comdt Leo Quinlan disagreed and 'did not accept that the regulations prevented medals being given and felt

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<sup>223</sup> *Westmeath Independent*, 18 June 2016.

<sup>224</sup> Member of the Independent Review Group Michael Kennedy had a minor advisory role in the film, reading early versions of the script and discussing some of the military and political events in the film with director Richie Smyth.

<sup>225</sup> *Westmeath Independent*, 2 July 2016.

<sup>226</sup> *Westmeath Independent*, 2 July 2016.

<sup>227</sup> DOD, 532/2004 pt 2, Lowe to Comdt Quinlan, 2 February 2015.

<sup>228</sup> DOD, 532/2004 pt 5, 'Briefing Note for the Minister re. his meeting with Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd) seeking recognition for those who participated at the Battle of Jadotville in September 1961', 4 July 2016.

that, if there was a will to do it, a way could be found to make it happen. The awarding of medals was “right, just and fair” and would be a “win win” situation for the Defence Organisation and for the men of ‘A’ Company.<sup>229</sup> The assumption here was one that was to gain popular traction after 2016 that the medals simply had to be awarded; there was no promoting awareness that being recommended for a medal meant just that and that an examination process had to follow. The line was that the 1962 Medals Board and 1965 Medals Board set out deliberately to avoid awarding medals to ‘A’ Company. As outlined in Chapters 9 and 10 of its Report, no concrete evidence of this has been produced to the Independent Review Group.

Further media examples of how the Battle of Jadotville was being manipulated were contained in an article by Jim Cusack in the *Sunday Independent* that the Battle of Jadotville was ‘one of the most successful defence actions in modern military history.’<sup>230</sup> Jim Cusack cited parallels to Rorke’s Drift and the Battle of the Alamo. But made according to who? Jim Cusack did not say.

Similarly, with the suggestion that the Battle of Jadotville had ‘become a text-book study for young officers around the world’, another statement made with no supporting evidence and with no input from those who were teaching Comdt Quinlan’s tactics for perimeter defence across the globe.<sup>231</sup> After discussions with Australian, British, German and United States military attachés and academics at their military training colleges and utilising contacts via the Defence Attachés Liaison Network the Independent Review Group found no evidence that the Battle of Jadotville or Comdt Quinlan’s tactics are currently, in summer 2021, on the syllabus of such courses or that they have been taught in the past.<sup>232</sup> Unfortunately, public debate and opinion has been given the line that the Jadotville based tactics are taught, have been so for some time, and have accepted this as factually correct.

In the closing scenes of the film Jamie Dornan’s Comdt Quinlan character punches the composite character ‘General McEntee’, a mixture of Lt Gen MacEoin and Lt Col McNamee, played by Michael McElhatton. When a journalist queried this with veterans as ‘dramatic licence’, ‘several veterans assured me afterwards it was completely true.’<sup>233</sup> It was not. This point is not to nit-pick the film but to show that fact and fiction were merging to create a new historically unsound and factually incorrect public view of Jadotville which was to be used by Jadotville veterans’ campaigners in the coming years in their call for the award of medals to ‘A’ Company.

Necessary correctives supplied by Declan Power emphasised that ‘those who see the film will remember that these actors are portraying real Irish soldiers who acquitted themselves in battle with great skill and courage at a place called Jadotville in the Congo in September 1961.’<sup>234</sup> He concluded that the film ‘enshrines the story of these brave and competent soldiers, men formerly lost to the pages of history, who are now being reclaimed by the nation.’ The problem with this

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<sup>229</sup> DOD, 532/2004 pt 2, ‘Meeting with Leo Quinlan to discuss Jadotville issue’, 7 July 2016.

<sup>229</sup> *Irish Independent*, 11 July 2016.

<sup>230</sup> *Sunday Independent*, 20 July 2016.

<sup>231</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>232</sup> A lengthy video conference discussion with Professor Thomas Bradbeer of the United States Army Command and General Staff College on 13 May 2021 clarified the situation from a United States perspective. At time of writing Professor Bradbeer planned to offer a strand covering Jadotville from the leadership perspective, not the perimeter defence perspective, as an optional part of a module to be offered in the 2021-22 academic year.

<sup>233</sup> *Westmeath Independent*, 9 July 2016.

<sup>234</sup> *The Herald*, 8 July 2016.

analysis is that this reclamation had now been ongoing since 2005, and while any Jadotville veteran might well say that they waited four times as long for this recognition of their bravery after being airbrushed out of history, the point is that there never seemed to come a time when Jadotville campaigners were prepared to let their case rest.

A further idea emerged in public after Longford/Westmeath Independent Alliance TD Kevin 'Boxer' Moran met Taoiseach Enda Kenny 'to seek formal recognition of the sacrifices made by those who survived the six-day siege and later imprisonment.'<sup>235</sup> Moran had also spoken to and planned to meet with Minister of State with Responsibility for Defence Paul Kehoe and was 'confident of a positive outcome', adding that they had 'not received a medal or a certificate in recognition of their supreme efforts.' The medals question was a live issue and a scroll had in fact been awarded to all members of 'A' Company in 2006. Kevin Moran was referring to a further award for the veterans of Jadotville which was in the offing. The Department of Defence had been investigating other ways of recognising the bravery of 'A' Company, and it was decided on the award of a 'unit citation as a whole and also specific citations to those individuals who had been recommended for bravery'. It had been decided to hold an event in September 2016 to mark the 55th anniversary of the Battle of Jadotville. Discussing these developments with Comdt Leo Quinlan, Margaret Stanley of the Department of Defence noted that

Mr Quinlan said the unit citation was a good idea and "a step in the right direction" as it acknowledged the bravery of the entire Company. He was dismissive of the idea of the individual citations and said he would continue to press for the awarding of medals. He was also dismissive of the commemorations that had been undertaken to mark the actions of 'A' Company over the past ten years.<sup>236</sup>

In all this discussion one voice seemed to have been overlooked: the views of the veterans. As Jadotville veteran Pte Thomas Flynn pointed out: 'when they made that movie, they opened up a lot of old memories, whether you wanted them or not, you got them back.'<sup>237</sup>

### ***The premiere of the Siege of Jadotville: July 2016***

The screening of *The Siege of Jadotville* at the Town Hall Theatre during the 2016 Galway Film Fleadh was an emotional event. The film theatre was filled to capacity and there was a strong sense of anticipation and expectation in the air. A Fleadh spokesperson said they 'could've sold out the venue three times over'.<sup>238</sup> The audience, a mixture of Fleadh-goers, Jadotville veterans and their families, Jamie Dornan fans and local dignitaries watched the film with rapt attention. They were captivated. When the credits rolled there was spontaneous applause across the house and the biggest, loudest cheer went up when at the end a photograph from 1961 of men of 'A' Company crossed the screen as they received a standing ovation. Filled with an immense pride for those men, it felt like it was about to bring down the roof.<sup>239</sup> Writing later of the film in the *Evening Echo* Cara O'Doherty, in a piece with many errors, nevertheless captured the emotions the *Siege of Jadotville* generated: 'it is worth seeing in the big screen. It will make you proud of 150 Irish lads,

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<sup>235</sup> *Westmeath Independent*, 9 July 2016.

<sup>236</sup> DOD, 532/2004 pt 2, 'Meeting with Leo Quinlan to discuss Jadotville issue', 7 July 2016.

<sup>237</sup> Pte Thomas Flynn, interview with IRG, 1 April 2021.

<sup>238</sup> *Irish Independent*, 11 July 2016.

<sup>239</sup> Independent Review Group member Michael Kennedy was present at the screening on the invitation of director Richie Smyth. Comdt Pat Quinlan's grandson Conor played the part of 'P.J. Joyce' in the film.

who history wanted to forget. Until now.<sup>240</sup> Adrian Bradley, son of Jadotville veteran Pte Robert Bradley, put it to the Independent Review Group that it was ‘amazing how a film can show the world how they were let down by higher authorities and their own government.’<sup>241</sup> Recalling a later premiere in Dublin, Kathleen Lafferty recalled an emotion that was so evident also in Galway that night for anyone who saw the veterans faces the night of the screening ‘that will live with me till the day I die, because it was like in a sense a little weight lifted off their shoulders: people believe us. You know, as one man said to me afterwards: ‘I can talk about it now.’<sup>242</sup>

Deirdre Verney of the *Westmeath Independent* began her review of the screening ‘it was a night at the cinema like no other.’<sup>243</sup> The version of Verney’s review which appeared in the *Westmeath Examiner* was titled ‘film shows the reality’: it did not. This misconception of fiction as fact was to become a major obstacle to accurately understanding the history of the Battle of Jadotville and its aftermath in the coming years. Facts had become obscured by fiction. Watching the film at a special screening in Dublin on 12 July 2016, Comdt Art Magennis (Retd) and Sqn Sgt Tim Carey (Retd) both of 35 Inf Bn Armoured Car Group sat in silence as the credits rolled. After some minutes silence, Comdt Magennis commented on how the film portrayed the Katangese Gendarmerie, with who he had been in direct combat in Elisabethville in December 1961: ‘they weren’t like that, they were soldiers’.<sup>244</sup> Ed Power in the *Irish Independent*, in an article which also appeared in the *Belfast Telegraph* in a slightly different form, hit the right note, calling *The Siege of Jadotville* ‘an arresting film rather than 100 percent accurate docudrama ... a thrilling romp because you want it to be.’<sup>245</sup> He pointed out that the Irish ‘compound’ ‘is largely an invention.’ He quoted Richie Smyth’s crystal-clear remarks at the Galway Film Fleadh that

it’s not a documentary ... I spoke to a lot of soldiers, a lot of historians. Everyone has a different story. You start to find a path through it. To engage the audience, you take certain aspects – the original battle was more skirmishes. To help the audiences understand we brought it all to one place. That’s the cinema aspect of it. I would like to think we kept to this historic (sic) truth.<sup>246</sup>

The *Belfast Telegraph* version added ‘the scene at the end of the trailer, in which thousands of mercenaries surround the soldiers’ compound, for instance, is largely an invention.’<sup>247</sup> However, it was cinematic scenes like this that audiences and later many public representatives and advocates of ‘A’ Company took away as truthful recreations of ‘A’ Company’s battle. ‘A’ Company veteran Pte Michael Tighe was explicit in his words:

This film, Jadotville, didn’t bear any resemblance, good, bad, or indifferent to the experience that I had in Jadotville because judging by that film about 14 fellows fought the whole battle and what was the rest, the hundred and something doing. Like, it didn’t bear any resemblance, like these people were coming out of the bushes in the film, right off

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<sup>240</sup> *Evening Echo*, 22 September 2016.

<sup>241</sup> Adrian Bradley, son of Jadotville veteran Pte Robert Bradley, written submission to IRG, 1 February 2021.

<sup>242</sup> Kathleen Lafferty, interview with IRG, 19 February 2021.

<sup>243</sup> *Westmeath Independent*, 16 July 2016.

<sup>244</sup> Comment to Michael Kennedy.

<sup>245</sup> *Irish Independent*, 16 September 2016.

<sup>246</sup> *Irish Independent*, 16 September 2016.

<sup>247</sup> *Belfast Telegraph*, 17 September 2016.

about 450 yards from me I could see 15 or twenty, and I opened fire on them, and there was a lot less by the time I'd finished I can assure you, that was my arc of fire, that was my area to protect, but as far as big swathes of these people coming at us, I could not say that happened on my watch anyway.<sup>248</sup>

While Comdt Liam Donnelly felt that 'the essence of what happened is there', historical accuracy became a victim of how the story of the Battle of Jadotville evolved after 2016.<sup>249</sup> This was not necessarily because of the film itself, but because of how in an age where attention spans were reduced, social media was evolving and it was easier to watch rather than read, public opinion and public opinion makers chose to view what was clearly a fictionalised adapted account as an accurate historical portrayal.

### ***The Unit Citation***

During the post-film discussion in Galway, Comdt Leo Quinlan announced that Minister of State with Responsibility for Defence, Paul Kehoe TD had authorised a Presidential Unit Citation for the men of 'A' Company, the first such award in the history of the Irish state. Kevin 'Boxer' Moran TD also announced the Unit Citation, taking a share of the credit as 'I made it clear that this was a matter that I wanted resolved'.<sup>250</sup> Cpl John Gorman called the Unit Citation the 'icing on the cake' of his fifteen-year campaign. He said that 'the announcement means he and other veterans can now, finally, have closure ... it brings everything to a close ... they talk about medals, but medals are a penny a dozen, a unit citation is fabulous. It is the icing on the cake ... it's the end of an era.'<sup>251</sup> Declan Power too felt that his mission had been achieved and that Minister Kehoe had shown 'a degree of common sense and compassion' and with Kevin 'Boxer' Moran TD had 'pulled a rabbit out of a hat'. Declan Power felt the Unit Citation was 'the equivalent of giving the whole company a medal for professional and valorous service ... it's an actual military decoration that they will get an insignia that if you were in uniform would be worn on the other side of the chest.'<sup>252</sup> Nevertheless, Comdt Leo Quinlan's initial hope had been that the closing credits of the film would state that the men of 'A' Company had finally been fully vindicated with the award of medals, but this was not to be.<sup>253</sup> Former Minister for Defence Simon Coveney had some months earlier come to a definite decision that though he found it 'extraordinary that medals weren't awarded',<sup>254</sup> there would be no new medals board to review the decisions of 1962 and 1965 and he was not willing to overturn their findings: 'I will not be recommending the award of medals'.<sup>255</sup>

At 1400hrs on 17 September 2016, the fifty-fifth anniversary of the end of the Battle of Jadotville, in front of 'huge crowds' the Unit Citation was formally presented to the veterans and the next of kin of deceased members of 'A' Company, at a special ceremony held at Custume Barracks, Athlone.<sup>256</sup> The citation recognised

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<sup>248</sup> Pte Michael Tighe, interview with IRG, 19 February 2021.

<sup>249</sup> Comdt Aidan Donnelly (Retd), interview with IRG, 3 February 2021, quoting remarks by his father Comdt Liam Donnelly on the film.

<sup>250</sup> *Westmeath Independent*, 16 July 2016.

<sup>251</sup> *Westmeath Independent*, 16 July 2016.

<sup>252</sup> *Westmeath Independent*, 16 July 2016.

<sup>253</sup> DOD, 532/2004, pt 2, 'Jadotville medals – note of meeting', Duffy to Quinn and others, 5 November 2015.

<sup>254</sup> DOD, 532/2004, pt 2, 'Jadotville medals – note of meeting', Duffy to Quinn and others, 5 November 2015.

<sup>255</sup> DOD, 532/2004, pt 5, Minister Coveney to Comdt Quinlan, draft letter 18 December 2015.

<sup>256</sup> *Offaly Independent*, 24 September 2016. A unit insignia was presented to 'A' Company veterans and next-of-kin in 2017.



the leadership, courage, bravery and professional performance of ‘A’ Company 35th Infantry Battalion and its attachments who, under challenging circumstances at Jadotville, while besieged by overwhelming numbers of Katangese Gendarmerie and cut off from support and reinforcements, did valiantly defend their position from the 13th September to 17th September 1961.<sup>257</sup>

Pte Paddy Hogan’s daughter Jackie had one very poignant memory of the presentation of the citation

I didn’t recognise the significance of all of this, I was actually overwhelmed and quite saddened and the one image which absolutely sticks in my mind is [Cpl] Mick Lynch’s wife going up to receive his citation.<sup>258</sup> And I’m standing there feeling very, very privileged and watching my father and feeling very proud. But what struck me was all of the families of the deceased men of Jadotville, how they must be now feeling and my image was of this elderly lady, Mrs Lynch, from our locality as well, and she going up [to receive the citation], this very frail little woman, with all her husband’s medals on her chest.<sup>259</sup>

Comdt Leo Quinlan felt that ‘the occasion was a “long time coming”, but as a family they were absolutely delighted it was finally here ... it was good for the army and the country that this recognition was finally happening.’<sup>260</sup> Pte Paul Malone later called the citation ‘a worthless piece of paper’ as it did not include his name, ‘anybody could have given this’.<sup>261</sup> Cpl Seán Foley felt similarly ‘there was no name on it, no presidential signing, you could have given it to anybody.’<sup>262</sup> Patricia Redmond held a similar point: ‘nobody had a name, everybody was just handed out the cert, no name, no recognition you know, “to whom”, no “To Jimmy Redmond”, or whoever it was ... I was almost going to hand it back.’<sup>263</sup>

Pte Malone called for the Minister for Defence to ‘admit responsibility for the way we were treated and give a medal or a scroll which actually includes our name and not just a token piece of paper.’<sup>264</sup> Pte Malone was supported by the Metropolitan Mayor of Waterford Councillor John Hearne (Sinn Féin) who felt that ‘No family could hold up the sheet he received and say their loved one risked their life for peace.’<sup>265</sup> Pte Malone made an important point to the Independent Review Group in 2021: ‘if the memorial and the citation all happened on the one day, that in my opinion would have been an end to it all, it would have been accepted at that, but it was kind of drip fed to us, to the people, so on and on it goes.’<sup>266</sup> The Department of Defence and the Defence Forces were unable to fathom what it would take to once and for all recognise ‘A’ Company’s personnel and their actions. Parsimony, lack of real thought over detail, division of opinion amongst veterans a failure to put veterans first and perhaps the meanness of mind that can pervade the Irish civil service

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<sup>257</sup> *Westmeath Independent*, 24 September 2016.

<sup>258</sup> Cpl Michael Lynch, ‘A’ Company, 35 Inf Bn.

<sup>259</sup> Interview with IRG, 18 February 2021.

<sup>260</sup> *Westmeath Independent*, 24 September 2016.

<sup>261</sup> *Munster Express*, 24 January 2017.

<sup>262</sup> Cpl Seán Foley, interview to IRG, 9 February 2021. A point also made to the IRG by Cpl Tadhg Quinn (interview with IRG, 21 January 2021).

<sup>263</sup> Jimmy Redmond and Patricia Redmond, son and wife of Pte Jimmy Redmond, interview with IRG, 15 April 2021.

<sup>264</sup> *Munster Express*, 24 January 2017.

<sup>265</sup> *Waterford News and Star*, 24 January 2017.

<sup>266</sup> Pte Paul Malone, interview to IRG, 2 February 2021.

could all be cited as reasons. Summed up by Declan Power to the Independent Review Group, 'there were a number of unfortunate ball handling errors' made at official level over the unit citation because 'if it didn't have standing, if it wasn't promulgated within DFRs as a military award then that was possibly going to be something that was going to come up and bite them on the ass.'<sup>267</sup> There was, he felt, 'a lack of military literacy within certain areas' at official level because actions taken within the Department of Defence 'completely emasculated the concept of the Unit Citation'.<sup>268</sup>

The news media covered the Unit Citation as they had *The Siege of Jadotville* film, which was premiered in Dublin at the Savoy Cinema on 19 September 2016. However, the film premiere was better copy than the presentation, wreath laying ceremony, piper's lament and Minister Kehoe's speech. Reporting the film became the tale of the heroes the Defence Forces shunned; heroes vindicated and the truth finally emerging.<sup>269</sup> It was an easy story to tell in an age where institutions were held in suspicion and state agencies seen as sinister forces following shady agendas. The Defence Forces too were an easy target because they rarely responded critically to political and media pressure on Jadotville, seeking instead to appease Jadotville veterans and their supporters with the plaques, scrolls and citations they wanted, a strategy which provided encouragement to keep returning for further awards.

### ***The Siege of Jadotville is released worldwide***

*The Siege of Jadotville* was released to worldwide audiences of over 81 million on Netflix on 7 October 2016, while a modest cinema release occurred in the US. The *Irish Independent* called it 'solid and well-paced' and gave it 3 out of 5 stars.<sup>270</sup> International reviews were mixed, the *Los Angeles Times* called the film 'a scrappy war flick with a fair amount of combat suspense but a whole lot of clichéd dialogue ... a serviceably exciting tale of bravery and ingenuity in the face of doom', though pointing out that 'a story tied to the fate of African citizens is - save the few scenes featuring Tshombe - told entirely with white people.'<sup>271</sup> A related issue was the amorphous portrayal of the Katangese Gendarmerie as a rabble, linking in the Rorke's Drift analogy, but making no attempt to understand the conventional military force Moïse Tshombe was developing. The Gendarmerie were described as 'guerrillas' by Mark O'Regan in the *Sunday Independent* on 23 October, a further degenerating of Katanga's army into a non-conventional military force. Another point, not commented on in the Irish media, was that Brigadier Raja had been incorrectly cast as a Sikh.<sup>272</sup>

### ***Jadotville Day 2016***

A further commemoration of the Battle of Jadotville took place on 22 October 2016 with the holding of the inaugural 'Jadotville Day' at Collins Barracks in Dublin. The commemoration was the idea of Defence Forces veteran Paul Clarke who felt that despite the commemorations of Jadotville by the Defence Forces since 2005, 'the authorities didn't go far enough in their praise, reward, or recognition for the Jadotville group.'<sup>273</sup>

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<sup>267</sup> Declan Power, interview with IRG, 4 May 2021.

<sup>268</sup> Declan Power, interview with IRG, 4 May 2021.

<sup>269</sup> *Derry Journal*, 5 August 2016.

<sup>270</sup> *Irish Independent*, 23 September 2016.

<sup>271</sup> <https://www.latimes.com/entertainment/movies/la-et-mn-mini-siege-jadotville-review-20161001-snap-story.html> (accessed 7 April 2021).

<sup>272</sup> A point made forcefully to the IRG by expert in Indian involvement in peacemaking Dr Swapna Kona Nayudu.

<sup>273</sup> *Westmeath Independent*, 5 November 2016.

In front of a large attendance, including a party who travelled specially from Athlone including Mayor of Athlone John Dolan, twenty-one doves were released, white roses were laid to remember deceased veterans and a ceremony was held to recognise the men of 'A' Company. Long-standing Jadotville campaigner Cpl John Gorman was presented with a replica of his unit pennant to mark the day.

A sign of how fiction and fact concerning the Battle of Jadotville were merging was seen in the final stanza in 'A poem for Colonel Quinlan' by Conor O'Leary read out at the event:

As for you General McEntee,  
Who disgraced my men and me.  
No matter what you say of us,  
We're the heroes of "A' Company.

There was no such person as 'General McEntee' in the Jadotville story, he was a fictional character created by Kevin Brodbin for *The Siege of Jadotville* film.<sup>274</sup>

### ***Reinterpreting the Battle of Jadotville through fact and fiction***

By the end of 2016, a new history of Jadotville had emerged. It was largely the product of *The Siege of Jadotville* film, 'a historic (sic) epic',<sup>275</sup> and 'a story finally told', and it was hagiographic and distinctly lacking in subtlety: the Battle of Jadotville had been reduced to a celluloid tale of good versus evil.<sup>276</sup> The film was now 'a true story',<sup>277</sup> a 'pivotal moment in Irish UN history',<sup>278</sup> in which 'tactical genius'<sup>279</sup> Comdt Pat Quinlan, 'a straightforward good guy', morphed into Jamie Dornan, brought all his men back alive.<sup>280</sup> 'A' Company, who were '150 against 3,000',<sup>281</sup> were 'immortalised',<sup>282</sup> the United Nations, their political masters, had failed 'at the very highest level'<sup>283</sup> and Conor Cruise O'Brien, the apparatchik on the ground was 'bungling, indecisive and out of his depth'.<sup>284</sup> These were very black and white positions and the empirical history, which was far more nuanced, had become the first casualty of this particular war. The aftermath of Jadotville and how 'A' Company was treated was 'one of the country's most shameful acts'.<sup>285</sup> This reworked and decontextualised history of the Battle of Jadotville took no account of the fighting and casualties the Defence Forces were taking simultaneously in Elisabethville and the fighting taking place at the time in Kamina, a textbook perimeter defence similar to 'A' Company's at Jadotville.

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<sup>274</sup> Given the structure of the lines, the correct name of the 35 Inf Bn commander. Lt Col McNamee would have worked, as would Lt Gen MacEoin.

<sup>275</sup> *Irish Independent*, 9 March 2017.

<sup>276</sup> *Evening Echo*, 22 September 2016.

<sup>277</sup> *Belfast Telegraph*, 21 September 2016.

<sup>278</sup> *City Tribune*, 11 November 2016.

<sup>279</sup> *Donegal Democrat*, 22 September 2016.

<sup>280</sup> *Belfast Telegraph*, 19 September 2016.

<sup>281</sup> *Evening Echo*, 22 September 2016. The figure grew to 4,000 in the *Waterford News and Star* of 24 January 2017.

<sup>282</sup> *Donegal Democrat*, 22 September 2016.

<sup>283</sup> *Sunday Independent*, 25 September 2016.

<sup>284</sup> *Sunday Independent*, 25 September 2016. The portrayal of Conor Cruise in *Siege of Jadotville* attracted considerable attention in the Irish media through October 2016.

<sup>285</sup> *Evening Echo*, 22 September 2016.

'A' Company had spent over fifty years being the subject of misinformation about their bravery and heroism, first they were branded cowards, then, exonerated, after 2016 they became the subjects in a world where countering 'fake news' required that all stories be rigorously fact-checked before publication. Unfortunately, between 2016 and 2020 this did not happen in the case of many of the stories which circulated in the media about 'A' Company and it ultimately led to incorrect information on the sensitive question of awards and decorations being spread countrywide to elected representatives and family members of deceased veterans of 'A' Company.

This popular perspective did lead to a renewed interest in Declan Power's book on which the *Siege of Jadotville* film was based. It was now number 5 in the paperback non-fiction best sellers list.

After the film had been released, Jadotville veteran Thomas Gunn made a point that was later made to the Independent Review Group by a number of Jadotville veterans. *The Siege of Jadotville* was meant to be entertainment, but it brought back 'awful memories.'<sup>286</sup> However, he felt that 'At least it's over: I'm not a "coward" anymore.' Andra Flynn said of her husband Jadotville veteran Pte Thomas Flynn 'whenever this all came up again, that they made the movie and they were getting the Jadotville medals, Tom suddenly got worse. It all seemed to suddenly then at an older age come out, and then [he was] diagnosed with PTSD.'<sup>287</sup> Living in Australia since 1970, Thomas Flynn had never heard of the film *The Siege of Jadotville*. He told the Independent Review Group how one Saturday night 'I was flicking through the ... Netflix, Andra was flicking through it, and a movie came up "The Siege of Jadotville", and I said "I was there", and that was, you know, it all came back.'

*The Siege of Jadotville* was later nominated for seven and won three Irish Film and Television Awards, including Best Director for Richie Smyth.<sup>288</sup> Jason O'Meara won the award of 'Best Supporting Actor' for his portrayal of CS Jack Prendergast. Jason O'Meara called for the award of medals to the men of 'A' Coy in his acceptance speech, dedicating his IFTA award to CS Jack Prendergast, who he called 'a real-life Irish action hero'.

Speaking at a book club event in Sallins, Co. Kildare in January 2017, Declan Power compared his factual account and *The Siege of Jadotville* film by explaining that 'for the purposes of dramatizing what is a complex historical and political background some of the events or people were not depicted entirely accurately. And the episode at the end of the film, where a senior officer was punched, never happened.'<sup>289</sup> 'A' Company had got belated national and international recognition for their bravery, but in achieving this the history of their own heroism had been rewritten and this moved the Battle of Jadotville to a place encompassing dumbed-down military history, commemorative pageantry and fictional writing.

### ***New public and political calls for personalised awards***

In the Seanad on 26 October 2016, Senator Gerard Craughwell (Ind) mentioned that he had attended the first Jadotville Day and felt that it was 'a sad reflection on this country that we did

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<sup>286</sup> *Westmeath Examiner*, 1 October 2016. Thomas Gunn felt the film 'gives a good sense of what happened' and was 'more than satisfied' if the film was 85% accurate and was 'fully accepting that the other 15% was necessary artistic licence.'

<sup>287</sup> Andra Flynn and Pte Thomas Flynn, interview with IRG, 1 April 2021.

<sup>288</sup> See [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FfK0Nlu6E\\_I](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FfK0Nlu6E_I). Thank you to Joseph Prendergast for bringing this YouTube clip to the attention of the IRG.

<sup>289</sup> *Leinster Leader*, 17 January 2017.

not do those heroes proud. We have not issued them with a medal for the service they have given to this country.<sup>290</sup> Senator Frank Feighan (FG) agreed, he felt that the certificates awarded in September 2016, which Senator Craughwell later in the same debate referred to as ‘a photocopy’, were ‘a compromise’ and ‘we might be able to go a little further in recognising the bravery of those men’. Senator Feighan urged people interested in Jadotville to see *The Siege of Jadotville* as it was ‘an inspiring film’.<sup>291</sup> Speaking in the Seanad Chamber on 9 November, Senator Pádraig MacLochlainn (SF) felt there was

growing anger not just among the families of those men who carried it alone for all those years but in wider society, including among individuals such as myself. There is growing outrage and anger about the failure to give them the honour they deserve. The Minister must reflect on this and understand the hurt and the pain. The appropriate way to reverse that is to take those people to the highest place of honour in the State - Áras an Uachtaráin - and honour them appropriately.<sup>292</sup>

Senator MacLochlainn felt that the appropriate honour was the Military Medal for Gallantry.

A pivotal event in positioning the opinions on the question of awards and decorations for ‘A’ Company was an evening on Jadotville held on 22 November 2016 at Galway Community College. After the very successful event, at which a number of Jadotville veterans were present, 5th Year students at the college petitioned the Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment Denis Naughten TD (FG) and Minister with responsibility for Defence Paul Kehoe TD (FG) ‘to award medals to the officers and NCOs of ‘A’ Company as recommended by the late Comdt Pat Quinlan.’ Leaving out the privates of ‘A’ Company and not aware that not all the recommendations were made by Comdt Quinlan, the students explained, citing Denis Naughten’s unfulfilled remarks in Dáil Éireann in 2004 on the bravery of ‘A’ Company, that ‘in a world obsessed with social media, celebrity and consumerism we want our nation to recognise what these men did in our name while serving with the United Nations.’<sup>293</sup> The students felt that ‘all obstacles have to be bypassed by simply doing what is right. We believe that giving the medals this Christmas is the right thing to do.’ Over the following three years, secondary school-children would also be mobilised by those seeking the award of medals to ‘A’ Company by their being urged to mail their public representatives seeking decorations for ‘A’ Company. For example, in February 2017, 200 personally written letters were sent by students of Malahide Community College to Taoiseach Enda Kenny (FG) seeking recognition of Comdt Quinlan and ‘A’ Company by awarding them medals. Letters were also sent by students at Galway Community College.

Speaking in Dáil Éireann on 13 December 2016 in response to Parliamentary Questions from Clare Daly TD (Socialist Party) and James Lawless TD (FF), Minister Paul Kehoe (FG) ‘all but ruled out the prospect of awarding medals for bravery to the remaining Jadotville veterans’.<sup>294</sup> He

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<sup>290</sup> <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/seanad/2016-10-26/8/> (accessed 12 April 2021). This was the first of 28 separate occasions that Senator Craughwell would speak on Jadotville in the Seanad.

<sup>291</sup> <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/seanad/2016-10-26/8/> (accessed 12 April 2021).

<sup>292</sup> <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/seanad/2016-11-09/3/> (accessed 12 April 2021). From late 2016, with Sen. Gabrielle McFadden and Sen. Jerry Buttimer, these Senators made representations on decorations for Jadotville veterans.

<sup>293</sup> DOD, 532/2004 pt 2, letter from students (names withheld by the Department of Defence under GDPR and unknown to the IRG) to Naughten, 15 December 2016.

<sup>294</sup> *Westmeath Examiner*, 14 January 2017.

denied claims by Deputy Daly 'that the remaining men, their colleagues and their families were not satisfied with the State's efforts to recognise them.' Deputy Daly and Deputy Lawless 'urged the Minister to provide individual medals of bravery'.<sup>295</sup> Deputy Lawless brought to Minister Kehoe's attention the significant point: 'What steps are being taken to acknowledge the trauma suffered by the men and their families for the continuing and prolonged neglect and failure to recognise them?' Minister Kehoe did not respond to this point, his brief had been to point out that 'There are rules and regulations around the presentation of medals and who receives them.'<sup>296</sup>

Comdt Liam Donnelly, who in 1996 had been the primary instigator in approaching the then Chief of Staff of the Defence Forces to investigate the Battle of Jadotville died on 5 January 2017.<sup>297</sup> One of those who attended Comdt Donnelly's funeral wrote to Minister Paul Kehoe how they

spoke to a number of retired army people at the funeral and have since watched the Jadotville movie, read up and made some phone calls to learn more. What happened to Comdt Pat Quinlan was unforgivable. Most of the damage is done – but what can be done immediately, to let Liam and many more rest in peace, is to honour with medals all those who fought so bravely. Shame on many governments and many Army Leaders.<sup>298</sup>

The point the e-mail made was very important in terms of the agendas continually evolving over the award of medals. The argument was developing to award medals to all members of 'A' Company regardless of Lt Col McNamee's submissions and in light of the fictionalised *The Siege of Jadotville* film. In effect, the actual 1961 and 1962 recommendations for consideration for awards were now being deemed invalid by a trend in public opinion, and this trend was in part based on an understanding from a fictionalised account of the Battle of Jadotville that as a side effect placed an overemphasis on events in Jadotville to the neglect of the position facing the 35 Inf Bn in Elisabethville and the 1 Inf Gp in Kamina. The question of medals for 'A' Company increasingly began to exist in isolation of other aspects of the 35 Inf Bn's and 1 Inf Gp's unit history, and of the Defence Force's deployment to Congo from 1960 to 1964, and exist more so in the context of *The Siege of Jadotville* as seen on Netflix and in the cinema.<sup>299</sup>

The Defence Forces and Department of Defence line in early 2017 remained that there was no provision in Defence Forces Regulations to roll back, re-examine or revisit the decision of the 1962 and 1965 Medals Boards. This line was technically correct, but in relying on precedent and regulations, it created a vortex within which those calling for the award of medals could make increasingly vigorous calls for medals to be awarded. Stonewalling was not a pro-active response in the climate of mounting interest in the Battle of Jadotville and rising public and political pressure for the award of medals to Jadotville veterans.

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<sup>295</sup> *Westmeath Examiner*, 14 January 2017.

<sup>296</sup> (<https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2016-12-13/16>, accessed 12 April 2021).

<sup>297</sup> Jadotville veteran CS Walter Hegarty DSM died on 25 January 2017. Senator Gerard Craughwell had remarks about CS Hegarty read into the record of Seanad Éireann. See <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/seanad/2017-01-26/7> (accessed 12 April 2021).

<sup>298</sup> DOD, 532/2004 pt 2, e-mail to 'admin@military.ie', 10 January 2017. Name of sender redacted by Department of Defence under GDPR and unknown to IRG.

<sup>299</sup> For example, see the further Seanad Debate on decorations and awards for Jadotville on 15 December 2016 (<https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/seanad/2016-12-15/7>, accessed 12 April 2021).



Independent Senator Gerard Craughwell and Fine Gael Senator Gabrielle McFadden as well as Fianna Fáil's Darragh O'Brien were prominent in contacting Minister Paul Kehoe, and in the first months of 2017, local representatives on county councils began to call for awards to Jadotville veterans.<sup>300</sup> Some of the correspondence from members of the public now being sent to the Department of Defence was extremely insulting in language:

dear minister you have not replied to me on the matter of the medals for the famlies of the gallent men of jadoville some of these men have since died its about time you did something about this matter i said to you in Athlone that booth you and your department are are a fucking disgrace you and successive ministers they did did something for their country but you done fuckall i am an ex soldier myself i served in the curragh about time you got up of your arse hole and put this matter right the army owes it these lads and their families that they get their rights yours truely<sup>301</sup>

Minister Kehoe covered the awarding of medals in a reply to Catherine Connolly TD (Ind) in Dáil Éireann on 15 February 2017. He was 'satisfied the events and happenings to date, in particular the award of a unit citation and specially commissioned insignia, properly honour the collective bravery of the men of 'A' Company'.<sup>302</sup> Deputy Connolly did not agree this was enough. She mentioned the initiative of the students from Galway Community College and felt that the 1965 Medals Board should be revisited as 'it is now time to undo the damage that was done in not giving recognition to those courageous young men.'<sup>303</sup>

### ***The 2017 archives review***

Deputy Noel Grealish (Ind) returned to the award of Jadotville decorations in Dáil Éireann on 22 February 2017, calling for a review of the decisions of the 1965 Medals Board, for medals for certain officers and NCOs of 'A' Company and specifically a medal for Comdt Pat Quinlan.<sup>304</sup> The students from Galway and Malahide, championing the cause of Jadotville, were joined by Comdt Leo Quinlan and CQMS Michael Tighe and Cpl Tadhg Quinn in the visitors' gallery watching the discussion.

Taoiseach Enda Kenny met with Comdt Leo Quinlan, Cpl Tadhg Quinn and CQMS Michael Tighe that day. Comdt Leo Quinlan recalled meeting Enda Kenny:

I'm confused he says, this Jadotville medal that people are talking about with the medal insignia and now medals for bravery, what medals precisely are being referred to by Noel Grealish? So I sat him down and I told him exactly what medals, I thought look, we don't know how many, eight, nine, whatever it is, these are special medals for bravery in battle or whatever it is and he said now, ok, I understand, right.<sup>305</sup>

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<sup>300</sup> See for example the initiative of Lifford Councillor Gerry Crawford on Donegal County Council who called for all of 'A' Company to be decorated with the Military Medal for Gallantry (*Strabane Chronicle*, 6 April 2017).

<sup>301</sup> DOD, 532/2004 pt 2, email to [info@defence.ie](mailto:info@defence.ie), 19 May 2017. Name and e-mail address of sender redacted by Department of Defence under GDPR and unknown to IRG.

<sup>302</sup> <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2017-02-15/14/> (accessed 12 April 2021).

<sup>303</sup> <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2017-02-15/14/> (accessed 12 April 2021).

<sup>304</sup> <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2017-02-22/2/> (accessed 12 April 2021).

<sup>305</sup> Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd), interview with IRG, 12 February 2021.

The Taoiseach replied to Deputy Grealish that he 'raised an interesting point when he said it is not known why medals were not awarded and asked the reason for that. That is an issue we must examine.'<sup>306</sup> He accordingly ordered a review by the Chief of Staff of the Defence Forces Vice Admiral Mark Mellett into why 'eight officers and NCOs' recommended by Comdt Pat Quinlan had not been awarded medals for the Battle of Jadotville because 'a medals board at the time denied them that honour.'<sup>307</sup> The figure of eight was incorrect and it ignores that a number of personnel at the rank of private were recommended in various ways for award. Long-time Jadotville campaigner, Cpl John Gorman dismissed the call for medals for eight alone: 'It should be medals for all or medals for none.'<sup>308</sup> Cpl Gorman argued that medals for all 'would for once and for all close the chapter on Jadotville for survivors and their families.'<sup>309</sup> He also wondered why the report of the 1965 Medals Board had not been made public. The report of the 1965 medals board was made public through the announcement of Distinguished Service Medals awarded in 1967.<sup>310</sup>

The developing narrative suggested that because of Comdt Pat Quinlan's recommendations alone the eight personnel were entitled to medals and a Medals Board had vindictively overturned what would otherwise have been a definite award because of the machinations of senior officers at Army HQ. As Fianna Fáil spokesperson for Foreign Affairs and Trade Darragh O'Brien TD put it, the 'recommendations for bravery medals at the time were ignored.'<sup>311</sup> The examination of the Independent Review Group into the 1962 and 1965 Medals Boards shows that this was not the case. It also shows that it was not just recommendations in respect of 'A' Company personnel that did not get recommended for an award, but personnel from across Defence Forces ONUC battalions. However, knowledge in the public domain of who had been put forward for recommendation for a medal was very scant in 2017 so this is, perhaps, an understandable oversight. As Comdt Leo Quinlan told the Independent Review Group in 2021:

Now at that stage none of us knew how many men were recommended for awards. I knew some were, but I didn't know how many. I knew Noel Carey was because my father had told me, and I think that about twelve or thirteen years ago I told Noel Carey he was recommended for a medal and I got the impression he didn't know at that time. He confirmed it later, but he was kind of set back on his heels a bit.<sup>312</sup>

The *Irish Examiner* quoted Comdt Leo Quinlan that Jadotville 'was buried' because of 'the embarrassment' the UN had suffered because of what happened to 'A' Company.<sup>313</sup> This inverted the significance of the Battle of Jadotville to the UN, and ignored that ONUC had caused far greater and still ongoing problems for the UN, than the Battle of Jadotville, as the still suspicious death of Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld which was at the time about to become the subject of a further international inquiry. It also ignored that in the aftermath of Operation Morthor, the UN paid little attention to what had happened at Jadotville, because it simply was not important

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<sup>306</sup> <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2017-02-22/2> (Accessed 12 April 2021).

<sup>307</sup> *Irish Examiner*, 23 February 2017.

<sup>308</sup> *Westmeath Independent*, 4 March 2017; *Westmeath Examiner*, 11 March 2017.

<sup>309</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>310</sup> Lists of names of those not awarded medals would not ever be made public.

<sup>311</sup> DOD, 532/2004 pt 2, O'Brien to Kehoe, 10 April 2017.

<sup>312</sup> Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd), interview with IRG, 12 February 2021.

<sup>313</sup> *Irish Examiner*, 23 February 2017.

to the evolving position of trying to end Katanga's secession. The point was again made by Comdt Leo Quinlan, without providing evidence that 'the experience of the UN mission in Jadotville and the strategy and bravery of the soldiers is taught as a case study in British and Australian military schools.' On asking for clarification of this point from British and Australian military contacts, the Independent Review Group was told that this was not the case.<sup>314</sup> And to further cement the narrowing gap between the history of the Battle of Jadotville and the fictional account on cinema and television screens, a picture of Jamie Dornan appeared as Comdt Pat Quinlan in the *Irish Examiner's* account of the Taoiseach's February 2017 Dáil Éireann statement made in response to Deputy Grealish.

On the Taoiseach's instructions the Chief of Staff, Vice-Admiral Mark Mellett initiated, via the Deputy Chief of Staff (Support) Maj Gen Kevin Cotter, an extensive study of the framework governing awards and a new archival investigation to try to pin down with a high level of certainty whether there was indeed sufficient archival evidence to make retrospective awards to personnel of 'A' Company.

The search of sources, including Military Archives, was complicated by the fact, that until the enactment of the National Archives Act 1986, there was no legislation for the official lodgement of documents in archives.

The most important search carried out in 2017 was into the service records of the 156 members of 'A' Company. One hundred and forty-two were located and of these twenty-nine were identified as having recommendations for awards ranging from promotion and commendation to medals. However, the search was unable to find material on the outcomes of these recommendations for award or their consideration. It was also unable to give a figure on the totality of awards recommendations made for 'A' Company. The search missed the list of names for consideration for awards signed off by Lt Col McNamee in 1962, so it concluded that there was no archival certainty available to determine who of the 156 personnel of 'A' Company were recommended for an award. The 2017 review examined in detail the documentary footprint, however incomplete, left by the 1962 and 1965 Medals Boards, yet it did not record an analysis of the material found on service records. The 2017 search concluded that there was no evidence to indicate that Comdt Pat Quinlan was considered for an award. This final conclusion the Independent Review Group concurs with.

The recommendation made by the 2017 review was for political direction as to the next course of action. As to courses of action, retrospective awards could be considered and implemented via changes to regulations. Possibilities were:

- The examination of a posthumous award to Comdt Quinlan.
- A Unit Award that recognizes the significance of the action of 'A' Company and its personnel at Jadotville.
- The linking of a unit award to the unit citation of 2016.

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<sup>314</sup> Contact with Dr David Lee, Australian Defence Force Academy, Canberra, 14 April 2021, and with the United Kingdom Defence Attaché, British Embassy, Dublin.

- The linking of the ministerial intent to award a unit insignia with the examination of a unit award.<sup>315</sup>

As Defence Forces Regulations did not allow for the retrospective examination of events in the context of awards it was for the Minister with responsibility for Defence to decide which course to pursue and then for regulations to be amended as necessary to deliver the Minister's intentions as well as to decide on the future establishment of a Defence Forces Board to examine the awards outlined above.

Chief of Staff Vice-Admiral Mellett wrote to Minister for Defence, Taoiseach Enda Kenny, on 1 June 2017 passing on the report of the investigation carried out by the Deputy Chief of Staff (Support) and seeking political direction to provide for a policy framework to conduct a retrospective investigation into the question for awards to 'A' Company and drawing the Taoiseach's attention to the courses of action in the report. The decision taken was to collectively honour the actions of all who served in Jadotville through a new and very specific medal: An Bonn Jadotville.

***An Bonn Jadotville: "A' Company has had its honour restored after fifty-six long years."***<sup>316</sup>

In early 2017, a proposal emerged for a specific medal to be awarded only to veterans of 'A' Company and families of deceased veterans of 'A' Company to honour their achievements and courage. Although the award of a specific medal had been unsuccessfully proposed from time to time, the proposal for An Bonn Jadotville gathered momentum through 2017. In the Seanad on 31 May, Senator Gerard Craughwell asked 'Do we want every one of the Jadotville people to be dead before we make a decision on these medals? What the hell will it cost to strike a medal for each and every living member?'<sup>317</sup> He expanded on his hopes some months later: 'I served with those men and never knew they were in Jadotville. I knew nothing about it because it was hidden. There is no disgrace in what they did. They are heroes. They deserve to be given their medal in front of their former colleagues and with a full military parade.'<sup>318</sup> The group proposing the medal made the point that 'the award of the medal to 'A' Company 35 Inf Bn ONUC would bring closure to all involved'.<sup>319</sup> Yet this contrasted with the view held by Comdt Leo Quinlan that the original 1960s medal recommendations should be awarded.<sup>320</sup>

On 13 June 2017, the day before he left office, Taoiseach Enda Kenny and Minister with responsibility for Defence Paul Kehoe issued a joint statement that they had 'decided to award a medal to the men of 'A' Company, 35 Inf Bn and the next of kin of deceased members, to give full and due recognition in honour of their courageous actions at the Battle of Jadotville in September 1961.'<sup>321</sup> The members of 'A' Company would 'be duly recognised in a fashion in which they have not been recognised up to now.'<sup>322</sup> No action was to be taken regarding the awards recommendations and process of the 1960s. This was a government decision taken at the

<sup>315</sup> DOD, 532/2004 pt 3, Maj Gen Cotter to Vice Admiral Mellett, 'Military Advice - Jadotville Awards', 23 May 2017.

<sup>316</sup> Closing line of Capt Noel Carey's speech to veterans and families on the presentation of An Bonn Jadotville, 2 December 2017. Video file of speech provided to the IRG by Capt Carey on 18 January 2021.

<sup>317</sup> <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/seanad/2017-05-31/8/> (accessed 13 April 2021).

<sup>318</sup> <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/seanad/2017-11-14/8/> (accessed 12 April 2021).

<sup>319</sup> DOD, 532/2004 pt 3, 'Proposal to Commission An Bonn Jadotville (the Jadotville Medal) attached to Clarke to Connick, 16 February 2017. The group were Sgt Paul Clarke, Cpl Dan O'Connell and 'A' Company veteran Cpl John Gorman.

<sup>320</sup> DOD, 532/2004 pt 2, briefing note of 4 July 2016.

<sup>321</sup> DOD, 532/2004 pt 2, press statement issued 13 June 2017.

<sup>322</sup> <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2017-07-11/24> (accessed 13 April 2021).

Taoiseach's last cabinet meeting before stepping down in favour of Leo Varadkar TD (FG).<sup>323</sup> Minister Kehoe emphasised that the medal was 'an exceptional step' building upon the 2016 Unit Citation and which 'gives full recognition to their performance at the Siege'.<sup>324</sup> Longford/Westmeath TD Kevin 'Boxer' Moran added in 'the decision was long overdue and should have been made many decades ago'.<sup>325</sup>

The announcement was reported in the press as an award for 'A' Company's bravery and as an honour to Comdt Pat Quinlan.<sup>326</sup> Students at Malahide Community School saw it as a positive outcome of their letter writing campaign and the *Irish Examiner* reported the decision as a vindication of actions taken by students at Galway Community College.<sup>327</sup> Cpl John Gorman said that the decision 'would mark the end of his long campaign for Jadotville recognition'.<sup>328</sup> Supporting John Gorman, another Jadotville veteran Tom Gunn added 'It's a great relief. Now we can sit back and relax for the rest of our lives, whatever we have left'.<sup>329</sup> He told the Independent Review Group it was 'a great honour, I have it at home in pride of place ... I was quite satisfied with that, more than satisfied, because after being in the doldrums for forty years this was the icing on the cake, that I felt was good enough ... I was satisfied with the Jadotville Medal and the Unit Citation, I felt that was what the unit deserved'.<sup>330</sup> Willie Penrose TD saw the decision as 'the culmination of a long campaign'.<sup>331</sup>

Following the government decision, a special working group was established within the Department of Defence to oversee the production and award of the new medal, a new regulation in Defence Forces Regulations yearly series was drafted to ensure the award of a medal consistent with the Unit Citation of 2016, and a medal and ribbon design process initiated.

Other Jadotville awards ceremonies took place in 2017. A plaque to honour the soldiers of Jadotville was unveiled in Athlone town on the second annual 'Jadotville Day'. The initiative had come about through Councillor Frankie Keena (FF) at the March 2017 meeting of Athlone Municipal District. It unanimously approved his proposal that the local authority install a plaque on Count McCormack Square on 21 October 2017. A civic ceremony was held in Athlone that day and Mayor of Athlone Councillor Aengus O'Rourke (FF) unveiled the plaque. As the final aspects of the design and production of An Bonn Jadotville were still underway, it proved impossible to hold the award ceremony in Custume Barracks that same day.

A week later, on 28 October 2017, a bronze monument to 'extraordinary leader' Comdt Pat Quinlan was unveiled in a ceremony attended by some 300 people at the Sea View Hotel in Waterville, Co. Kerry.<sup>332</sup> The unveiling ceremony could not be held on site at the Coomakista Pass due to poor weather on the day.<sup>333</sup>

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<sup>323</sup> DOD, 532/2004 pt 3, briefing note on An Bonn Jadotville Medal awarding ceremony by Executive Branch, Department of Defence, 19 September 2017.

<sup>324</sup> Ibid.

<sup>325</sup> *Longford Leader*, 16 June 2007.

<sup>326</sup> *Irish Examiner*, 14 June 2017.

<sup>327</sup> *Irish Examiner*, 14 June 2017.

<sup>328</sup> *Offaly Independent*, 17 June 2017.

<sup>329</sup> *Westmeath Examiner*, 24 June 2017.

<sup>330</sup> Pte Tom Gunn, interview with IRG, 28 January 2020.

<sup>331</sup> *Westmeath Examiner*, 24 June 2017.

<sup>332</sup> *Irish Times*, 30 October 2017.

<sup>333</sup> *The Kerryman*, 1 November 2017.

In the months leading up to the unveiling of the County Kerry plaque, pressure was put on Minister Kehoe by Comdt Leo Quinlan and by public representatives including Joe McHugh TD (FG) and Catherine Connolly TD (Independent) to award a posthumous medal to Comdt Pat Quinlan. In the opinion of Comdt Leo Quinlan this was to be a Military Medal for Gallantry. However, it is not legally possible for a civilian including retired officers, or a politician to ask for a medal to be awarded to a member of the Defence Forces. Only a Medals Board operating under Defence Forces Regulations can recommend to the Minister for Defence that medals be awarded.

An Bonn Jadotville was presented by Minister Paul Kehoe to the members of 'A' Company and family members of deceased personnel of 'A' Company at a ceremony in Custume Barracks, Athlone, on 2 December 2017. It was 'one of his priorities for the year.'<sup>334</sup> In the weeks before the ceremony, Senator Gabrielle McFadden (FG) caught the importance of An Bonn Jadotville: 'the decision to award the medal to these Jadotville heroes was a consequence of the Government wanting to recognise that they should get full recognition and that what happened to them in 1961 should never have happened.'<sup>335</sup> The presentation ceremony was an emotional event for the veterans and relatives present; pride, happiness, sadness and a lot of memories both of the Battle of Jadotville itself and the treatment of 'A' Company by their fellow comrades at all levels in the Defence Forces in the following years. When reporting the ceremony, the following day's *Sunday Independent* newspaper devoted half its article to the message sent by Jamie Dornan and the cast of *The Siege of Jadotville* to the veterans.<sup>336</sup>

An Bonn Jadotville bears the words 'cosaint chalma' ('valiant defence') and 'misneach' ('courage') with 'Jadotville' on the clasp and a ribbon representing a mix of the colours from the Irish flag and the ONUC mission medal ribbon. 'Small consolation for 50 years of being treated like pariahs' wrote Ian O'Doherty in the *Irish Independent* linking his views to low wages and budget cuts in the 2017 Defence Forces.<sup>337</sup> Not all were happy with the medal. Pte James Tahaney thought the medal was too late and 'it wasn't suitable for what we went through, we went through *Hell*, there was no fellow who came back who you could say was 100% well, including myself.' Cpl Seán Foley described it as 'a kind of an afterthought ... a token'.<sup>338</sup> Kathleen Lafferty, daughter of Cpl John McAnaney felt An Bonn Jadotville was 'not a real medal, to me personally, it's not an Army medal, it's not a military designed medal and to me it was something that was made up basically, hoping that it may shut them up and just keep them happy.'<sup>339</sup>

Nevertheless, Pte Thomas Flynn said of receiving An Bonn Jadotville: 'I felt proud of it, it wasn't something I ever envisaged.'<sup>340</sup> Capt Noel Carey, the most senior of Comdt Quinlan's men still alive, told those gathered at Custume Barracks that 'we can now do one thing that it has taken fifty-six long years to do. We can hold our heads up with pride, because 'A' Company have had honour restored after fifty-six long years.'<sup>341</sup> One of the long-time advocates of recognition for

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<sup>334</sup> DOD, 532/2004 pt 4, Stanley to Mulhall, 16 November 2017.

<sup>335</sup> <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/seanad/2017-11-14/8/> (accessed 13 April 2021).

<sup>336</sup> *Sunday Independent*, 3 December 2017.

<sup>337</sup> *Irish Independent*, 7 December 2017.

<sup>338</sup> Cpl Seán Foley, interview with IRG, 9 February 2020.

<sup>339</sup> Kathleen Lafferty, interview with IRG, 9 February 2021.

<sup>340</sup> Andra Flynn and Pte Thomas Flynn, interview with IRG, 1 April 2021.

<sup>341</sup> *Westmeath Independent*, 9 December 2017. A slightly different phraseology to the version delivered.

‘A’ Company, Senator Gerard Craughwell felt the presentation ‘was a wonderful day. It worked out perfectly at the end of the day. It was a credit to the Department of Defence and the Defence Forces.’<sup>342</sup> Lt Joe Leech’s son Lt Cmdr John Leech (Retd) considered the Bonn Jadotville ‘an excellent way of recognising what ‘A’ Company did; I thought it was pretty extraordinary what they managed to do.’<sup>343</sup> Cpl John Gorman felt it was ‘mission accomplished’ after almost two decades campaigning.<sup>344</sup> John Gorman later announced on social media in early 2019 that ‘his Jadotville work was done’.<sup>345</sup>

Accompanying his father Pte Michael Greene to the presentation ceremony for An Bonn Jadotville, his son John asked ‘does that draw a line under it for you? And he actually said “Yeah, it did”’.<sup>346</sup> Pte Mick Dunne said that after the Bonn Jadotville was presented ‘I thought the chapter was closed when they gave the medals in Athlone.’<sup>347</sup> By this Pte Dunne meant not that the history of the Battle of Jadotville should be closed, he felt it should be spoken about, but that the question of decorations was closed. Pte Joe O’Kane asked a question many veterans asked: ‘I was happy to get it, but why did it take so long?’<sup>348</sup> This closure was very important for many veterans, though Pte James Tahaney made the point that the memories would ‘always be there, no matter what you get, you’ll always think of where you were.’<sup>349</sup>

***Some magic evidence has come from somewhere, out of the sky, sixty years on.***<sup>350</sup>

In his speech at Athlone on 2 December 2017 during the presentation of An Bonn Jadotville, Capt Noel Carey spoke of ‘A’ Company’s ‘gallant Comdt Quinlan, a leader among leaders.’<sup>351</sup>

In November 2017, Comdt Quinlan’s son, Leo Quinlan, working with Michael Williams, son of Cpl Frank Williams of ‘A’ Company, received documentation ‘unearthed in Army Headquarters’ in ‘A’ Administration Section from which it could be conjectured which personnel were apparently recommended by Comdt Quinlan for leadership and bravery in the Battle of Jadotville.<sup>352</sup> Comdt Leo Quinlan wanted these medals to be awarded. He felt that the Bonn Jadotville was

just like a certificate that you’ve attended the IMI, at a conference or a course or you’ve got your Leaving Certificate, it doesn’t, nothing related to your bravery or individual brave actions. So, I made the very strong point that the general Jadotville medal, while very welcome should not be confused with the MMGs and DSMs as mentioned for the 31 men who performed exceptional acts of bravery and who were consequently recommended for exceptional awards.<sup>353</sup>

However, many Jadotville veterans were happy with the closure given by the award of An Bonn Jadotville and felt that additional medals would devalue the Bonn Jadotville. Some others felt that

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<sup>342</sup> <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/seanad/2017-12-05/2/> (accessed 13 April 2021).

<sup>343</sup> Lt Cmdr John Leech (Retd), interview with IRG, 23 February 2021.

<sup>344</sup> *Westmeath Independent*, 9 December 2017.

<sup>345</sup> *Westmeath Examiner*, 26 January 2019.

<sup>346</sup> John Greene, interview with IRG, 2 February 2021.

<sup>347</sup> Pte Mick Dunne, interview with IRG, 23 February 2021.

<sup>348</sup> Pte Joe O’Kane, interview with IRG, 25 February 2021.

<sup>349</sup> Pte James Tahaney, interview with IRG, 28 January 2021.

<sup>350</sup> BSM P.J. Higgins, interview with IRG, 16 February 2021.

<sup>351</sup> *Westmeath Independent*, 9 December 2017.

<sup>352</sup> Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd), interview with IRG, 12 February 2021.

<sup>353</sup> Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd), interview with IRG, 12 February 2021.



it brought back events they had tried to block out over the past sixty years.<sup>354</sup> Pte Thomas Flynn's wife Andra told the Independent Review Group that 'medals aren't the be-all and the end-all'.<sup>355</sup>

Capt Noel Carey felt that 'when Pat Quinlan's recommendations were discovered in a press in Military Archives the obstacles to a solution to the awards lessened'.<sup>356</sup> A fair point in theory (though they were not discovered in Military Archives), but in practice it complicated matters considerably. Pte Joe O'Kane, who was recommended for a Commendation, put the passage of time since Jadotville in context: 'I'm happy and contented, because whenever I seen my name on this thing, DSM medals, says I, "what did I do wrong, what did I do right?", I can't remember'.<sup>357</sup>

A systematic public pressure campaign now began, making use of this new material in a synopsis and, unfortunately incorrectly analysed manner, to engage elected representatives at local and national level to call for the awarding of medals. What was being circulated was not, as the Independent Review Group later discovered, Comdt Pat Quinlan's recommendations, although some were contained in the document. Pte O'Kane had been recommended for consideration for a Commendation by Capt Donnelly and Lt Leech, and not by Comdt Quinlan. It is also important to recall that nomination does not automatically equal the award of a decoration. However, the point was increasingly being made that nomination for a decoration alone equalled the right to an award, for example by prominent Jadotville campaigner Senator Gerard Craughwell: 'I commend the Defence Forces for uncovering the names. Now let us get the medals for the men in question'.<sup>358</sup> The list was a synopsis of the conclusions of the 1962 Medals Board relating only to 'A' Company<sup>359</sup> combined with names drawn from a broader document from 1971. It contained significant, though understandable, errors, as the table below shows.

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<sup>354</sup> Andra Flynn and Pte Thomas Flynn, interview with IRG, 1 April 2021.

<sup>355</sup> Andra Flynn and Pte Thomas Flynn, interview with IRG, 1 April 2021.

<sup>356</sup> Capt Noel Carey (Retd), 'info brief to IRG', 31 December 2020.

<sup>357</sup> Pte Joe O'Kane, interview with IRG, 25 February 2021.

<sup>358</sup> <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/seanad/2018-10-17/9> (accessed 15 April 2021).

<sup>359</sup> See comments by Senator Gerard Craughwell in the Seanad on 17 October 2018 (<https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/seanad/2018-10-17/9>) (Accessed 15 April 2021).

**JADOTVILLE MEDAL LIST<sup>360</sup>**

**'Recommendations for Awards under DFR A10, A15, A19'**

Names circulated from 2018 in support of award of medals. Columns A to E are the original list, columns F to H are comments added by IRG following analysis of the list.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
No	Rank	Name	'A' Coy Sub-Unit	Parent Unit	Actual recommendation from 'A' Company to OC 35 Inf Bn	Actual recommendation for consideration by Lt Col McNamee to the Adjutant-General	For action at
<b>'Recommendations for Military Medal for Gallantry' (6)</b>							
73505	Coy Sgt	Prendergast, Jack	Coy HQ	6 Bn	Medal	MMG	Jadotville
94808	Sgt	Monaghan, John	Sp Pl	6 Bn	Medal	MMG	Jadotville
801545	Sgt	Hegarty, Walter	2 Pl	1 Bn	Meritorious Service/Medal	MMG	Kamina, Jadotville, Elisabethville <sup>361</sup>
810264	Cpl	Quinn, Tadhg	Sp Pl	1 Bn	Medal	MMG	Jadotville
809650	Pte	Hennelly, Gerald	3 Pl	4 Fd Engr Coy	Medal	MMG	Jadotville
809687	Pte	Galvin, Michael	1 Pl	4 Fd Engr Coy	Medal	MMG	Jadotville <sup>362</sup>
<b>'Recommendations for 'DSM' (medal did not exist in 1961; no recommendations were made for it)' (34)</b>							
7440	Capt	Donnelly, Liam	Sp Pl	5 FAR	Commendation	Meritorious Service	Jadotville
7645	Lt	Knightly, Kevin	Cav Tp	Mot Sqn	Meritorious Service	Meritorious Service	Jadotville
7767	Lt	Carey, Noel	3 Pl	17 Bn	Commendation	Meritorious Service	Jadotville
7668	Lt	Quinlan, Tom	2 Pl	1 Bn	Commendation	Meritorious Service	Jadotville, Elisabethville <sup>363</sup>
73505	<del>Coy Sgt</del>	<del>Prendergast, Jack</del>	<del>Coy HQ</del>	<del>6 Bn</del>	N/A	For MMG alone	N/A
94808	<del>Sgt</del>	<del>Monaghan, John</del>	<del>Sp Pl</del>	<del>6 Bn</del>	N/A	For MMG alone	N/A
801545	<del>Sgt</del>	<del>Hegarty, Walter</del>	<del>2 Pl</del>	<del>1 Bn</del>	N/A	For MMG alone	N/A
421402	Sgt	Kelly, Tom	Sp Pl	6 Bn	Commendation	Meritorious Service	Jadotville
77210	Cpl	Williams, Frank	Coy HQ	Sigs	Promotion	Promotion	Jadotville
805649	Cpl	Rea, James	1 Pl	1 Bn	Commendation	Meritorious Service	Jadotville
804723	Cpl	Lucey, James	Cav Tp	Depot Cav	Commendation	Meritorious Service	Jadotville
94809	Cpl	McDonnell, Tom	Sp Pl	6 Bn	Commendation	Meritorious Service	Jadotville
810428	Cpl	Foley, John	3 Pl	1 Bn	Unknown	Meritorious Service	Jadotville
98807	Cpl	McDonagh, John	3 Pl	1 Bn	Commendation	Meritorious Service	Jadotville
96739	Cpl	McManus, John	Sp Pl	MPC	Meritorious Service	Meritorious Service	Elisabethville
810264	<del>Cpl</del>	<del>Quinn, Tadhg</del>	<del>Sp Pl</del>	<del>1 Bn</del>	N/A	For MMG alone	N/A
425332	<del>Cpl</del>	<del>Lynch, Michael</del>	<del>3 Pl</del>	<del>6 Bn</del>	N/A	For 39 Inf Bn	N/A

<sup>360</sup> A copy of this list was provided by Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd) to the IRG and the IRG discussed it in detail with Comdt Quinlan and his brother Comdt Pat Quinlan (Retd) on 12 February 2021.

<sup>361</sup> Awarded a DSM in 1967 for actions in Elisabethville and Jadotville.

<sup>362</sup> Name not on original list and added by IRG. Also communicated to Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd) and Comdt Pat Quinlan (Retd) at their 12 February 2021 meeting with the IRG.

<sup>363</sup> Awarded a DSM in 1967 for actions in Elisabethville and Jadotville.

808117	Pte	O'Kane, Joe	Sp Pl	6 Bn	Commendation	Meritorious Service	Jadotville
809016	Pte	Larkin, Robert	1 Pl	6 Bn	Commendation	Meritorious Service	Jadotville
80511	Pte	McCormack, Michael	1 Pl	4 S&T	Commendation	Meritorious Service	Jadotville
800068	Pte	Gunn, Tom	3 Pl	1 Bn	Commendation	Meritorious Service	Jadotville
810219	Pte	Cooley, Charles	1 Pl	1 Bn	Unknown	Meritorious Service	Unknown
810143	Pte	Flynn, Thomas	Sp Pl	1 Bn	Commendation	Meritorious Service	Jadotville
809014	Pte	Tighe, Michael	2 Pl	6 Bn	Meritorious Service	Meritorious Service	Jadotville, Elisabethville <sup>364</sup>
809854	Pte	Molloy, Daniel	Sp Pl	6 Bn	Meritorious Service	Meritorious Service	Elisabethville
810214	Pte	Nicell, John	Sp Pl	6 Bn	Meritorious Service	Meritorious Service	Elisabethville
809084	Pte	Feery, Jim	Sp Pl	6 Bn	Meritorious Service	Meritorious Service	Elisabethville <sup>365</sup>
809613	Pte	Stanley, Noel	1 Pl	6 Bn	Commendation	Meritorious Service	Jadotville
809683	Pte	Brennan, Michael	1 Pl	6 Bn	Commendation	Meritorious Service	Jadotville
<del>809650</del>	<del>Pte</del>	<del>Hennelly, Gerald</del>	<del>3 Pl</del>	<del>4 Fd Eng Coy</del>	N/A	For MMG alone	N/A
810997	Pte	Quinlan, Matt	Sp Pl	1 Bn	Promotion	Promotion	Jadotville
<del>809687</del>	<del>Pte</del>	<del>Galvin, Michael</del>	<del>3 Pl</del>	<del>4 Fd Engr Coy</del>	N/A	For MMG alone	N/A
807159	Tpr	McCarton, Patrick	Cav Tp	4 Mot Sqn	No recommendation found	No recommendation	N/A
-----	Rev Fr	Fagan Joseph	Chaplain	Air Corps	Unknown	Meritorious Service	Unknown

<sup>364</sup> To have been awarded a DSM in 1967 for actions in Elisabethville and Jadotville.

<sup>365</sup> Awarded a DSM in 1967 for actions in Elisabethville.

Chief of Staff Vice-Admiral Mellett invited Comdt Leo Quinlan to meet him on 27 February 2018 for a courtesy visit at McKee Barracks, but during the meeting no mention was made of the additional documentation. Similarly, when Comdt Leo Quinlan met Minister Paul Kehoe on 3 May 2018, no new information was tabled. Towards the end of 2018, Senator Gerard Craughwell said that he had documentation recommending nine members of 'A' Company for a Distinguished Service Medal and four members for a Military Medal for Gallantry. He did not reveal from where this information came. The general indication by those possessing the list in 2018 was that it was from documentation that they felt had been hidden, or deliberately misplaced in Army Headquarters and had been found recently.<sup>366</sup> However, the Distinguished Service Medal did not exist as a medal in 1961, so the names must have come from lists compiled later than 1964 when the medal was introduced.

Senator Craughwell raised the medals awards in the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence in October 2018. Calling for a review of Distinguished Service Medal recommendations, Senator Craughwell's comments on record also include the errors introduced into the analysis by viewing the 1962 and 1971 documents in isolation:

I have a list of those recommended for Distinguished Service Medals and it includes approximately twenty privates, ten corporals, four sergeants, one company sergeant, three lieutenants and a captain. A corporal, a private, two sergeants and 'A' Company sergeant have been recommended for the military medal for gallantry. One of those, Sergeant Walter Hegarty, the father-in-law of my niece, died not knowing that he had two recommendations for distinguished service medals, one of which he was awarded, and a recommendation for the military medal for gallantry. It is simply not good enough. Flattery we do; respect we do not do.<sup>367</sup>

The Independent Review Group has discovered that Sgt Walter Hegarty was in fact recommended solely for a Military Medal for Gallantry, he was not recommended for three medals. He was actually recommended separately for two medals but, as in other cases, the awards were combined: The Meritorious Service Medal by 32 Inf Bn and The Military Medal for Gallantry by 35 Inf Bn. The Military Medal for Gallantry was not awarded by the 1962 Medals Board but its recommendation from 35 Inf Bn was combined with the one from 32 Inf Bn to award CS Hegarty a combined Distinguished Service Medal 2nd Class by the 1965 Medals Board, for actions which included those at Jadotville.

Senator Craughwell also read the list of names, including Cpl Michael Lynch and Pte Matt Quinlan, neither of whom had been recommended for a Distinguished Service Medal, into the Seanad record. He also repeated the mistake that Sgt Hegarty had been recommended for multiple medals.

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<sup>366</sup> DOD, 532/2004 pt 6, e-mail to Paul Kehoe, senators and TDs, name redacted by DOD and unknown to IRG, 14 May 2019. The exact phrase used in this e-mail was 'hidden/misplaced among army records and only recently discovered.'

<sup>367</sup>[https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/joint\\_committee\\_on\\_foreign\\_affairs\\_and\\_trade\\_and\\_defence/2018-10-18/2](https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/joint_committee_on_foreign_affairs_and_trade_and_defence/2018-10-18/2) (accessed 15 April 2021). Senator Craughwell also made the point in the Seanad on 17 October 2018, see <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/seanad/2018-10-17/9>, accessed 15 April 2021).

A similar error was made by Deputy Eamon Scanlon (FF) in Dáil Éireann on 5 February 2019 regarding these recommendations.<sup>368</sup>

Using the new material Comdt Leo Quinlan wrote, after it was suggested to him it was an avenue to follow, to TDs in constituencies from which the Jadotville veterans on the list came alerting them to the matter of medals. As he told the Independent Review Group:

A lot of it was left up to me because I wasn't getting support from the Army, so I chased where I could people to keep the Jadotville story alive. I was told also to go to politicians but I went also ... it wasn't me chasing people "do you want to hear my talk, do you want to hear my talk", I was just getting every day, every week, requests.<sup>369</sup>

These talks, national and international created a greater public awareness of Jadotville through 2019. People who were at the talks picked up on the story of the medals and began writing to politicians and to the Taoiseach Leo Varadkar. Secondary school students were active once again supporting a push for these apparent medals recommendations. As Comdt Leo Quinlan put it 'it took on a life of its own'.<sup>370</sup> He told the Independent Review Group that from one locality the Taoiseach received nearly 1,000 e-mails.

On 21 January 2019, Comdt Leo Quinlan wrote, for example, to Barry Cowen TD (FF) that Comdt Pat Quinlan had recommended Pte Noel Stanley for a DSM.<sup>371</sup> Here was an unfortunate error which gained traction based on the paucity of the material then available to Jadotville campaigners. Pte Stanley was recommended for a commendation, not a medal, by Lt Tom Quinlan and CS Jack Prendergast, with Comdt Quinlan later signing off on the recommendation for consideration for an award. Similar letters were sent to Senator Jerry Buttimer (FG) and Bernie Durkan TD (FG).

The interpretations of the newly located documentation being circulated on medal non-awardees, contained a number of significant inaccuracies, particularly about individuals who had been put forward for, but not awarded, a medal. For example, the case of Pte Matt Quinlan, who died by suicide in Australia in 1991,<sup>372</sup> was conveyed with the strong suggestion that his life would have been different if Pte Quinlan had received or known he had been proposed for a Distinguished Service Medal. Pte Quinlan's service record shows that he was not recommended for a Distinguished Service Medal, he was recommended for a promotion. The Distinguished Service Medal did not exist in 1961. Pte Matt Quinlan was not recommended for a medal, yet the incorrect story now circulated in the media and in the Oireachtas that he had been recommended for consideration for a medal.<sup>373</sup> This does not detract from Pte Matt Quinlan's service in Jadotville.

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<sup>368</sup> <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2019-02-05/29> (accessed 15 April 2021).

<sup>369</sup> Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd), interview with IRG, 12 February 2021.

<sup>370</sup> Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd), interview with IRG, 12 February 2021.

<sup>371</sup> DOD, 532/2004 pt 8, Comdt Quinlan to Cowen, 21 January 2019.

<sup>372</sup> *Irish Times*, 16 May 2019. The article discusses a talk by Pte Quinlan's sister on the impact Jadotville and its aftermath had on her brother.

<sup>373</sup> See 'Jadotville's long shadow: suicide, alcoholism, marital breakdown', *Irish Times*, 19 August 2019. See also *Westmeath Examiner*, 21 November 2020 and <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/seanad/2019-05-16/8/> (accessed 16 April 2021).

Speaking to the *Irish Times*, Comdt Leo Quinlan said that ‘one of those recommended for a Military Medal for Gallantry and for a Distinguished Service Medal was a 17-year-old boy from Mayo. He died not even knowing he was recommended ... another man, Tadhg Quinn, who is still alive, was recommended for both medals. He was 18 years of age and in charge of a mortar crew.’<sup>374</sup> Cpl Tadhg Quinn’s recommendation for a ‘medal’ was initiated by Lt Noel Carey and Capt Liam Donnelly and he was ‘recommended’ for consideration for a medal (taken in 1961 to mean the Military Medal for Gallantry, there was only one medal when these recommendations were drawn up) by Lt Col Hugh McNamee.<sup>375</sup> He was recommended only once, and Comdt Pat Quinlan’s name does not appear on his recommendation papers. When Cpl Quinn was not successful in being considered for a Military Medal for Gallantry, he was reconsidered at the initiative of the 1962 Medals Board for a Distinguished Conduct Medal, and was later considered for a Distinguished Service Medal in 1965. His case was unsuccessful as the 1965 Medals Board felt his recommendation for consideration lacked direct evidence.<sup>376</sup> Unfortunately, as a result of incorrect information on medals made public after 2018, Cpl Quinn’s family were placed under the impression he was to be awarded two medals. Unaware of the actual nature of her father’s recommendation, Cpl Quinn’s daughter Helena, writing in the *Limerick Leader* explained

Isn’t it amazing? An 18-year-old fella from Abbeyfeale went to Africa, experienced something most of us couldn’t even imagine and came back having given such a good account of himself that his commanding officer felt it appropriate to recommend him for two highest military honours ... whether or not they are ever awarded, the medals for which my dad was recommended are an important part of our family story and our family history.<sup>377</sup>

The names being circulated were taken from a list of names of personnel from across several ONUC battalions who had been either finally recommended for awards, or passed over by the 1962 medals board, and a 1971 list of the names of personnel considered for a Distinguished Service Medal by the 1965 Medals Board and not awarded a medal. Comdt Pat Quinlan had not created this list; they were not all his recommendations, a proportion came from subordinate officers and NCOs in ‘A’ Company, though as company commander, he should have been aware that all of them were submitted to HQ 35 Inf Bn for action by Lt Col McNamee

The information ‘found’ in 2017 was retrospectively checked-off against a list of 35 Inf Bn personnel to come up with what was in fact an incorrect list of unsuccessful medal recommendations. The result was that the names of two soldiers who were with the 35 Inf Bn, Cpl Lynch, who was recommended for an award for service with a later battalion, and Tpr McCarton, were now publicised as having been recommended for an award by Comdt Pat Quinlan when they had not been. In addition, Pte Joseph O’Brien, who volunteered for a duty which led

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<sup>374</sup> *Irish Times*, 12 August 2020.

<sup>375</sup> Information from Cpl Quinn’s personal file made available to the IRG by Military Archives.

<sup>376</sup> Information from Cpl Quinn’s personal file made available to the IRG by Military Archives.

<sup>377</sup> *Limerick Leader*, 21 November 2020. A version of this article appeared in the *Galway City Tribune* on 4 December 2020.

to him being recommended for consideration for a commendation as a result of actions related to the Battle of Jadotville, was not on the list at all.<sup>378</sup>

Secondly, as in Pte Quinlan's and Cpl Quinn's cases, family members learned that their loved ones had been put forward for a medal or series of medals when they had not been, because the options open for awards in the early 1960s, also included promotions and commendations, and there was only one medal available to be awarded, namely the Military Medal for Gallantry.

Thirdly, the lists, both 1962 and 1971, were being taken out of context. Publicity made it sound as if it was Comdt Pat Quinlan's recommendations alone that had been found. Thus, a lobbying campaign for medals for certain Jadotville veterans began based on a misreading of archival material.

The most inaccurate suggestion now being circulated was that five members (a sixth was added to the document later) of 'A' Company, including Cpl Quinn above, had been proposed for both a Military Medal for Gallantry and a Distinguished Service Medal. What had happened was that the 1962 Medals Board, having considered and rejected six recommendations from 'A' Company for Military Medals for Gallantry, put the six men forward for the still unpromulgated and never introduced lesser Distinguished Conduct Medal, and then in 1965 these men were further considered for the Distinguished Service Medal. 'A' Company personnel were never recommended for two medals by their company or battalion commanders, nor were they ever formally recommended for a Distinguished Service Medal which was instituted on 8 February 1964. But the story that they had been so, was now also in the public domain, and being distributed to elected representatives and the media, to act on as part of a public pressure campaign, and thus it became written into the record of the history of Jadotville without being 'fact checked'.

A further inaccuracy, though one which was understandable given that draft citations for awards were not seen by those who compiled the list, was the notion that none of the men recommended for awards as a result of the Battle of Jadotville received awards, when it is clear that Sgt Walter Hegarty and Lt Tom Quinlan both received their Distinguished Service Medals in part because of bravery at Jadotville, and this was also the case in the award which Pte Michael Tighe was proposed for, but was unable to receive. When Cpl Francis Williams received promotion, though not promotion for actions in Jadotville, his actions at Jadotville were noted positively. It might have been anathema to mention Jadotville in the Defence Forces, but credit was given to men who fought at Jadotville, if not in the quantity that Comdt Pat Quinlan would have liked or expected.

Finally, not all on the list were recommended for consideration for award for action at Jadotville. As far as the Independent Review Group can establish from records, four of the recommendations for consideration were for actions in Elisabethville alone.

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<sup>378</sup> Pte O'Brien had driven Capt Donnelly, Comdt Clune and Pte Dunne back to Jadotville on 9 September 1961 after Capt Donnelly and Comdt Clune had attempted to explain to Lt Col McNamee and Conor Cruise O'Brien how serious the situation in Jadotville was getting.



There was of course much that was correct in the list. Yet it would seem all who later saw the new list took it at face value, and did not realise it included the errors and omissions outlined above. These inaccuracies were not introduced for any malicious reasons, but simply by misinterpretation and oversight in error due to a lack of corroborating material and further information. Nevertheless, their incorporation into the Jadotville medals debate introduced a considerable new level of inaccuracy which continues to ripple outwards in the public record and public debate.

They also caused hurt by reopening a series of events many veterans and their families felt had been closed by the award of the Bonn Jadotville. BSM P.J. Higgins, a nephew of Pte Joe McGuinness of 'A' Company felt strongly that it was not appropriate to reopen the medals issue and expressed these wishes in person to Comdt Leo Quinlan in three words: 'let this be'.<sup>379</sup> BSM Higgins showed his uncle the 2017 list and told him that he was not on the list:

I said to Joe, "Joe, you are not one of the recipients", I had to be honest with him because I have the list of the proposed recipients, and Joe went out to the car, I'll never forget it, and he brought in the medals, he brought in the three medals, he brought in his Congo medal, his peacekeeping service medal and his Jadotville medal and he threw it on the table, "Are you telling me", he said, "after all this time this is for NOTHING" and I looked at him and you know it brought a tear to my eye because I couldn't answer him.<sup>380</sup>

BSM Higgins felt that Leo Quinlan's publicising of the 2017 list had 'brought these medals into the political arena' and he had 'made a political football out of them by writing to every single County Council' about them'. BSM Higgins felt this was a political action which brought the apolitical Defence Forces into politics in a way he found 'kind of sore'.

### ***A new public and political campaign for medals***

A campaign to lobby local and national politicians to award Jadotville medals began in earnest in February 2019 using the information outlined in the previous section. A parliamentary question tabled in January 2019 by fourteen TDs called on 'the Taoiseach and Minister for Defence to explain the reason why these medals, committed to previously, have not been presented'.<sup>381</sup> It was said by one of the fourteen, Deputy Eamon Scanlon (FF), that the medals had been 'announced' by Enda Kenny, separately to An Bonn Jadotville, in June 2017.<sup>382</sup> This is a suggestion, also made in Dáil Éireann on 26 February 2019 by Deputy Jack Chambers (FF), of which the Independent Review Group has found no evidence as Enda Kenny's statements at the time and contemporary Department of Defence material seen by the Independent Review Group refer solely to the award of An Bonn Jadotville.<sup>383</sup> Minister Paul Kehoe replied to Deputy Chambers that 'No Government has ever awarded a Distinguished Service Medal. It is up to the medal board to consider the recommendations made to it. I know for a fact that no commitment was made by a politician that

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<sup>379</sup> BSM P.J. Higgins, interview with IRG, 16 February 2021.

<sup>380</sup> The word 'recipients' on the first line of this quote is not technically correct, the names on the list were for those proposed for consideration for a decoration.

<sup>381</sup> <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2019-02-05/29> (accessed 15 April 2021).

<sup>382</sup> Deputy Scanlon's statement that 'The medals referred to by him were those that Commandant Leo Quinlan had clearly identified to him a few months earlier in Leinster House' is not borne out by the evidence from Dept of Defence records seen by the IRG. See <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2019-02-05/29> (accessed 15 April 2021) for the debate.

<sup>383</sup> <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2019-02-26/8> (accessed 15 April 2021).

a Distinguished Service Medal would be awarded' and in a similar manner, correcting Deputy Scanlon, Minister Kehoe said that 'it was a decision of the former Government in 2017 to present medals to the people who went through the siege of Jadotville in the Congo.'<sup>384</sup>

Through 2019, many elected representatives willingly accepted at face value the new information they had recently received on Jadotville medals and raised it seeking the award of medals without interrogating the accuracy of the documentation now available to them. The rekindled medals campaign became a convenient way to attack the government and attack senior levels in the Defence Forces. As Jadotville veteran Pte Michael Greene said to his son John 'where are we in all of this?'<sup>385</sup>

If the list of alleged recommendations for awards which was now in circulation had been taken at face value by the Defence Forces, because of growing political and public pressure, then medals would have been incorrectly awarded to personnel and awarded in a manner at variance with the recommendations for consideration for 'A' Company personnel put forward by Lt Col McNamee in February 1962. Though Senator Craughwell was convinced that 'There are 155 outstanding medals, some for gallantry and some for distinguished service', these were not outstanding medals to be awarded. Specific medal recommendations had been made, considered by a medals board and a decision taken not to award them as they did not meet the criteria for award.<sup>386</sup> This is a different outcome altogether than that being suggested by many through 2019.

Through 2019 Comdt Leo Quinlan undertook regular speaking engagements around Ireland to publicise the Battle of Jadotville and wrote to TDs that 'the army needs to be "pushed" to do the right thing'.<sup>387</sup> The momentum was building in this round of the Jadotville campaign. Senator Terry Leyden told the Seanad that he had 'received hundreds of e-mails' from members of the public on medals for Jadotville veterans.<sup>388</sup>

But to have awarded medals now, based on the incorrect analysis of partial information that was circulating, would have created a highly problematic and embarrassing outcome for veterans and their families, if awards had been made based on the list now in circulation. Would a family who received an award in error feel compelled to return it? It would also have been highly problematic and embarrassing for the Defence Forces and the Department of Defence, as well as for the elected representatives championing 'A' Company, had the suggestions contained in the list been implemented.

The list that was being passed to elected representatives was, as explained above, not a list of awards recommendations from 'A' Company. Yet no public representative, journalist, civil servant, soldier or commentator seems to have checked to see what the list was a list of. There was widespread misunderstanding as to what detail it contained. No one asked about the medals recommendation and awarding procedures to see what in fact a recommendation for a medal

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<sup>384</sup> <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2019-02-05/29/> (accessed 15 April 2021).

<sup>385</sup> John Greene, interview with IRG, 2 February 2021.

<sup>386</sup> <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/seanad/2019-02-28/7/> (accessed 15 April 2021).

<sup>387</sup> DOD, 532/2004 pt 8, Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd) to John McGuinness TD, 21 January 2019. This mail was sent to others including Minister Paul Kehoe.

<sup>388</sup> <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/seanad/2019-02-27/24/> (accessed 15 April 2021).

meant. No one seemed to realise that a recommendation did not mean that the recommendee automatically got a medal or was entitled to one. The assumption was that if you were on the list you had to get a medal, which is incorrect. The difference between the initial recommendation for consideration for an award and actual recommendation by a Medals Board for a medal was not mentioned. It would seem that no one was aware of this. It is also clear from his letter to the Chief of Staff in 1967 that Comdt Pat Quinlan did not anticipate that all put forward for possible awards in 'A' Company would get awards. Seemingly unaware of these facts, the campaign which now took off, confused a great deal of information based on misunderstandings of the documentation before it.

The Department of Defence countered calls for the award of these additional medals with the established precedent that medal awards were time limited and that the matter had been 'comprehensively addressed in 1965'. It added that the men of 'A' Company had been honoured in several ways, including a unit citation presented in 2016 and the specially commissioned Jadotville medal awarded in 2017. It was not proposed to award Distinguished Service Medals or Military Medals for Gallantry 'to specific individuals'. Minister for Defence Simon Coveney said he would 'consider any information to support a reconsideration of this request.'

The public debate on medals had by now taken on a specific direction. As Deputy Jack Chambers (FF) put it: 'will people get the awards as recommended by Comdt Pat Quinlan? That is what the families want.'<sup>389</sup> However a number of the 'A' Company veterans and their families who presented their cases before the Independent Review Group made the opposite point: they did not want medals presented.<sup>390</sup> This was ignored by politicians; they had different agendas. As BSM P.J. Higgins succinctly put it, for politicians 'this is about a press release.'<sup>391</sup>

Minister Kehoe explained that no one individual recommends the award of medals, that was up to a Medals Board who reported ultimately to the Minister for Defence. Others thought that the Minister for Defence could simply implement the recommendations written for the men of 'A' Company. As Deputy Catherine Connolly told Dáil Éireann: 'It is in the power of the Minister to implement Comdt Pat Quinlan's recommendations regarding the soldiers.'<sup>392</sup> It was not within the Minister's power, he had to be advised to act after due process.

The interpretation stuck that the medals were there to be awarded and it was Comdt Pat Quinlan – there was no mention of Lt Col McNamee or others – who had recommended they be awarded. A further issue was that it was incorrectly assumed that the list now in circulation was drawn up by Comdt Pat Quinlan. As Deputy Joe Flaherty (FF) told the Dáil:

Leo Quinlan has continued to campaign for them to be awarded the distinguished service medal or military medal for gallantry - the two highest honours afforded to anybody in the

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<sup>389</sup> [https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/select\\_committee\\_on\\_foreign\\_affairs\\_and\\_trade\\_and\\_defence/2019-05-16/3](https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/select_committee_on_foreign_affairs_and_trade_and_defence/2019-05-16/3) (accessed, 16 April 2021).

<sup>390</sup> BSM P.J. Higgins, interview to IRG, 16 February 2021, a point also made by Pte Michael Greene, quoted below.

<sup>391</sup> BSM P.J. Higgins, interview to IRG, 16 February 2021.

<sup>392</sup> <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2020-09-23/17/> (accessed, 16 April 2021).

proud Irish Defence Forces. He has thankfully found the original list of recommendations made by his father after the battle which put forward 33 men for these awards.<sup>393</sup>

The list found in 2017 was not an original list of recommendations made by Comdt Pat Quinlan. Yet still no one had checked or noticed this. There is, in fact, no list of 'A' Company recommendations signed off on or put forward by Comdt Pat Quinlan.

In summer 2019, Comdt Leo Quinlan wrote to all County Councils, it having been suggested by one particular County Councillor, 'giving them the story of Jadotville basically'.<sup>394</sup> He argued that there was 'a big difference between the unit citation and the Jadotville medals which were awarded to the unit as a whole, and the individual medals for bravery recommended by his father'.<sup>395</sup> On the instigation of Fianna Fáil Councillor Michael Coleman, a former Defence Forces member, Kildare County Council called in June 2019 for 'the medals promised by Enda Kenny' to be awarded.<sup>396</sup> He did not realise that this had been a reference to An Bonn Jadotville. Kerry County Council passed a similarly worded motion in July 2019.

Leitrim and Carlow County Councils passed motions on Jadotville medals in September 2019, and Sligo County Council followed in October 2019. In putting the proposal before Leitrim County Council Cllr Finola Armstrong-McGuire (FG) said that 'this must be carried through with the dignity it deserved ... Comdt Quinlan must be given due recognition for his leadership role'.<sup>397</sup> The *Leitrim Observer* reported that 'all members supported'.<sup>398</sup> It is beyond belief that no county councillor or county council critically examined the material provided to them or sought to check its veracity before tabling and in some cases debating the matter. A call to Military Archives, the Defence Forces Press Office, the Department of Defence were all easily available options. It would also have been possible to check the document against the 35 Inf Bn's Unit History which is available for download free of charge from the Military Archives website.

On Carlow County Council it was a similar tale: a call for the 'long-overdue' medals to be awarded made with no apparent understanding of the medals recommendations consideration and award process.<sup>399</sup> It was just not as simple (or indeed correct) as the Carlow County Council motion suggested: 'the medals ... were promised by former Taoiseach Enda Kenny in his last days in office, but they have not been received'.<sup>400</sup> The Taoiseach cannot promise medals in the manner suggested, there is a complete process involved. It was evidence of the embedded clientelist nature of the Irish political system that elected representatives felt that this was a proper way to proceed. As noted above, Enda Kenny had in any case been speaking about An Bonn Jadotville.

It was an easy win for an elected representative to stand up and go on the record calling for the award of medals to former soldiers from their constituency. It allowed a crack at central

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<sup>393</sup> <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2020-09-15/21> (accessed 16 April 2021).

<sup>394</sup> Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd), interview with IRG, 12 February 2021.

<sup>395</sup> <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/department-has-no-plan-to-award-bravery-medals-to-jadotville-survivors-1.4327774> (12 August 2020, accessed 11 April 2021).

<sup>396</sup> *Leinster Leader*, 6 August 2019.

<sup>397</sup> *Leitrim Observer*, 11 September 2019.

<sup>398</sup> *Leitrim Observer*, 11 September 2019.

<sup>399</sup> *Nationalist and Leinster Times*, 17 September 2019.

<sup>400</sup> *Nationalist and Leinster Times*, 17 September 2019.

government, gave them prominence in local media, and showed engagement with an emotional matter in which the representative in question had little else further to do except claim credit.

At South Dublin County Council's meeting on 9 November 2020 Sinn Féin Councillor Patrick Pearse Holohan moved a motion that

This Council calls on the Minister of Defence, the Chief of Staff and the Commander in Chief the President to promote and support the Irish Soldiers of 'A' Company 35th Infantry Battalion and in recognition, and award 33 men 33 Distinguished Service Medals and 5 Military Medals for Gallantry recommended by the late Comdt Pat Quinlan.<sup>401</sup>

The motion was 'moved without debate'<sup>402</sup> and a letter was drafted 'to the relevant bodies named in the motion'; the response, when received, would be circulated to County Council members.<sup>403</sup> There was no debate, no assessment and no consideration of the matter to ascertain its accuracy.

'It's high time now, as a nation, that we do acknowledge the service that they did', Councillor Joe Flaherty told Longford County Council. His fellow councillors 'were in unanimous agreement with the motion.'<sup>404</sup> But had not that been why An Bonn Jadotville was awarded?

The point seemed lost continuously that recommendations for medals in themselves did not automatically entitle a soldier to a medal. It was lost on Waterford County Council on 17 September 2020 when it agreed unanimously that City and County Mayor Damien Geoghegan (FG) write to President Higgins, Minister Simon Coveney and Vice Admiral Mellett 'requesting that all outstanding honours dating from the 1961 Siege of Jadotville be awarded.'<sup>405</sup> There were no outstanding honours because the recommendations of the 1965 Medals Board had been acted on. The established line of 3,000 attackers, unverifiable casualty figures on the Katangan side and intermingling fact and fiction via *The Siege of Jadotville* film continued. The Council called for the presentation of the 'bravery recommendations', unaware, as were its counterparts across Ireland, that recommendations were for consideration for award, not recommendations for definite award. Councillors Eddie Mulligan (FF), Conor McGuinness (SF) and John Hearne (SF) 'voiced their support to see the Jadotville soldiers finally honoured in accordance with their Commanding Officers wishes.'<sup>406</sup> As the Independent Review Group has found, Comdt Quinlan's wishes were that some of 'A' Company be decorated, but he never specified who, leaving that to the 1962 and 1965 Medals Boards.

Wexford County Council also unanimously called for medals to be awarded. Fianna Fáil's Gerry Laffan 'noted that the medals were never awarded despite being recommended by their Commanding Officer Pat Quinlan'.<sup>407</sup> Councillor Laffan and his colleagues missed the point that

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<sup>401</sup> <http://www.sdublincoco.ie/Meetings/ViewDocument/67769> (accessed 17 April 2021).

<sup>402</sup> Minutes of Council meeting of 9 November 2020, available at <http://www.sdublincoco.ie/Meetings/Agenda/1987?p=2> (accessed, 17 April 2021).

<sup>403</sup> <http://www.sdublincoco.ie/Meetings/ViewDocument/67769> (accessed 17 April 2021).

<sup>404</sup> *Longford Leader*, 20 September 2019.

<sup>405</sup> *Waterford News and Star*, 22 September 2020.

<sup>406</sup> *Waterford News and Star*, 22 September 2020.

<sup>407</sup> *New Ross Standard*, 22 September 2020.

a recommendation did not automatically mean an award. This chapter of the Battle of Jadotville was founded upon a lack of understanding which was predicated on incorrect information.

Sinn Féin Councillor Tony Black and his party colleague David Dunne placed a motion before Tipperary County Council, which it passed, calling for the award of medals because 'A' Company 'have still not received the recognition they deserve or the medals they were put forward for.'<sup>408</sup> Defence Forces veteran and campaigner for better service conditions and pay for serving members of the Defence Forces, RSM Noel O'Callaghan (Retd) had emailed Taoiseach Micheál Martin and Minister for Defence Simon Coveney 'asking them to award the medals now.'<sup>409</sup> Others were lobbying Chief of Staff Vice-Admiral Mark Mellett. RSM O'Callaghan (Retd) felt that if the Jadotville veterans 'die out without this being sorted it will be a legacy and stain on those who let it happen back in the past and those of us in the present. We have the moral courage to right this wrong of the past.'

In a similar vein, Fianna Fáil TD for Longford/Westmeath Joe Flaherty raised the question of medals in Dáil Éireann in an appeal to Minister for Defence Simon Coveney. He repeated the story that these medals had been promised by Enda Kenny in his final day in office and that the Cabinet decided their award. In fact, Department of Defence documents show that the cabinet decided the award of An Bonn Jadotville. Deputy Flaherty disagreed with the Department of Defence view that the 1965 Medals Board had dealt comprehensively with the issue, pointing out that many of his constituents shared this view.<sup>410</sup>

County Councils in Westmeath, Kilkenny, Limerick and Sligo<sup>411</sup> passed similar motions. Councillor Ken Glynn (FF) of Westmeath County Council said that both Military Medals for Gallantry and Distinguished Service Medals 'continue to be denied' to 'A' Company, the Councillor suggesting that the medals had been awarded but for some reason presentation had been refused, whereas they had been considered by two medals boards and in cases awarded for service including service at Jadotville.<sup>412</sup> It was the same story seen on County Councils across Ireland, for example Cllr Jody Walsh (Green Party) in Waterford felt the medals were 'so richly deserved but so ignominiously denied ... in fact to serve a politically motivated agenda at the time, they were branded as cowards.' 'A' Company were again part of a politically motivated agenda in 2020, a point lost on all representatives who took up their cause.

In late September 2020, Deputy Denis Naughten described the award of medals as 'the last piece in this jigsaw.'<sup>413</sup> Yet underlying this phase of the Jadotville story were serious misunderstandings which were continuing to gain ground as well as outright errors and mistakes based on a lack of understanding of the sources and list of names in circulation:

- an automatic assumption that medals were never awarded, even in part, for action at Jadotville;

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<sup>408</sup> *The Nationalist*, 24 September 2020.

<sup>409</sup> *Irish Examiner*, 4 September 2020. The article also appeared in the *Westmeath Examiner* on 12 September 2020.

<sup>410</sup> *Longford Leader*, 25 September 2020.

<sup>411</sup> *Sligo Champion*, 13 October 2020.

<sup>412</sup> *Westmeath Examiner*, 3 October 2020.

<sup>413</sup> <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2020-09-23/17> (accessed 16 April 2021).

- an assumption that the medals were there to be presented and were being denied by malign influence;
- a misunderstanding as to what recommendations for awards were proposed (medals, citations and promotions);
- an assumption that all initial recommendations for consideration for an award had a prima facie case for award;
- little or limited understanding of the recommendation and award process;
- a mistaken assumption that five members of ‘A’ Company had been recommended for consideration for both the Military Medal for Gallantry and the Distinguished Service Medal although by late 2020 this point was not being raised as often;
- a failure to recognise that awards was a broader question than just the Battle of Jadotville, and that it was not just certain members of ‘A’ Company who had been recommended for medals and not awarded them by the 1962 and 1965 Medals Boards, that personnel from other units had similarly not been awarded medals;
- an assumption that the decisions of a Medals Board convened under Defence Forces Regulations could be overturned by political pressure or by the Minister for Defence;
- no attempt to check the veracity of the list of names sent to County Councillors and members of the Oireachtas;
- no awareness that the Distinguished Service Medal did not exist in 1961 when recommendations for consideration for awards were made;
- downplaying, purposeful or in ignorance, that ‘A’ Company had been honoured already,
- lack of understanding of the age-profile of ‘A’ Company, the average age being much higher than suggested by public debate;
- a denigration of An Bonn Jadotville by elected representatives;
- a lack of understanding that ‘A’ Company, 35 Inf Bn is the only Defence Forces unit to be awarded a Unit Citation and a medal – An Bonn Jadotville;
- confusion over what Enda Kenny had said regarding the award of medals in July 2017;<sup>414</sup>
- a strong reliance on the account of the Battle of Jadotville as told in the fictionalized *The Siege of Jadotville* film of 2016 in preference to historical accounts or the undertaking of new archival research;<sup>415</sup>
- a tendency to inflate the numbers of the attacking Gendarmerie into many thousands,
- Katangese casualty figures that were put forward without a verifiable source;
- exaggerated claims about international interest in Jadotville
- unsupported claims of the teaching of the Battle of Jadotville at a range of international military colleges and institutions. It was verified by the Independent Review Group that those institutions most regularly mentioned do not have Jadotville on their syllabus and do not teach Jadotville or Comdt Quinlan’s tactics as part of doctrine;

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<sup>414</sup> See remarks by West Cork Councillor Joe Carroll (FF) and Gillian Coughlan (FF) in *Southern Star*, 5 December 2020.

<sup>415</sup> As Senator Frances Black said in the Seanad on 25 September 2020: ‘I watched the Netflix film of the battle the other night. If anybody in this House does not understand what happened at Jadotville, I highly recommend that he or she watch that film. They are absolutely inspiring men and they should be honoured.’ See <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/seanad/2020-09-25/8> (accessed 16 April 2021).



- and most of all, a lack of interrogation of the facts in favour of easy comments uttered without a thought for the consequences for veterans and their families, or the basis upon which their points were made or the documentation from which they came.

Seeking a meeting with newly appointed Secretary-General of the Department of Defence Jacqui McCrum and in correspondence with Taoiseach Micheál Martin and Minister for Defence Simon Coveney, Comdt Leo Quinlan was hopeful that medals could be awarded. He felt this outcome 'would be a win-win for everybody. For the government, for the Army and particularly for the veterans and their families.'<sup>416</sup> In a familiar phrase in the Jadotville story, he felt that it would 'bring closure to the whole issue'.<sup>417</sup> Family members, such as Deborah Kerr Flanagan, daughter of Cpl John Kerr of 'A' Company, felt that 'each and every one of these heroes fit the criteria for being awarded the Military Medal for Gallantry'.<sup>418</sup> Others did not feel this way. BSM P.J. Higgins, speaking of his uncle Pte Joe McGuinness put in a further context:

Think of how you are going to tell him he wasn't a brave soldier, think of how he is going to feel, how are you going to put it, he didn't deserve the same reward as the guy he stood beside in the trench. Think about "was it all for nothing". That's all I'd ask you to think, think about the Joe McGuinnesses.<sup>419</sup>

Minister Simon Coveney remained 'cool' on the question of medals when questioned in the Dáil by Independent TD Catherine Connolly, replying that 'no new information' had come to light to support calls for the medals to be awarded.<sup>420</sup> He also stated that 'the board did not award any medals whose citations mention Jadotville.' The citations did not mention Jadotville, but it is now clear that two of the medals did include Jadotville within the scope of their citations. Deputy Connolly asked that the time limit for the award of medals be waived to allow the medals to be presented to members of 'A' Company – again an incorrect assumption that the medals simply had to be presented.

This new series of moves, like others over the summer and autumn of 2020, and in earlier years, amounted to political pressure being put on the Defence Forces in a manner which paid little heed to the structures or the authority of the institution, and the significance of medals to the military establishment.

***'We shouldn't be pressured by politicians to issue a medal':<sup>421</sup> The Seanad debate of 11 November 2020***

Political pressure to award medals for Jadotville had risen further by autumn 2020. Over eighteen County Councils had passed motions in favour of awarding medals to Jadotville veterans. There was no new information or analysis circulating on the medals issue and no sign that any was forthcoming. Minister of State at the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Colm Brophy TD (FG) summed up the official position in Dáil Éireann on 23 October 2020:

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<sup>416</sup> *Westmeath Independent*, 10 October 2020.

<sup>417</sup> *The Kerryman*, 14 October 2020.

<sup>418</sup> Letter to the editor of the *Westmeath Independent*, 10 October 2020; *Westmeath Examiner*, 24 October 2020.

<sup>419</sup> BSM P.J. Higgins, interview with IRG, 16 February 2021.

<sup>420</sup> *Westmeath Independent*, 17 October 2020.

<sup>421</sup> BSM P.J. Higgins, interview with IRG, 16 February 2021.

With regard to inquiries about additional medals, the award of Distinguished Service Medals and Military Medals for Gallantry are provided for in Defence Forces Regulation A9. This regulation sets out the criteria for such medals. It is important that, in order to maintain the prestige of such medals, the criteria be adhered to strictly. The introduction of any change to the regulations or the criteria for the award of Distinguished Service Medals and Military Medals for Gallantry is not a straightforward matter, and there are many associated complexities. Robust consideration must be given to any potential unintended consequences arising, such as those associated with maintaining the integrity of the award-of-medals system and the implications for previous decisions of properly constituted military medals boards.

The availability of documentary evidence and official records also represents a challenge in this case. It has been previously indicated that any additional documentation, information or evidence to support the request to award medals will be considered. At this juncture, with no new information having come to light, there would not be a cause for the matter to be re-examined. Notwithstanding this, the issue is receiving further consideration. The Chief of Staff is currently considering the matter in the context of the award of medals and the possible implications for the integrity of the award-of-medals system. It should be noted that the Secretary General of the Department of Defence is meeting retired Comdt Leo Quinlan shortly to discuss these matters and has requested that if he has any new information on the matter, he should submit it in advance of the meeting or bring it with him so it may be considered further.<sup>422</sup>

These words received short shrift from Sinn Féin Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh:

I knew in advance that this was the type of answer I would get, that is, that there were two properly constituted medals boards convened by two chiefs of staff and that issuing the deserved medals may undermine the prestige of the medals or have unintended consequences. That is the same trash that is quoted continuously.<sup>423</sup>

Deputy Ó Snodaigh asked that the medals be issued and wondered:

How can the prestige of the medal be undermined by giving it to the very men for whom it was designed? It was designed after the incident. It should not be beyond the military authorities to accept that they made and make mistakes. It does not undermine their authority or command structure. It still allows for military discipline and comradeship. It should never be seen as a sign of weakness. In fact, it should be seen as a sign of strength to admit an error. Correcting the record is better than living a lie.

During their work the Independent Review Group found that ‘correcting the record’ by finding authentic primary source documents may lead to the narrative history changing as new information

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<sup>422</sup> <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2020-10-23/15> (Accessed 16 April 2021).

<sup>423</sup> Ibid.

emerges, sometimes by re-reading sources already known to exist and re-reading them in the light of other sources. The Independent Review Group are also aware that the 'record' is a living and evolving record, and one which is never static and which will evolve in the years to come as further material, perhaps material kept in private hands or simply not yet released or located, becomes available. There thus never can be one 'correct' record and the 'record' will not please everyone.

A cross-party group of senators, Malcolm Byrne (FF), Fiona O'Loughlin (FF), John McGahon (FG), Mark Wall (Lab) and Gerard Craughwell (Ind) were lobbying strongly on behalf of the veterans of Jadotville and their relatives. As Senator Wall put it on 22 October 2020: 'we have come to a point where we need to do more'.<sup>424</sup>

A debate on the Jadotville medals took place in the Seanad on 11 November 2020 from 1.15pm to 2.45pm. It began with the names of the personnel of 'A' Company being read into the record of the Seanad.

Minister for Defence Simon Coveney opened the debate with a statement and during it explained how

In recent times, the issue of awarding Military Medals for Gallantry, MMG, and Distinguished Service Medals, DSM, to some, or all, of the soldiers of 'A' Company has been raised in a number of forums. The personnel from 'A' Company who were recommended to be considered for the award of the MMG or DSM underwent due process by a properly constituted medals board in 1962 and 1965. There is a well-established institutional process that takes place within a relatively short timeframe after events to assess the contemporaneous facts and findings.

The decision to award a MMG or DSM is one for the Minister for Defence under regulations. Such a decision is taken on foot of advice from a military board duly appointed by the Chief of Staff in accordance with Defence Forces Regulations. This is the sensible and proper approach. As Minister, I rely on professional military advice in such matters, as I believe all politicians should. I do not intend to award MMGs or DSMs without the required evidence and appropriate recommendations coming from military sources. To do so would be anathema to military personnel generally. The sound and reasoned judgment that comes of senior military experience and a determination to get to the facts and bring forward a fair and balanced recommendation is what is required when it comes to the award of such medals.

Regarding evidence to re-open the 1962 and 1965 medals boards, Minister Coveney reported that 'at this juncture, no new information has come to light that would be cause for the matter to be re-examined.' Minister Coveney informed the chamber of the initiative to set up the Independent Review Group, and he concluded:

I do think we need to be careful, however. We cannot move to a situation where politicians decide who gets medals and what kind of medals they get in terms of service either at home

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<sup>424</sup> <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/seanad/2020-10-22/10/> (accessed 16 April 2021).

or abroad. This has to be a recommendation that comes from the military themselves. That is how this works. Otherwise, we move into the space of trying to please people politically as opposed to robust assessment through military structures, through a medals board in these cases, where assessments are made. That being said, my job as Minister for Defence, legally and as the head of the defence infrastructure for the country, is to make sure that the context is fully understood and, if new evidence arises or if new perspectives develop, that they are recognised and that appropriate reviews take place. That is the context in which we are looking at this review, which is not the first, but I believe the context of it is important.

Minister Coveney concluded that Jadotville was ‘certainly not a closed book.’

In the following debate all Senators spoke highly of ‘A’ Company and of Comdt Pat Quinlan, many commented positively on the work of Comdt Leo Quinlan and Cpl John Gorman. They spoke of the families of the men of ‘A’ Company, the PTSD and the trauma suffered by the veterans. They saw Jadotville very much in isolation within the context of ONUC, though the Niemba ambush was mentioned. When it came to the award of medals Senator Frances Black captured the feeling of all her colleagues:

I am sure we would all agree that it would be great to see these men receive the Distinguished Service Medals and Military Medals for Gallantry, which would show a sincere mark of respect and gratitude to the men of ‘A’ Company and acknowledge the siege of Jadotville as a cherished part of our Irish history.

This view, which was widely held, seemed to ignore An Bonn Jadotville, and showed little awareness that to award further medals would be a divisive act amongst the veterans still living. ‘I can just picture the number of questions that would be asked and the upset it would be causing’, was the perspective of Col Joe Leech’s son Lt Cmdr John Leech (Retd).<sup>425</sup> ‘A’ Company had been rewarded as a unit, rather unwittingly the Seanad debate seemed intent on sowing renewed division by creating two classes of Jadotville veterans. That the award of further medals would do this was made strongly to the Independent Review Group by many Jadotville veterans and their families.

Senator O’Loughlin was first to reply to the Minister, making the case that ‘the veterans of the siege of Jadotville need to be properly recognised’ and asking for ‘an alternative solution when a set of regulations appear to be unfair.’ Senator O’Loughlin was followed by twelve others who supported her and who spoke with great passion about ‘A’ Company and fully supported the award of medals to twenty-nine members.<sup>426</sup> Senator Gerard Craughwell spoke highly of the men of ‘A’ Company but read the incorrect list of names of those recommended for consideration for awards (he used the term ‘nominated’) into the Seanad record. He concluded ‘I fully support what the Minister is trying to do but this is a military matter, not a political matter. It is up to the

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<sup>425</sup> Lt Cmdr John Leech (Retd), interview with IRG, 23 February 2021.

<sup>426</sup> The speakers were, in order of speaking, Senator Fiona O’Loughlin, Senator Malcolm Byrne, Senator Gerard Craughwell, Senator John McGahon, Senator Mark Wall, Senator Vincent Martin, Senator Lynn Boylan, Senator Frances Black, Senator Lisa Chambers, Senator Alan Davitt, Senator Joe O’Reilly, Senator Micheál Carrigy and Senator Aisling Dolan. Those speaking after Senator Black were limited to one minute each.

military authorities to re-examine this case and make recommendations to the Minister. It is not for politicians to decide who gets medals in this world.<sup>427</sup> He considered that

what we must do is expedite the research of the Chief of Staff into this issue, get a medals board together and see if we can make a recommendation. A recommendation is not a medal and that needs to be learned here. There needs to be an open and transparent appraisal of what took place at Jadotville, and then medals should be issued where they are due.

Senator John McGahon pointed to the unanimity of opinion amongst senators on the matter of medals. His remarks called for action, but also attempted to presage the findings of the Independent Review Group:

We should let that medals board examine the whole issue again, in light of new information that I have no doubt will be supplied when the expert group meets. If it is decided that there is nothing to be decided here, which I do not think they will, then that is fair enough because we will have asked for that medals board to be reconvened to examine this issue in greater detail.

Senator Mark Wall repeated the error that two medals were recommended to be awarded to a number of Jadotville veterans and concluded in a similar manner as Senator McGahon, almost suggesting a foregone conclusion to the yet to be established Independent Review Group's report:

I welcome the fact the Chief of Staff will set up an independent group of external experts. That is the way to go. While I support the Minister's comments that politicians should not award medals, I am sure he will agree that when we are brought information about incidents such as Jadotville and our heroes, we should bring it to his attention as the Minister for Defence in order that we can go through the due process of awarding those medals.

Senator Vincent Martin spoke likewise, calling on Minister Simon Coveney 'to do all in his power to ensure that the medal recommendations made by Colonel Pat Quinlan ... are reviewed by a competent military board, which I am sure this external expert board will do.'

The uneasiness of a group of Jadotville veterans on what was said by senators was eloquently captured by Jadotville veteran Pte Michael Greene in a written submission made to the Independent Review Group via his son John. Michael raised issues on behalf of 'A' Company veterans he was in ongoing contact with about the way senators spoke during the debate, and specifically the way they referred to An Bonn Jadotville:

Probably the most concerning thing for a Jadotville veteran like myself and others who I have spoken to since, to hear in the debate was that "no military medals have been awarded

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<sup>427</sup> <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/seanad/2020-11-11/11> (accessed 16 April 2021). All quotations from the debate are from this source.

for Jadotville” or the fact that soldiers have so far been let down and not received due recognition, despite Mr Coveney detailing at length the awards that have been awarded or the seeming belief amongst all the senators that this was entirely insufficient acknowledgment for the Jadotville soldiers.

It begs the question: what was the Bonn Jadotville for? ... as this was a very proud moment for me and my family, and we remember the speeches that day with some reverence but [this] was seemingly diminished or even belittled in its value by the comments by most of the senators.

I have to say that I found this a bit of an insult. While this was perhaps entirely unintentional, and intended to strengthen the argument for the award of the twenty-nine medals, it reaffirmed an element of the stigma against which some Jadotville veterans struggled with for so long.

But the question is now that this view has been established i.e. that the Bonn Jadotville medal is perhaps an insufficient recognition, is whether the stigma continues against the 156 men as the Bonn Jadotville award has such little value to Ireland’s leaders, or if the DSMs and gallantry awards are made to the twenty-nine, then this stigma remains but only against the remaining 127, identified by their omission?

I have no doubt that the military authorities will re-affirm the status of the Bonn Jadotville medal to its rightful status where I and many others believe it should belong i.e. an award of significant and valued recognition, but these issues should be considered and they are being keenly watched by Jadotville veterans like myself.

Pte Michael Greene continued:

But let me re-iterate this very important point, as the award of medals has been [a] divisive issue even among the veterans themselves. To equally acknowledge the efforts of the 127, in no way belittles the efforts of the twenty-nine who have been recommended, they were indeed Ireland’s bravest sons as was every other man of the 156 who served at Jadotville, just that their contributions should equally not be diminished by the proposals and the Seanad debates which by implication would spread to the wider society.

To sum up the views of myself and the other Jadotville veterans I remain in contact with, is that “we didn’t see anyone do something that all the others weren’t doing too”... and that quote comes from three surviving Jadotville veterans although they can speak for themselves.

Pte Michael Greene’s conclusion is a powerful statement of personal feeling and conveys his strong sense of disappointment at what took place in the Seanad on 11 November 2020:

In summary the Bonn Jadotville award came as a huge relief to me and many others that served at Jadotville after 56 years. By making that award, it was felt that our efforts were

equally valued, that we finally really mattered and there was no bias towards rank and age that I have described in this statement.

The unit citation and various plaques and not least the establishment of Jadotville day also gives me and others great pride.

It therefore came as a disappointment to have these recognitions so diminished particularly in the Seanad debate and that the “somewhat formal” procedures that meant we were overlooked, shunned, shamed and stigmatised for all those years, that had been healed so much with the recognition of the last fifteen years culminating in the Bonn Jadotville award.

But in the current proposal, the same elements may be almost re-established by omission for 127 of the 156 veterans.

As I have said, this includes most of the last generation of surviving Jadotville veterans who would currently make up a significant part of those who are not included from the gallantry and DSM awards being proposed and I would ask the independent review board and any subsequent medals boards, not to mention further political commentators, to consider the unintended consequences that this could entail.

As Pte Paul Malone emphasised to the Independent Review Group: ‘It wasn’t one man who carried Jadotville, it was 156.’<sup>428</sup>

Given the prevailing climate, as evident in the Seanad debate and the political pressure coming from County Councils, and other bodies and individuals, Minister for Defence Simon Coveney and Chief of Staff of the Defence Forces Vice Admiral Mark Mellett came ‘to the conclusion that an independent review group was the best way forward.’<sup>429</sup> The Independent Review Group was tasked to examine the entire case, including new evidence if any was available.

Sadly, the incorrect details of the recommendations made for ‘A’ Company continued to appear in the public record as 2020 ended. Covering the Seanad debate the *Irish Times* incorrectly reported that:

Thirty-three men from ‘A’ Company, 35th battalion were recommended for the Distinguished Service Medal (DSM) for gallantry by their commanding officer Colonel Pat Quinlan arising out of the siege which occurred in September, 1961.

Of the 33, five were also recommended for the Military Medal for Gallantry (MMG), the Irish army’s highest award.<sup>430</sup>

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<sup>428</sup> Pte Paul Malone, interview to IRG, 2 February 2021.

<sup>429</sup> <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/seanad/2020-11-11/11> (accessed 16 April 2021). All quotations from the debate are from this source.

<sup>430</sup> <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/experts-to-examine-case-of-gallantry-medals-for-jadotville-veterans-1.4406530%20> (12 November 2020, accessed 11 April 2020). See also *Donegal Democrat*, 26 November 2020.



As the Independent Review Group later discovered, no double recommendations for medals were made, and it was a pity that such incorrect information had gained a public foothold. Minister Coveney explained that ‘it would be wrong if medals were issued on foot of political lobbying or as a political decision.’ There was a ‘well-established process’ within the Defence Forces and a military board had already examined the men’s cases for medals in 1962 and 1965. Minister Coveney argued that the award of medals

has to be a decision that comes from the military themselves. This is how this works. Otherwise, we move into a space of trying to please people politically as opposed to robust assessment through military structures, through a medals board in these cases.<sup>431</sup>

Yet recent public awareness and lobbying campaigns over Jadotville have in some cases been politically motivated and, with regard to the ‘new evidence’ found in 2017, showed little regard for the accuracy of the case they were seeking to make. There remained little awareness that ‘it’s one thing being considered [for an award], it’s another thing getting awarded.’<sup>432</sup>

Senator Alan Davitt (FF) made the point about the Independent Review Group that ‘It is imperative that the committee is given a free path to make its own findings and recommendations. As the Minister mentioned, the composition of the committee is most important. As the Minister stated, two reviews [sic] were held in 1962 and 1965. In the fullness of time the narrative and perspective can change.’ Perspective and narrative can change, but only based on an analysis and interpretation of historical documentation from the time in question. It is not the work of historians to change the past, this they cannot do, but they can examine historical material that has been carefully conserved by archivists or in some cases held in private hands such as within families to see if the historical narrative can be augmented or brought into better focus and thus our understanding of the past, our perspective, improved and enhanced. A good historian sees the past in its own terms and not through the lens of their own time-period.

Despite many of the statements in the Seanad debate placing pressure on the government to award medals, most speakers did seem to recognise and agree with Minister Coveney that it was for the Defence Forces to award medals, but there was a strong tendency through the debate and later in Dáil Éireann, that the Independent Review Group, though independent, must come up with only one result.<sup>433</sup> Senator Lynn Boylan (SF) made a seemingly contradictory statement on the award of medals suggesting that ‘we are legislators and nobody is suggesting that politicians should be awarding military medals, but we need to fix this before the men pass on. It is in our gift to do that as legislators.’ Senator Joe O’Reilly spoke of the proud men and survivors of ‘A’ Company. Senator Craughwell provided some context: ‘at the end of the day, we did some service for them by giving them An Bonn Jadotville but we need to go the extra step and clearly decide one way or the other on this issue.’ He seemed to have already prejudged the outcome of any new

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<sup>431</sup> <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/seanad/2020-11-11/11> (accessed 16 April 2021). All quotations from the debate are from this source.

<sup>432</sup> Col Tony Bracken MMG (Retd), interview with IRG, 26 January 2021.

<sup>433</sup> See the exchange between Deputy John Brady (SF) and Minister Coveney on 17 November 2020 at <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2020-11-17/25> (accessed, 16 April 2021).

investigation of the Battle of Jadotville and its context: 'if a proper historical analysis is taken, the case would stand for recognition of these men.'

'A proper historical analysis' means being led by sources, not fitting evidence to a prejudged conclusion. It means asking questions, however awkward, and upsetting the orthodoxy. The orthodoxy now seemed to be to accept a one-sided incorrect view of the Battle of Jadotville and its aftermath and for those who should ask questions not to ask questions.

The Independent Review Group, established on 18 December 2020, began its task immediately, and held its first formal meeting on 7 January 2021. It began interviewing Jadotville veterans, relatives and stakeholders from 12 January 2021 and completed the interview process on 14 June.<sup>434</sup>

No politician cared enough about the Jadotville veterans to even discuss with the Independent Review Group the possibility of talking to the group or making a submission on behalf of any veteran or veterans. Ms Margaret Orr, daughter of Jadotville veteran Pte Robert Orr, concluded her submission to the Independent Review Group 'any decisions or recommendations should be influenced by any of the surviving members or deceased members' families. Not by any political parties or outside influences.'<sup>435</sup> BSM P.J. Higgins felt that medals boards sat in 1961 and 1965, there was a military process gone through and 'no politician has the right to dictate thereafter.'<sup>436</sup> In the 2019 to 2020 round of the Jadotville debate, most public representatives demonstrated the lack of an informed understanding on the question of the award of medals through their poor critical analysis of the information before them on the Battle of Jadotville and its aftermath.

**'End the circus.'**<sup>437</sup>

In 2021 the Battle of Jadotville exists in an historical space interpreted through the lens of the contemporary world. The battle and its aftermath are judged through current tropes and mores. Here again the 2016 Netflix film *The Siege of Jadotville* looms large. This openly fictionalised account is now the dominant easily accessible international source on the battle. Despite the clear signposts that it is a fictionalised account, fact and fiction have been confused by those using the film to comment, often at high level, on the real events of 1961. Jadotville also exists in a linked politicised space where veterans have been turned into the pawns of contemporary political lobbyists and advocates for their rights. These groups are by their own agendas well-meaning and seek to put the veterans first, whether the veterans like it or not. This populist orthodoxy seems to miss the dwindling group of 'A' Company veterans. 'A' Company veteran Cpl Seán Foley mused on this that

ah there's a lot of stuff appearing on Facebook and everything like that, it's like everything else, people are jumping to conclusions and making up their own minds and everybody else's minds about what should be done, what will be done, what won't be done. I think people should keep a tight rein on what they are thinking and what they are speaking.<sup>438</sup>

<sup>434</sup> Because of the ongoing restrictions due to Covid19 the IRG conducted all its interviews via MS Teams.

<sup>435</sup> IRG correspondence, Margaret Orr to Brig Gen Pakenham (Retd), 28 January 2021.

<sup>436</sup> BSM P.J. Higgins (Retd) interview with IRG, 16 February 2021.

<sup>437</sup> Lt Cmdr John Leech (Retd), interview with IRG, 23 February 2021, giving his views on what his father Col Joe Leech would say to the IRG were he alive in 2021.

<sup>438</sup> Cpl Seán Foley, interview with IRG, 9 February 2021.

Pte Michael Tighe spoke in a similar vein ‘there’s enough publicity going on at the moment that isn’t very good and if you’ve paper it won’t refuse ink.’<sup>439</sup> After sixty years the dwindling number of veterans of the Battle of Jadotville continue to be the objects of a politicised agenda.

From the 1960s to the 2000s, Defence Forces groupthink on the Battle of Jadotville was to sweep it under the carpet. The veterans suffered. From the 2010s to the 2020s, the popular groupthink was to support the veterans in any way possible to reverse the attitudes of the previous fifty years. After 2016, some Jadotville veterans became celebrities and some of their deceased comrades semi-fictionalised heroes. The unhealthy and often unfounded aggression of social media warriors, the agendas of politicians, lobbyists and advocacy groups always insisted they put the veterans first. Yet another group of veterans, men rarely or never seen in public view, still suffered privately the trauma of what they went through at Jadotville. They lived their lives in mental and physical distress and pain, distress and pain renewed by the publicity now being given to the Battle of Jadotville. Their story got lost in the glitz of the silver screen and the red carpet, the distorting fury of social media, the soundbite, and the wider political agenda. These veterans still suffered.

Some veterans have recently told the Independent Review Group of their experiences and put them on the record for posterity. For many it was the first time. Military historian and oral history expert Michael Whelan poignantly told the Independent Review Group of similar interviews he had undertaken with the Military Archives Oral History Project: ‘there is so much impactful resonance in the silence and emotion that comes with somebody telling you their story when no one has asked them that story before.’<sup>440</sup>

Discussing the contemporary resonance of Jadotville with the Independent Review Group in May 2021, Declan Power felt that ‘it doesn’t help that we have a society that is so militarily illiterate’ and that Jadotville should be a springboard to focus more on the contribution of the Irish soldier ‘to international society, to peace security and stability.’<sup>441</sup>

It is disheartening to realise that after the pioneering work of Comdt Liam Donnelly and Col Terry O’Neill PhD on the Battle of Jadotville, and after the long campaigns for the veterans waged by Cpl John Gorman, Declan Power, Comdt Leo Quinlan, Senator Gerard Craughwell and others, the stark raw factual history of the Battle of Jadotville - the five days of combat ‘A’ Company went through, their captivity and their subsequent lives of suffering, hurt and trauma - is for many gleaned from a one-minute and forty-seven second movie trailer.<sup>442</sup> We are in danger of making Jadotville ‘a cardboard cut-out comic version of Irish military history’,<sup>443</sup> this is not the way to honour the veterans of ‘A’ Company, their families and the memory of the Battle of Jadotville.

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<sup>439</sup> Pte Michael Tighe, interview with IRG, 9 February 2021.

<sup>440</sup> Cpl Michael Whelan, interview with IRG, 11 May 2021.

<sup>441</sup> Declan Power, interview with IRG, 4 May 2021.

<sup>442</sup> See [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9\\_JHsiQTTmg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9_JHsiQTTmg) (accessed 17 April 2021).

<sup>443</sup> Declan Power, interview with IRG, 4 May 2021.



A COMPANY  
35 INFANTRY BATTALION

In honour of the Officers, NCO's and men of 'A' Company 35th Infantry Battalion United Nations Force in the Congo(ONUC) who had the misfortune to suffer so much at Jadotville in the Province of Katanga in September 1961.

'A' Company took responsibility for the UN Post at Jadotville on the 3rd of September. On the 9th of September they were surrounded by a large force of Katangese Gendarmerie and early on the morning of the 13th of September the Company came under attack. Over the coming days until the 17th of September they endured almost continuous attacks

26. Memorial to 'A' Company, 35 Inf Bn, Custume Barracks Athlone, which was unveiled on 19 November 2005. (John Gorman's private collection.)

17th of September... water and several men... Company remained in captivity until finally... of October 1961. ... peace are



27. Unveiling of Portraits, Col Hugh McNamee and Col Pat Quinlan by James Hanley RHA, The Military College, 23 February 2007. Left to Right: Brig Gen Liam MacNamee, Capt Colin MacNamee, Lt Rory Quinlan, Capt Shane Quinlan and Comdt Pat Quinlan. (Defence Forces Public Relations Section.)





28. Unit Citation awarded to 'A' Company, 35 Inf Bn, and presented on the 55th Anniversary of the Battle of Jadotville, Custume Barracks Athlone, 17 September 2016. (Defence Forces Public Relations Section.)



29. An Bonn Jadotville. Presented to veterans of 'A' Company, 35 Inf Bn and veterans; families, at Custume Barracks, Athlone on 2 December 2017. (Defence Forces Public Relations Section.)





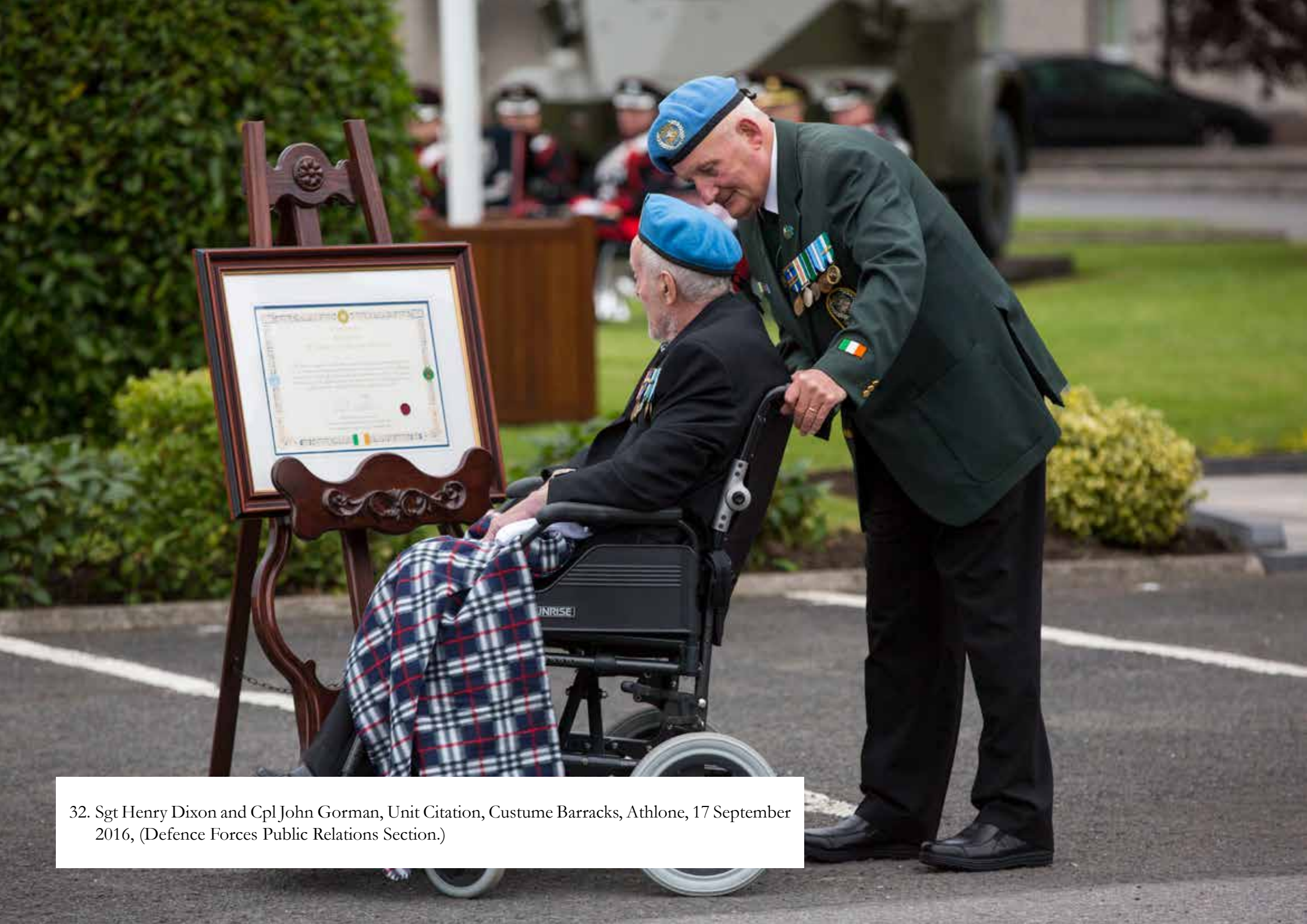
30. Presentation of Unit Citation, Custume Barracks Athlone, 17 September 2016. Left to Right: Vice-Admiral Mark Mellett DSM, Minister Paul Kehoe TD, Brig Gen Howard Berney, Sgt Henry Dixon and Cpl John Gorman.(Defence Forces Public Relations Section.)





31. Presentation on behalf of personnel of 'A' Company by Capt Noel Carey (Retd) assisted by CQMS Seán Foley (Retd) to Mrs Judy Kearney, wife of Charlie Kearney who came to 'A' Company's their assistance in Jadotville and was later with the company in captivity. Custume Barracks, Athlone, 17 September 2016. (Defence Forces Public Relations Section.)





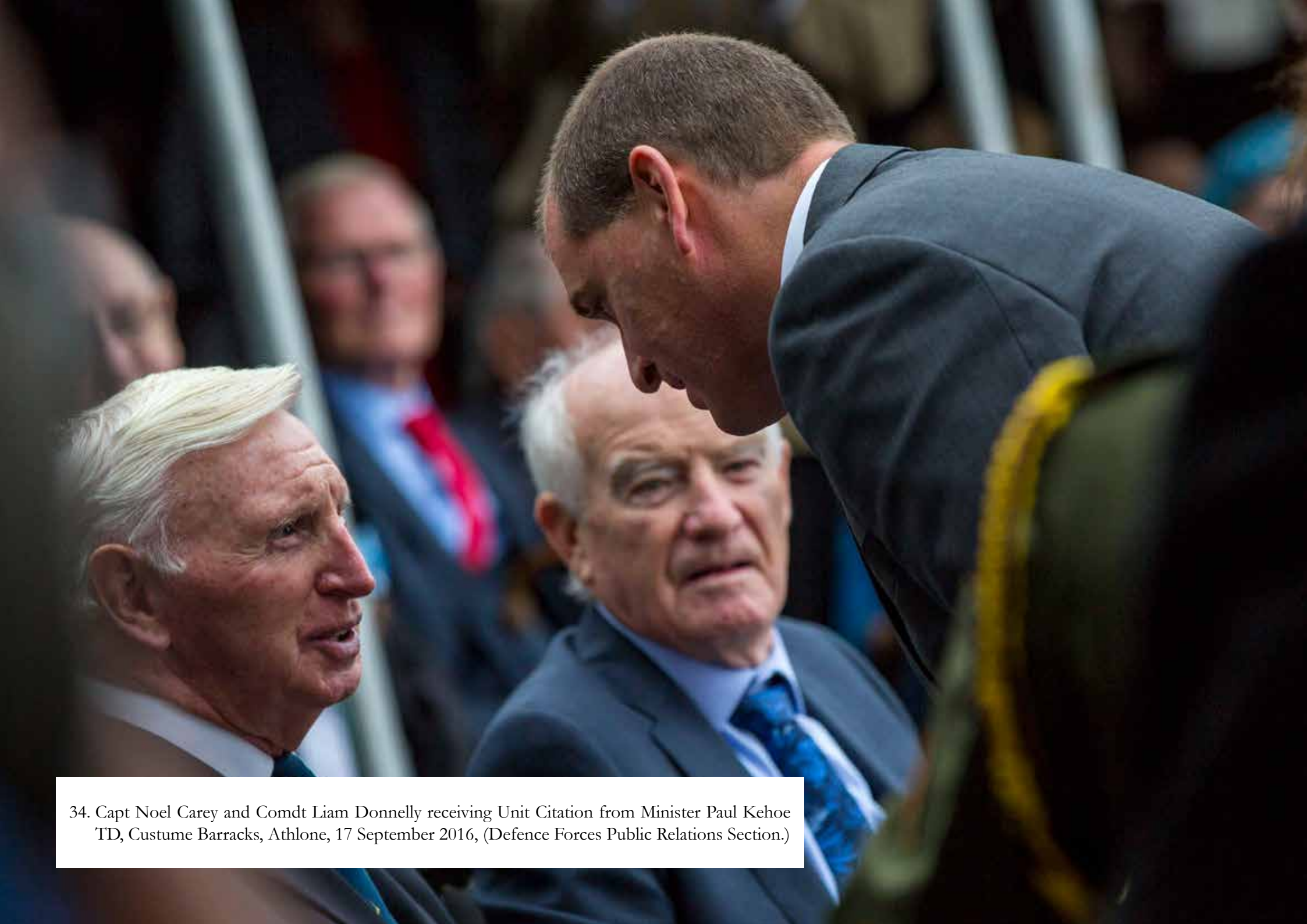
32. Sgt Henry Dixon and Cpl John Gorman, Unit Citation, Custume Barracks, Athlone, 17 September 2016, (Defence Forces Public Relations Section.)





33. Veterans of 'A' Company, 35 Inf Bn, Presentation of Unit Citation, Custume Barracks, Athlone, 17 September 2016, (Defence Forces Public Relations Section.)





34. Capt Noel Carey and Comdt Liam Donnelly receiving Unit Citation from Minister Paul Kehoe TD, Custume Barracks, Athlone, 17 September 2016, (Defence Forces Public Relations Section.)



35. Gnr Tom Cunningham with Pte Bill Ready on his left, receiving Unit Citation from Minister Paul Kehoe TD, Custume Barracks, Athlone, 17 September 2016, (Defence Forces Public Relations Section.)





36. Pte Paul Malone receiving Unit Citation from Minister Paul Kehoe TD, Cusinstown Barracks, Athlone, 17 September 2016. (Defence Forces Public Relations Section.)





Óglaigh  
na hÉireann  
DEFENCE FORCES IRELAND



An Roinn Cosanta  
Department of Defence

## Jadotville Medal Presentation Ceremony

### Searmanais Láithreoireachta Bonn Jadotville



02.12.2017



www.mil



Óglaigh  
na hÉireann  
DEFENCE FORCES IRELAND

37. Programme for Presentation Ceremony, An Bonn Jadotville, Custume Barracks, Athlone, 2 December 2017. (Defence Forces Public Relations Section.)



38. Guests attending the Presentation of An Bonn Jadotville, Custume Barracks, Athlone, 2 December 2017. (Defence Forces Public Relations Section.)





39. Minister Paul Kehoe TD presenting Col Pat Quinlan's Bonn Jadotville to his son Comdt Leo Quinlan, with Vice-Admiral Mark Mellett DSM in attendance, Custume Barracks, Athlone, 2 December 2017. (Defence Forces Public Relations Section.)



40. Minister Paul Kehoe TD presenting Comdt Liam Donnelly's Bonn Jadotville to his wife Mrs Eileen Donnelly, with Vice-Admiral Mark Mellett DSM in attendance, Custume Barracks, Athlone, 2 December 2017. (Defence Forces Public Relations Section.)





41. Capt Noel Carey with his family Left to Right: Ronan, Paul and Angela, and Vice-Admiral Mark Mellett DSM, having received his Bonn Jadotville. (Defence Forces Public Relations Section.).



42. Capt Noel Carey, 'A' Company, 35 Inf Bn, addressing the attendees following the presentation of An Bonn Jadotville, Custume Barracks, Athlone, 2 December 2017. (Defence Forces Public Relations Section.)





43. Brig Gen Howard Berney, GOC 2 Brigade presenting Col Kevin Knightly's Bonn Jadotville to his son Kevin and daughter Clare in the Officers' Mess, Cathal Brugha Barracks, on 30 May 2018. (Col George Kerton's private collection.)



44. Presentation ceremony An Bonn Jadotville, 28 February 2019. Left to Right: Michael Thompson IUNVA National Welfare Officer, Colonel George Kerton (Retd), Sergeant Brendan Healy, His Excellency Adrian O'Neill, the Irish Ambassador, Corporal Seán Tiernan, Vice-Admiral Mark Mellett, DSM and Colonel Richard Heaslip (Retd). (Michael Thompson's private collection.)





45. The Irish Ambassador to Australia His Excellency Breandán Ó Caollaí presented Sgt Thomas O'Connor's An Bonn Jadotville to his son Martin O'Connor on 13 April 2020. Left to Right: Martin O'Connor, Ambassador Ó Caollaí and Detective Alexander Montgomery. (Martin O'Connor's private collection.)

## Chapter 12

# Medal Analysis 2021

### *Overview of Chapter 12*

This chapter covers the following issues:

- Introduction,
- Terms of Reference,
- Addressing the Terms of Reference,
- Part 1: Recommendations Submitted in 1962:
  - Methodology,
  - Regulations, Integrity of Awards,
  - Submissions to the Independent Review Group,
  - Medal Award Process,
  - Chapters 4, 8 and 9 of Independent Review Group's Report,
  - Tracking Recommendations 1962-1971,
  - Conclusions and Recommendation(s).
- Part 2: Individuals not Recommended for an Award in 1962:
  - Methodology,
  - Provisions of DFR A9 (New Series) Dress and Medals,
  - Medals Awarded to 'A' Company,
  - Submissions to the Independent Review Group,
  - Chapter 4, 8 and 9 of Independent Review Group's Report,
  - Analysis of Case Study,
  - Conclusions and Recommendation(s).

### *Introduction*

The purpose of Chapter 12: Medal Analysis 2021 is to record the Independent Review Group's methodology, deliberations, analysis, conclusions and recommendations pursuant to paragraphs 4b and 4d of its Terms of Reference. For a complete understanding of the Independent Review Group's work in addressing paragraphs 4b and 4d, this chapter should be read in conjunction with:

- Chapter 3: Methodology – Looking and Listening,
- Chapter 4: Defence Forces Medals and Awards,

- Chapter 6: Katanga 1961 – Re-examining the Operational Environment and the Battle of Jadotville,
- Chapter 8: 1961 Medals Board Process,
- Chapter 9: 1962 Medals Board Process, and
- Chapter 10: 1965 Medals Board Process.

### ***Terms of Reference***

The Independent Review Group's Terms of Reference<sup>1</sup> signed by the Chief of Staff on 18 December 2020 prescribe that the Review Group will, inter alia:

- **Para 4b.** 'Consider the historical evidence and processes in relation to all recommendations for military medals received with respect to the events at Jadotville or encompassing Jadotville',
- **Para 4c.** 'Engage with national and international stakeholders (including Jadotville veterans) with a view to uncovering any additional or new evidence in this case',
- **Para 4d.** 'May consider the actions of individuals not already the subject of a recommendation in relation to possible awards in respect of Jadotville'.

### ***Addressing the Terms of Reference***

- *Historical Evidence and Processes – Para 4b*  
Chapters 8, 9 and 10 of this Report outline the Independent Review Group's examination of the recommendations, initiated by 'A' Company in 1961 and submitted by OC 35 Inf Bn on 9 and 28 February 1962, for the consideration of an award for 'A' Company personnel in relation to Jadotville or encompassing Jadotville. These three chapters record the Independent Review Group's extensive research and comprehensive analysis of the historical evidence and processes associated with the 1961 Medals Board, the 1962 Medals Board and the 1965 Medals Board. This analysis informs the contents of this chapter.
- *Consultations and Submissions - Para 4c*  
In implementing para 4c of the Terms of Reference, through the medium of interviews, and submissions, the Independent Review Group engaged with veterans of 'A' Company and veterans' families in order to uncover any additional, or new primary source evidence, regarding the award of medals for 'A' Company, 35 Inf Bn.<sup>2</sup> In parallel, the Independent Review Group engaged with national and international academic and military experts on the subject of the Battle of Jadotville, on ONUC's organisation, deployment, and command and control, and the Defence Forces medals and awards processes.<sup>3</sup> In addition, the Independent Review Group received submissions, some of which were focused on

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<sup>1</sup> For Terms of Reference, see Annex A of the IRG's Report.

<sup>2</sup> For Nominal Roll, see Annex F of the IRG's Report.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

medals, and others which referred to medals within a particular submission.<sup>4</sup> See Chapter 5 of the Independent Review Group's Report: Consultations – Veterans, Families, Academics and Experts.

- *Individuals not Recommended for an Award in 1961 – Para 4d*

Addressing para 4d of the Terms of Reference, the Independent Review Group took full cognisance of the events associated with Jadotville, or encompassing Jadotville, as contained in Chapter 6 of its Report: Katanga 1961 – Re-examining the Operational Environment and the Battle of Jadotville.

The Independent Review Group was also informed by the material in other chapters of its Report namely:

- Chapter 4: Defence Forces Medals and Awards,
- Chapter 8: The 1961 Medals Board Process,
- Chapter 9: The 1962 Medals Board Process,
- Chapter 10: 1965 Medals Board Process,
- and
- Chapter 11: Seeking Recognition for 'A' Company – 1968 to 2020.

In addition, the Independent Review Group reflected on the provisions of DFR A19 (1948), DFR A19 (1965),<sup>5</sup> and DFR A9 (2001) and written and verbal submissions received on this particular issue. This matter will be further elaborated within this chapter. Documents made available by the Defence Forces and the Department of Defence encompassing Jadotville also informed the Independent Review Group's elaboration of this chapter.

### ***Part I and Part II***

The main body of Chapter 12 consists of two parts, with each part culminating with conclusions and recommendations:

- Part I: Covers paragraph 4b of the Terms of Reference, and is titled Recommendations submitted in 1962, and
- Part II: Covers paragraph 4d of the Terms of Reference, and is titled Individuals not recommended for an award in 1962.

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<sup>4</sup> For List of Submissions, see Annex G of IRG's Report.

<sup>5</sup> The reprinted version of DFR A19 (Medals and Awards) promulgated in 1965, incorporated all amendments issued since 1948.



## **PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS SUBMITTED IN 1962 – PARAGRAPH 4b**

### ***Methodology to Address Para 4b***

When considering the historical evidence and processes in relation to all recommendations for military medals received with respect to the events at Jadotville or encompassing Jadotville, the Independent Review Group adopted a methodical approach, breaking its task down into distinct modules covering research, consultation and analysis. This included an analysis of a substantial amount of data and information, and the systematic and objective examination of all factors. This process provided the basis for its conclusions and recommendations.

The Independent Review Group addressed paragraph 4b as follows:

- Reviewed the regulations, instructions and procedures relating to the Defence Forces Medals and Awards process, as prevailed in 1961, 1962 and in 1965, including the regulations and instructions associated with military boards, including Medals Boards,
- Took into account the contents of Chapters 8, 9 and 10 of the Independent Review Group's Report: 1961 Medals Board Process, 1962 Medals Board Process, and 1965 Medals Board Process,
- Examined all available service records of the 156 personnel<sup>6</sup> who participated in the Battle of Jadotville or activities encompassing Jadotville,
- Examined the available documents for the thirty-three personnel whose recommendations for the consideration of an award were initiated in 'A' Company in 1961, three of which related to promotion recommendations,
- Tracked available documentation associated with the recommendations for awards, initiated by 'A' Company in 1961, thereafter submitted by OC 35 Inf Bn in February 1962, through the processes undertaken by the 1962 and 1965 Medal Boards, and finally to their lodgement on the respective personal files in Officers' Records Section, and on the respective service files in Enlisted Personnel Section in April 1971,
- Examined written submissions made to the Independent Review Group in respect of the 1961 recommendations of 'A' Company, 35 Inf Bn, for the consideration of a medal or award,
- Reviewed the content of all submissions and interviews with veterans and veterans' families regarding the 1961 recommendations in respect of 'A' Company for the consideration of an award (medal or promotion),

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<sup>6</sup> The IRG traced 147 service records of the 156 personnel in 'A' Company 35 Inf Bn, see Chapters 9 and 10 of the IRG's Report.

- Reviewed the content of submissions from local authorities and elected representatives sent to the Minister for Defence and to the Chief of Staff,
- Examined all documents encompassing Jadotville provided by the Defence Forces and the Department of Defence to the Independent Review Group in March, April and May 2021.
- Examined the adverse effects that the well-intentioned but ill-considered interventions by politicians and others in relation to the award of medals have had on veterans of ‘A’ Company. In many cases, these interventions, in print, on social media platforms, in the Oireachtas and Council Chambers across the island of Ireland, have added to, rather than have helped resolve, the issues surrounding Jadotville. Advocating bravery awards for some has left other veterans feeling their contribution was less than adequate. The integrity and status of An Bonn Jadotville has been diminished for many veterans by these interventions.
- Finally, drew conclusions and made recommendations, based on the above methodology.

### ***Submissions to the Independent Review Group***

On the invitation of the Independent Review Group, the issue of awarding medals to personnel of ‘A’ Company who were recommended by Lt Col McNamee for consideration of an award, and who subsequently were not awarded medals, was raised by veterans and family members during the Group’s Consultation Module. These representations were made by means of both verbal representations during interviews conducted by the Independent Review Group, and by written submissions provided to the Group. In some cases, both written and verbal representations were made by some individuals. Please refer to Annex F for the nominal roll of those engaged in the Consultation Module.

The Independent Review Group fully considered the verbal and written representations concerning Jadotville or encompassing Jadotville. With regard to medals initiated in ‘A’ Company, the following are a sample of such representations:

- *Veterans*
  - Writing to the Chief of Staff on 20 January 2020, Cpl John Gorman advanced the view that the implementation of recommendations for awards should not happen and would only lead to the devaluation of military awards.<sup>7</sup>
  - In a submission dated 31 December 2020 Capt Noel Carey (Retd) recommended that ‘personnel of ‘A’ Company who had shown outstanding bravery should receive awards’. ‘The higher echelons of the Army obstructed all efforts to have these soldiers recognised’.<sup>8</sup>
  - Writing on behalf of her father Pte Robert Orr, on 28 January Margaret Orr stated ‘medals for Gallantry are only awarded to individuals who have displayed exemplary acts of courage....there were 156 men who displayed this in 1961’.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Cpl John Gorman to Vice-Admiral Mark Mellett, 20 January 2020.

<sup>8</sup> Capt Noel Carey to IRG, 31 December 2020.

<sup>9</sup> Margaret Orr to IRG, 28 January 2021.

- Michael Greene, in a submission dated 3 March stated
  - ‘We didn’t see anyone do something that all the others weren’t doing too.’
  - ‘The award of medals has been divisive issue among veterans.’
  - [If] ‘re-introduced by omission, those who will not receive medals will be further shunned, shamed and stigmatised.’
  - ‘To equally acknowledge the efforts of those who were not recommended in 1961, in no way belittles the efforts of those who were recommended for medals.’<sup>10</sup>
- Families
  - In his submission to the Chief of Staff in December 1996, Comdt Liam Donnelly (Retd) observed that ‘it is unbelievable that the participants in the fighting in Jadotville did not get one single award’.<sup>11</sup>
  - On 20 August 2020, Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd) submitted a five-page document titled ‘Medal Awards for the Battle of Jadotville, Congo 1961’ to the Minister for Defence.<sup>12</sup> The paper records that during a February 2017 meeting in Government Buildings, on his last day in office, Taoiseach Enda Kenny stated that medals would be awarded to personnel of ‘A’ Company.<sup>13</sup> Comdt Quinlan’s paper concludes: ‘the presentation of these awards to the veterans still living and posthumously to those who have passed away should be seen as a win win for the Country, the Army, the Department of Defence and most of all for the veterans and their families’.<sup>14</sup>
  - Writing on behalf of his father Pte Robert Bradley who served three tours of duty in the Congo and one in Lebanon, his son Adrian said in January 2021 that ‘all personnel of ‘A’ Company should receive medals’.<sup>15</sup>
  - In a written submission to the Independent Review Group, dated 11 January 2021, Brig Gen Liam MacNamee (Retd) included the following: ‘It is also my understanding, and despite opinions to the contrary, that any recommendations for the award of medals to the members of A Company were fully endorsed and supported by the Battalion Commander.’<sup>16</sup>
  - Writing from the South Burlington, Vermont, USA on 1 February 2021, Declan McCabe, whose father Sgt Martin McCabe was in Jadotville said:
    - ‘I would like to make it very clear, that I very much appreciate the fact that *An Bonn Jadotville* was awarded in 2017. And I’m grateful that this recognition of courage and valiant defence, as is inscribed on the medal (*Cosaint Chalma agus Misneach*), was made. I also recognize that this is a unique medal in that it is the only time an entire unit has been recognized in Irish military history.’

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<sup>10</sup> Michael Greene to IRG, 3 March 2021.

<sup>11</sup> Comdt W.G. Donnelly, Congo – 1961, Submission to the Chief of Staff, p19, December 1996.

<sup>12</sup> Folder 25 provided by Comdt Leo Quinlan to IRG, 5 February 2021.

<sup>13</sup> CQMS Michael Tighe advised the IRG that he was in attendance at the meeting and expressed his disquiet with Comdt Quinlan’s interventions. Interview with IRG, 9 February 2021.

<sup>14</sup> The IRG is strongly of the view that the reference to ‘medals’ was in fact *An Bonn Jadotville*. See Chapter 11.

<sup>15</sup> Adrian Bradley to IRG, January 2021.

<sup>16</sup> Brig Gen Liam MacNamee (Retd) to IRG, 11 January 2021.

- ‘It was politically expedient in 1962, and in 1965 to deny medals.’ ‘We continue to second guess the recommendations of Comdt Quinlan, and in doing so we disrespect him and tarnish his memory’.<sup>17</sup>
- On 1 February 2021, Deborah Kerr-Flanagan, whose father was Cpl Seán Kerr, said in her submission: ‘the Bonn Jadotville is a fine medal but it is a medal in lieu of, rather than in respect of. The award of the DSM would be fitting to ‘A’ Company with citations issued to veterans and families of deceased veterans’.<sup>18</sup>
- Cpl Tom Gunn informed the Independent Review Group: ‘the calibre of Comdt Quinlan should not be doubted’.<sup>19</sup>
- In an interview with the Independent Review Group, Collette Byrne, daughter of CQMS Patrick Neville said: ‘those recommended for medals in Jadotville should get them’.<sup>20</sup>
- In an interview, Niamh Malone, daughter of Pte Francis Malone advised: ‘If one is to get recognition, it should be for all. It wasn’t one man who carried Jadotville, it was 156’.<sup>21</sup>
- Comdt Aidan Donnelly included the following in his written submission to the Independent Review Group dated 3 February 2021:
  - If there is no documentary evidence of the first medal review boards available, then the Army is not in a position to be defensive and to stand over the conclusions of that review board.
  - All evidence that the Independent Review Group has received, is in effect new evidence.
  - The process was flawed, and it was not in the interest for the Defence Forces or politicians to have issues surrounding Jadotville exposed.<sup>22</sup>
- Writing to the Independent Review Group on 8 February 2021, BSM P.J. Higgins (Retd) stated:
  - ‘The medals issue was dealt with following the presentation of the Bonn Jadotville on 2 December 2017. Jadotville was confined to history to the satisfaction of both the deceased veterans’ families and surviving veterans.’
  - ‘By awarding medals, the non-recipients will return once again to a position where their integrity and bravery during the Battle of Jadotville is once again called into question. The efforts over the years to achieve recognition will be in vain.’
  - ‘Was Joe [Pte Joe McGuinness]<sup>23</sup> not a dedicated soldier, and what did he do so differently than his comrades who were recommended for medals? He has gone through enough, please do not inflict the final insult and allow him to live the remainder of his life in dignity.’
  - ‘Taking this issue into the public arena goes against the military code. If this was purely a military decision, no medals would be issued.’

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<sup>17</sup> Declan McCabe to IRG, 1 February 2021.

<sup>18</sup> Deborah Kerr-Flanagan to IRG, 1 February 2021.

<sup>19</sup> Cpl Tom Gunn, interviewed by IRG, 28 January 2021.

<sup>20</sup> Collette Byrne, interviewed by IRG, 28 January 2021.

<sup>21</sup> Niamh Malone, interview with IRG, 2 February 2021.

<sup>22</sup> Comdt Aidan Donnelly (Retd) to IRG, 3 February 2021.

<sup>23</sup> BSM P.J. Higgins (Retd) is a nephew of Pte Joe McGuinness.

‘Implementing the medal recommendations will show disrespect to the 1962 and 1965 Medals Boards, and a total disregard and disrespect for medals awarded by these boards.’

- ‘Must be conscious of the consequences of implementing the recommendations for Jadotville on the question of medals for actions involving Defence Forces personnel not yet in the public domain.’<sup>24</sup>
- On 8 February 2021 the sister of Pte Matt Quinlan, Bernadette Quinlan stated: ‘these men should have received their medals when they returned home but they could not because of the failings of the UN, Conor Cruise O’Brien and the Army.’<sup>25</sup>
- In a submission dated 12 February 2021, Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd) and Comdt Pat Quinlan (Retd) stated:
  - Since all men of ‘A’ Company performed excellently, it follows that those that were recommended for award were the “best of the best” and their recommendations have therefore to be viewed in that context.
  - We would hope that the Board would look at this from a humane point of view. Bear in mind what these men and their families have suffered and continue to suffer.’<sup>26</sup>
- John Sweeney, son of Pte Bernard Sweeney informed the Independent Review Group: ‘if they’re entitled to a medal they should get it on the basis of the reports of Comdt Quinlan’.<sup>27</sup>
- Lt Cmdr John Leech’s (Retd) submission dated 24 April 2021, stated: ‘award all the personnel their medals as Comdt Quinlan had recommended in 1962, and award other members of the company as appropriate. This is on the premise of sufficient evidence to justify such awards.’<sup>28</sup>

### ***Submissions from Local Authorities***

As part of the documents provided by the Defence Forces, the Independent Review Group had sight of correspondence sent to the Minister for Defence and to the Chief of Staff from local authorities regarding the award of medals for personnel of ‘A’ Company, 35 Inf Bn.<sup>29</sup>

### ***Medal Award Process***

The 1961, 1962 and 1965 Medals Boards were convened, conducted their work, and submitted their findings and recommendations, in accordance with the prevailing DFR A5 Courts of Inquiry, DFR A19 Medals and Decorations, and Rules of Procedure. The following paragraphs derive from chapters 8, 9 and 10 of the Independent Review Group’s report.

The first Defence Forces Medals Board, which was appointed by the Chief of Staff, Maj Gen Seán Collins-Powell on 24 February 1961, submitted its report on 10 March 1961. The 1961 Medals

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<sup>24</sup> BSM P.J. Higgins (Retd) to IRG, 8 February 2021.

<sup>25</sup> Bernadette Quinlan to IRG, 8 February 2021.

<sup>26</sup> Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd) and Comdt Pat Quinlan (Retd) to IRG, 12 February 2021.

<sup>27</sup> John Sweeney interview with IRG, 4 April 2021.

<sup>28</sup> Lt Cmdr John Leech to IRG, 24 April 2021.

<sup>29</sup> Waterford City and County Council, 2 September 2020, Kildare County Council, 29 September 2020, Roscommon County Council 25 November 2020, South Dublin County Council, 5 March 2021.

Board recommended the award of the Military Medal for Gallantry 2nd Class to Tpr Anthony Browne.

The 1961 Medals Board shows an awards process in operation, and that both the Minister for Defence and the Chief of Staff had an active part in this process.

On 29 March 1962, the Chief of Staff, Maj Gen Seán Collins-Powell issued a Convening Order under the provisions of paragraph 17 of DFR A19, for the 1962 Medals Board. Following an analysis, the provisional findings of the 1962 Medals Board were deemed to be void,<sup>30</sup> and that a new Medals Board was necessary, pursuant to the amended DFR A19 prescribing for the Distinguished Service Medal. No awards were made consequent on the 1962 Medals Board.

Appointed by the Chief of Staff, Lt Gen Seán MacEoin, the 1965 Medals Board convened on 24 June 1965 and submitted its report on 10 November 1966 recommending the award of sixty-five Distinguished Service Medals, including three personnel who served with 'A' Company in Jadotville. Twenty-seven personnel of 'A' Company, who were recommended for consideration of an award, excluding the three recommended for promotion, were not recommended by the 1965 Medals Board for a medal.

The 1961 Medals Board confirmed the principle, already enshrined in regulations, that as well as recommending cases placed before it to the Minister for Defence for an award, a Medals Board also has a responsibility to reject those recommendations made to it that it does not consider merit an award.<sup>31</sup> This is a particularly important responsibility, especially in the context where a unit, such as the 35 Inf Bn, has seen action and where as a result recommendations for awards are made for some of its personnel by its commander. In these circumstances, following the outcome of a Medals Board's deliberations, a number of the individuals recommended may be awarded medals.

### ***Examination of Service Records***

The Independent Review Group sought to examine each of the service records of the thirty-three 'A' Company personnel who were recommended for an award, including three promotions, by OC 35 Inf Bn in 1962. The Independent Review Group was unable to examine two recommendation folders of those recommended for an award, as the two associated service records could not be located.<sup>32</sup> Nevertheless, the Independent Review Group was able to track these two recommendations within the 1962 and 1965 Medals Board process.

All statements associated with the thirty-three personnel of 'A' Company recommended for the consideration of an award, including promotion, less the statements for Pte Hennelly and Pte Cooley are on their respective service records held in Military Archives.<sup>33</sup> All veterans, and in the case of those who have died their respective next-of-kin, have access to their service files which they can view on appointment in Military Archives.

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<sup>30</sup> See chapter 9.

<sup>31</sup> Paragraph 17, DFR A19, Medals and Decorations, An Roinn Cosanta, 24 July 1948. 'The Military Board shall, before recommending the award of the Medal, satisfy itself of the incontestable proof of the performance of the act and that such act is sufficiently meritorious to merit the award.'

<sup>32</sup> 809650 Pte Gerald Hennelly, and 810219 Pte Charles Cooley.

<sup>33</sup> Although one additional service record was not located, the recommendation for an award was made available to the IRG.



### ***Tracking of Recommendations 1962 – 1967***

#### *Submission of awards initiated in ‘A’ Company*

In February 1962, Lt Col McNamee OC 35 Inf Bn recommended all of the thirty-three cases for an award initiated in respect ‘A’ Company and attachments. He subsequently forwarded all of them to the Adjutant-General.

In accordance with DFR A19, recommendations in respect of ‘A’ Company, which in many cases were inadequately framed and less than complete, were considered by the Adjutant-General, who did not establish if a prima facie case for an award existed for each case, as is required by DFR A19. Nevertheless, cases from ‘A’ Company were considered by both the 1962 and 1965 Medals Boards.

#### *1962 Medals Board*

The 1962 Medals Board examined all of the twenty-two recommendations for the Military Medal for Gallantry from the 35 Inf Bn, including six from ‘A’ Company, and proposed that the Military Medal for Gallantry, 2nd Class, be awarded to Capt Art Magennis, Armd Car Gp, 35 Inf Bn.

The remaining twenty-one individuals, including six from ‘A’ Company, were subsequently reconsidered by the 1962 Medals Board, for a recommendation for the award of the proposed Meritorious Conduct Medal.

There is nothing to suggest that the 1962 Medals Board went about its decision-making in a non-standard manner. The breakdown of recommendations and awards from the 1962 Medals Board shows a general balance between the subunits of the 35 Inf Bn.

The 1962 Medals Board did not approve the award of the Meritorious Conduct Medal for ninety-seven Irish personnel, including fifty-two who served with the 35 Inf Bn.

Following an analysis, initiated on the Chief of Staff’s instructions, it was concluded that the recommendations of the 1962 Medals Board for the award of the proposed Meritorious Conduct Medal, an award not in existence when the board was convened, were invalid. It was concluded that a new Medals Board was necessary, pursuant to the amended DFR A19 prescribing for the Distinguished Service Medal. The interim findings of the 1962 Medals Board for recommendations for the award of the Meritorious Conduct Medal, including eight from ‘A’ Company were considered void.

#### *1965 Medals Board*

The Independent Review Group is fully satisfied that all recommendations of ‘A’ Company personnel submitted by Lt Col McNamee, excluding recommendations for promotion, were subsequently included in the 360 cases considered by the 1965 Medals Board for the Distinguished Service Medal. The eight recommendations for promotion including three from ‘A’ Company by Lt Col McNamee appeared to have been addressed separately by the 1962 Medals Board.

The regulations prescribing the Distinguished Service Medal embodied many features of both acts and service. Comparisons between and across submitted recommendations were problematic, particularly in relation to acts of courage versus acts of service.

During a conference for overseas unit commanders on 15 October 1965, reference was made to the difficulties facing the 1965 Medals Board, including the brevity and lack of detail in the witness statements supporting recommendations for consideration of an award.

There is no record on file of any additional evidence being provided to the 1965 Medals Board in respect of personnel from 'A' Company, though in some cases it was suggested that it should be provided. In setting criteria for the award of medals, the Adjutant-General had a responsibility to ensure that the recommendations which were presented to the 1965 Medals Board met the required standard. This could not be said to have been achieved in many of the cases for 'A' Company personnel seen by the Independent Review Group.

A draft report prepared by the 1965 Medals Board in late November 1965 proposed thirty-three names for recommendation for the award of the Distinguished Service Medal. Fourteen came from the 35 Inf Bn. Five came from 'A' Company, three of whom (an officer, an NCO and a private) were recommended explicitly for acts in Jadotville.

#### *Non-award of two medals – 'A' Company*

The 1965 Medals Board ultimately decided not to award eight of the Distinguished Service Medals it listed in its draft November report. Two of the eight were from the 35 Inf Bn, both from 'A' Company. One for action at Jadotville and Elisabethville, and the other for action in Elisabethville. The Independent Review Group identified a requirement to examine these two cases in detail, the results of which are outlined below.

In the first of the two cases, an 'A' Company individual was being considered by the 1965 Medals Board for the award of the Distinguished Service Medal for action in Jadotville and Elisabethville. The 1965 Medals Board noted in its documents that this member of 'A' Company was an illegal absentee. The Independent Review Group established that the individual was subsequently found not guilty of desertion but guilty of absence by a Limited Court-Martial.

Regarding the second case, the draft November report from the 1965 Medals Board showed that the board was considering two members of 'A' Company for the award of the Distinguished Service Medal, in both cases for a particular action in Elisabethville. The Independent Review Group examined the medal folders contained in the service records of both individuals. The witness statements for the recommendation of an award were identical for both individuals. One of the individuals was subsequently awarded the Distinguished Service Medal 3rd Class. This prompted the Independent Review Group to examine the non-award to the other individual. In examining documentation associated with the 1965 Medals Board, the Independent Review Group understands that in arriving at a decision, the criteria used by the 1965 Medals Board included, witness statements, number of overseas tours of duty, and an individual's conduct. This individual was the subject of Limited Court-Martial proceedings, which was noted by the 1965 Medals Board and informed their decision.

In the absence of clear guidance instructions, the 1965 Medals Board adopted criteria and standard procedures which they applied consistently to their deliberations. The process adopted by the 1965 Medals Board was consistent throughout, and was in keeping with the ethos of the Defence Forces in the 1960s.

*Comparison between the 1962 and 1965 Medals Boards*

A comparison between the interim recommendations for the ‘Meritorious Conduct Medal’ made by the 1962 Medals Board, and the draft recommendations for the Distinguished Service Medals made by the 1965 Medals Board in November 1965, shows the difference in outlook of the two boards. Comparing the results for ‘A’ Company, 35 Inf Bn in both cases should show if there was any noticeable ‘Jadotville Effect’.<sup>34</sup>

In total, ten of the 1962 Medals Board’s twenty-three ‘Meritorious Conduct Medal’ recommendations, were not recommended for the Distinguished Service Medal by the 1965 Medals Board, five of whom were from ‘A’ Company.

*Company Sergeant Jack Prendergast*

The most obvious omission on the 1965 draft list remains CS Jack Prendergast. Recommended initially for immediate promotion by Comdt Pat Quinlan, was later changed to Military Medal for Gallantry in lists submitted by OC 35 Inf Bn to the Adjutant-General which was not awarded. He was subsequently considered by the 1962 Medals Board for a ‘Meritorious Conduct Medal 2nd Class’, CS Jack Prendergast was not recommended for any award by the 1965 Medals Board.

The Independent Review Group examined the case of CS Jack Prendergast, and revisited his award recommendation file containing witness statements signed by Comdt Pat Quinlan and Lt Tom Quinlan, the recommendation of OC 35 Inf Bn, and his service record. CS Prendergast’s service record showed that he had a subsequent tour of duty in 1965 with 41 Inf Bn, UNFICYP. The Independent Review Group then tracked CS Prendergast’s case through the 1962 Medals Board and 1965 Medals Board.

Based on the Independent Review Group’s analysis of the Battle of Jadotville and events encompassing Jadotville, coupled with information conveyed by veterans during interviews, CS Jack Prendergast’s case was then analysed and evaluated by the Group. Despite extensive research by the Independent Review Group, no new primary source evidence was identified which, along with his 1961 witness statements, would amount to a robust prima facie case for the consideration of an award and accordingly to the reopening of his case.

Finally, there are the four cases of Pte Noel Stanley, Pte Thomas Flynn, Pte James Nicell and Pte Daniel Molloy. Both Pte Flynn and Pte Stanley were recommended for the ‘Meritorious Conduct Medal 3rd Class by the 1962 Medals Board, for actions specifically related to action in Jadotville. Pte Nicell and Pte Molloy were also recommended for the ‘Meritorious Conduct Medal’ 3rd Class, but for acts specifically related to the fighting in Elisabethville in December 1961. None of the four was subsequently recommended by the 1965 Medals Board for a Distinguished Service Medal. As in the case of CS Prendergast, no new primary source evidence was identified which, along with their 1961 witness statements, would amount to a robust prima facie case for the consideration of an award and accordingly the reopening of their cases.

<sup>34</sup> IRG Report, Chapter 10.

Five other soldiers from the 35 Inf Bn were likewise recommended by the 1962 Medals Board for the 'Meritorious Conduct Medal'. However, as with the case of the five individuals from 'A' Company, they did not receive a recommendation for the Distinguished Service Medal from the 1965 Medals Board.

These figures show that it was not a case of automatically pushing to one side those who had recommendations for acts in Jadotville. The issue here is the substance of the recommendations before the 1965 Medals Board and, in particular, the actual assessment of an action meriting an award. This does not in any way reflect on the professional ability and conduct of each man. It is an observation on the medals award process.

#### *1965 Medals Board Report*

The 1965 Medals Board held the view that fighting bravely and with competent skill was to be expected of all personnel. Being under fire and returning fire was not enough in itself to secure an award.<sup>35</sup> Officers were expected to show resourcefulness and devotion to duty.

There is no evidence on paper that any undue influence from any external party was exerted on the 1965 Medals Board. Some speculated, but none of the stakeholders and interested parties interviewed by the Independent Review Group was able to provide specific evidence of malign external influence on the 1962 or 1965 Medals Boards. As Chief of Staff and as the convening authority, Lt Gen MacEoin had an influence on the medals processes in 1962 and 1965.

#### *Jadotville Factor*

Regardless of how 'A' Company performed in Jadotville, the institutional climate was against awarding medals to Defence Force personnel in the first place. The history of the 1965 Medals Board, building on that of the 1962 Medals Board, shows a restrictive posture towards medals and the methods of award.

In the overall context of 360 recommendations before the 1965 Medals Board, those from 'A' Company, on account of the content of their medals recommendations statements and the sheer number of cases before the board, were crowded out of consideration. Some were simply vague and were lacking in detail, others no more than examples of an individual doing his duty, albeit excellently. The opportunity of reviewing these was not availed of by OC 35 Inf Bn.

Personnel of 'A' Company were awarded Distinguished Service Medals for their actions at Jadotville. However, the climate of the time prevented Jadotville being explicitly mentioned in citations. One possible reason was that Jadotville, as the environment in the Defence Forces might suggest, was a battle which was not deemed worthy of awards because 'A' Company was forced to surrender. Another possible reason is that in the atmosphere of the 50th anniversary of the 1916 Rising in 1966, 'blood sacrifice' was deemed a positive outcome, and as no member of 'A' Company had died at Jadotville, there were going to be no awards for 'A' Company. Yet the Independent Review Group did not find any explicit evidence that such was the case.

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<sup>35</sup> MA, Medals Board Box 1, Col Shortall to Lt Gen MacEoin, 10 November 1966.

The temptation is to focus in on 'A' Company in isolation, and incorrectly conclude that as Jadotville was regarded by many senior officers as 'regrettable', then actions at Jadotville were not going to result in awards for those put forward for consideration for recommendation under any circumstances.

To suggest that the awards process was interfered with in order to impede the award of medals to personnel from 'A' Company in Jadotville, is to lose sight of the fact that many of the initial recommendations for the consideration of awards for these personnel lacked substance, and that the wider dimension of the award process was evolving from the very moment recommendations for consideration for awards were initiated.

*Submission from Comdt Pat Quinlan*

In a submission to the Chief of Staff dated 14 March 1967, Comdt Pat Quinlan requested a review of A' Company's recommendations arising from Jadotville.<sup>36</sup> Comdt Quinlan did not mention the fact that Lt Thomas Quinlan and Sgt Walter Hegarty were awarded Distinguished Service Medals for actions which included Jadotville.<sup>37</sup> Pte Jim Feery's Distinguished Service Medal was related to the period 5 to 19 December 1961.<sup>38</sup>

Comdt Quinlan also stated that he anticipated that some personnel from 'A' Company would be awarded, an indication that he did not expect all 'A' Company recommendations to be successful, and that awards to some would be acceptable as recognition of the actions of all.

Following a review by the members of the 1965 Medals Board, Lt Gen MacEoin responded to Comdt Quinlan advising him that the issue was fully considered by the 1965 Medals Board.

*Re-examining 1965 Medals Board's findings*

Having examined the 1965 Medals Board in detail, the Independent Review Group concluded that the Board's findings followed due process, including the recommendation of the award of sixty-five Distinguished Service Medals, and were consistent with the procedures and standards of the time. Any re-examination of the 1965 Medals Board's findings on particular cases would require the reopening of all 360 cases that were addressed by the Board, including the sixty-five cases where a Distinguished Service Medal was awarded such as Lt Tom Quinlan, Sgt Walter Hegarty, Cpl William Allen and Pte James Feery. This is a course of action the Independent Review Group does not recommend.

***Conclusions and Recommendation***

Regarding the thirty-three personnel of 'A' Company whose cases for consideration of awards were examined by the 1962 Medals Board and the 1965 Medals Board, the Independent Review Group identified no new primary source evidence which, along with their 1961 witness statements, would amount to a robust prima facie case for the consideration of an award. Accordingly, their cases should not be reopened.

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<sup>36</sup> MA, Medals Board Box1, Comdt Quinlan to Lt Gen MacEoin, 14 March 1967.

<sup>37</sup> GRO 10/1967

<sup>38</sup> GRO 10/1967

The Independent Review Group is aware from interviews with veterans that the reopening of the thirty-three recommendations for awards, as proposed since 2018, would cause grave concern to many veterans. The Independent Review Group endorses the view from veterans that the reopening of cases would undermine the integrity and status of An Bonn Jadotville, and diminish the actions of other personnel of 'A' Company in Jadotville who were not recommended for an award in 1961.

Reopening the thirty-three cases, no matter how it may be undertaken, would result in the emergence of four categories of named individuals in 'A' Company:

- Those who were awarded a medal by the 1965 Medals Board, and who would either forfeit or retain their award.
- Those for whom no recommendation for an award was made at company level.
- Those who were initially put forward for an award at company level but may not be recommended by a reconstituted Medals Board.
- Those who may be awarded a medal as the result of a reconstituted Medals Board.

Based on its analysis of the Battle of Jadotville and events encompassing Jadotville, its examination of all cases initiated by 'A' Company in 1961, its analysis of the material in Military Archives from the 1962 and 1965 Medals Boards, and the information conveyed by veterans during interviews, the Independent Review Group is strongly of the view that there is no merit in reopening the recommendations of the 1962 and 1965 Medals Boards.

## **PART II - INDIVIDUALS NOT RECOMMENDED FOR AN AWARD IN 1962 – PARAGRAPH 4d**

### ***Methodology to Address Para 4d***

The Independent Review Group adopted a methodical approach when considering the actions of individuals not already the subject of a recommendation in relation to possible awards in respect of Jadotville. This included an analysis of a substantial amount of data and information, and the systematic and objective examination of all factors. This provided the basis for its conclusions and recommendations.

The Independent Review Group addressed paragraph 4d as follows:

- Reviewed the provisions of DFR A9 Part III – Medals:
  - Section I: An Bonn Míleata Calmachta (The Military Medal for Gallantry),
  - Section II: An Bonn Seirbhíse Dearsna (The Distinguished Service Medal).
- Examined procedures for the recommendation for an award including elapsed time, awards for overseas unit and sub unit commanders,
- Examined medals awarded to 'A' Company, 35 Inf Bn,
- Recalled the contents of Chapter 4 of the Independent Review Group' Report: Defence Forces Medals and Awards,
- Examined the status of An Bonn Jadotville (The Jadotville Medal), in the context of undermining this unique medal, should a Military Medal for Gallantry or a Distinguished Service Medal be considered as a recommendation for an award to an individual(s),



- Took into account the contents of Chapters 8: 1961 Medals Board Process, Chapter 9: 1962 Medals Board Process and Chapter 10: 1965 Medals Board Process, contained in the Independent Review Group's Report,
- Examined all available service records of the 156 personnel<sup>39</sup> who participated in the Battle of Jadotville or activities encompassing Jadotville,
- Examined written submissions made to the Independent Review Group regarding the award of a medal to an individual(s) of 'A' Company, 35 Inf Bn,
- Reviewed the content of interviews with veterans and veterans Families, where verbal recommendations for individual(s) of 'A' Company, 35 Inf Bn were made,
- Reviewed the content of submissions from Local Authorities sent to the Minister for Defence and the Chief of Staff,
- Examined all documents encompassing Jadotville provided by the Defence Forces and the Department of Defence in March, April and May 2021,
- Examined contemporary military advice, staff analysis and Ministerial requests for military advice, regarding the retrospective awards to personnel of 'A' Company, 35 Inf Bn,
- Identified and analysed all available data associated with each potential recipient of an award arising from Chapter 6 Katanga 1961 Re-examining the Operational Environment and the Battle of Jadotville, data contained in the personal/service file(s), coupled with any primary source, evidence-based facts provided to the Independent Review Group by means of written and verbal submissions,
- Developed a case study(ies) for any potential recipient(s) who may merit a recommendation for consideration for an award,
- Examined any comparable Defence Forces medals awarded in respect of the case study(ies),
- Examined the case study(ies) to establish if the Jadotville Medal was, or was not sufficient, and the appropriate award recognition for the subject in the case study(ies),
- Examined the Defence Forces medal process: integrity of awards, collective awards, retrospective awards, regulatory framework and previous decisions related to ONUC,
- Scrutinised the case study(ies) against the criteria for a Military Medal for Gallantry, and a Distinguished Service Medal as prescribed in DFR A19, and the interpretation of the criteria by both the 1962 Medals Board, the 1965 Medals Boards, and by decisions made by the Chief of Staff arising from the 1961 Medals Board,
- Identified the appropriate medal i.e. the Military Medal for Gallantry, or the Distinguished Service Medal, which could be associated with a particular case study,
- Examined such case study(ies) to ascertain if they would merit the rating of prima facie by the Deputy Chief of Staff (Support) for the appropriate medal, thus facilitating a recommendation that a Medal Board should be convened by the Chief of Staff<sup>40</sup>,
- Finally, made recommendation(s), based on the above methodology.

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<sup>39</sup> The IRG traced 147 Service Records, see Chapter 3.

<sup>40</sup> DFR A9 (New Series) Dress and Medals.

***Provisions of DFR A9 (New Series) Dress and Medals***

*An Bonn Míleata Calmachta (Military Medal for Gallantry)*

In accordance with the provisions of Section I, Part III of DFR A9 (New Series) Dress and Medals, the Military Medal for Gallantry may be awarded in recognition of the performance of any act of exceptional bravery or gallantry (other than one performed on war service) arising out of or associated with, military service and involving risk to life or limb. The award shall be made by the Minister on the recommendation of a military board appointed by the Chief of Staff. The medal or bar may not be awarded by the Minister unless the recommendation is made and forwarded, through the usual channels, to the Chief of Staff not later than two years after the performance of the act in respect of which the recommendation is made.

- It is clear that the prescribed time of two years has elapsed in respect of any acts of exceptional bravery or gallantry involving risk to life or limb conducted by personnel of ‘A’ Company, 35 Inf Bn, who were not recommended for the award of the medal in 1961.
- The provisions of DFR A9, made under Section 26 of the Defence Act, prohibit the retrospective awarding of the Military Medal for Gallantry.

*An Bonn Seirbhíse Dearschna (The Distinguished Service Medal)*

In accordance with the provisions of Section 2, Part III of DFR A9, the Distinguished Service Medal may be awarded in recognition of individual or associated acts of bravery, courage, leadership, resource or devotion to duty (other than one performed on war service) arising out of or associated with service in the Defence Forces and not meriting the award of the Military Medal for Gallantry. The award shall be made by the Minister on the recommendation of a military board appointed by the Chief of Staff. The medal or bar may not be awarded by the Minister unless the recommendation is made and forwarded, through the usual channels, to the Chief of Staff not later than four years after the performance of the act in respect of which the recommendation is made.

- It is clear that the prescribed time of four years has elapsed in respect of any acts of bravery, courage, leadership, resource or devotion to duty conducted by personnel of ‘A’ Company, 35 Inf Bn who were not recommended for the award of the medal in 1961.
- The provisions of DFR A9, made under Section 26 of the Defence Act, prohibit the retrospective awarding of the Distinguished Service Medal in this instance.

***Procedures for the Recommendations for an Award***

If an act, arising from service with ‘A’ Company, 35 Inf Bn, was to be considered in 2021, specific regulatory provisions will be required providing for the submission of a recommendation, its consideration by the Deputy Chief of Staff (Support) and the appointment of a military board by

the Chief of Staff. The procedures for the initiation of a recommendation for an award are as follows:<sup>41</sup>

- *Initial Recommendation*

The initial recommendation for the award of the Medal to an individual may be made by an officer of the Defence Forces; and shall be accompanied by a statement setting out the grounds for such recommendation and giving such other relevant information as will enable higher authority to determine the merits of the act. The recommendation shall normally be based upon the statement of a person who has personal knowledge or was an eyewitness to the act. The act must be described specifically and in detail. When the initial recommendation is made by an officer who has not personal knowledge, or was not an eyewitness to the act, the testimony of at least one person who has personal knowledge or was an eyewitness of the act, must accompany the recommendation. Where possible, the testimony of more than one such person shall be obtained.

- *Submission of Recommendation*

A Commanding Officer to whom such a recommendation has been submitted shall, after they have made such investigations into the case as they consider necessary, submit the recommendation, through the usual channels, to the Deputy Chief of Staff (Support) together with their personal recommendation, whether favourable or unfavourable. Each Officer Commanding a Formation/Service, or the Senior Irish Officer Overseas, as the case may be, through whom a recommendation for an award is made, shall add their comments to the recommendation. The Deputy Chief of Staff (Support), if satisfied that a prima facie case exists for the award of the Medal, shall take steps to bring the case before the Military Board referred to in paragraph 7 of Defence Force Regulation A9 (New Series) Dress and Medals.

- *Investigation by Military Board*

The Military Board shall, before recommending the award of the Medal, satisfy itself of the proof of the performance of the act, and that such act is sufficiently meritorious to merit the award. For these purposes, the Board may call for additional evidence or examine witnesses or other persons and may, if necessary, and where practicable, visit the scene of the act.

### ***Elapsed Time – Recent Cases***

In two of the more recent cases of awards, Distinguished Service Medals were presented nine years after the events they were awarded for took place.

- Presentation of the Distinguished Service Medal to the crew of Dauphin 248 on 19 June 2008 who died while on a Search and Rescue mission on 1 July 1999.
- Presentation of the Distinguished Service Medal to Naval Service personnel on 2 February 2018 for their part in an Arrest and Detention operation on 5 November 2008.

It would seem that the recommendations for the Naval Service awards were made days before the four-year deadline elapsed. In relation to the Air Corps, the basis of the awards would seem to hinge on a recommendation made within the four-year deadline. Even allowing for the four

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<sup>41</sup> Submission from OIC 'A' Admin Sec to IRG, 25 February 2021.

years deadline, no explanation is available as to why a further five years elapsed before the Air Corps and Naval Service presentations were made. These two recent examples advance the case for reform of the medals awards system.

### ***Awards for Overseas Unit and Sub-Unit Commanders***

As advanced in Chapter 4 of this Report, the route a recommendation takes would seem to preclude and perhaps even discourage the award of a medal for leadership at company and battalion level in an operational environment. The fact that only one Battalion Commander and two Company Commanders have been awarded the Distinguished Service Medal for the leadership of their units in over sixty years of unit involvement in overseas service is indicative of this:

- The Distinguished Service Medal with Distinction: O.4938 Lt Col Patrick Barry awarded as OC B Coy 33 Inf Bn.
- The Distinguished Service Medal with Distinction: O.6378 Comdt Joseph Fitzpatrick awarded as OC A Coy, 36 Inf Bn.
- The Distinguished Service Medal with Distinction: O.4484 Lt Col Michael Hogan posthumously awarded as OC 36 Inf Bn.

### ***Naval Service Awards***

On two occasions, Officers Commanding of Naval Service ships were awarded the Distinguished Service Medal.

- The Distinguished Service Medal with Distinction: O.8538 Lt Cmdr James Robinson, OC LÉ Aisling, air and sea recovery operations site of Air India Boeing crash, 23 June 1985.
- The Distinguished Service Medal with Distinction: O.9047 Lt Cmdr Mark Mellett, OC LÉ Orla, arrest of the ketch *Beirne* off south west coast on 13 July 1993.

### ***Range of Awards***

As advanced in Chapter 4 of this report, there are inherent issues associated with an award such as the Distinguished Service Medal that sets out to cover such a wide spectrum of categories. The same medal, at the same grade, has been awarded to individuals who have been killed in action and to those who have been diligent administrators/hard workers in overseas appointments.

### ***Medals Awarded to 'A' Company Personnel***

In 1962, OC 35 Inf Bn Lt Col McNamee recommended and submitted the names of thirty-three of the 156 'A' Company personnel for consideration of an award arising from service with ONUC.<sup>42</sup> Subsequently, Lt Thomas Quinlan, Sgt Walter Hegarty, and Pte James Feery, were awarded the Distinguished Service Medal. Cpl William Allen, who also served with 'A' Company, was later awarded the Distinguished Service Medal for service with the 38 Inf Bn.

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<sup>42</sup> See Chapter 9: 1962 Medals Board Process, and Chapter 10: Medals Board Process of this report.

Whereas all overseas unit commanders were instructed to submit recommendations to the 1965 Medals Board in accordance with the amendment to DFR A19<sup>43</sup> covering the Distinguished Service Medal, no additional recommendations were submitted by Lt Col McNamee in 1965. This was an opportunity for Lt Col McNamee to review his existing recommendations for awards, and to submit new cases to the 1965 Medals Board. Accordingly, a total of 123 personnel of 'A' Company were not the subject of a recommendation for the consideration of an award.

Arising from service with 35 Inf Bn, all personnel of 'A' Company were awarded the United Nations Peacekeeping Medal<sup>44</sup> and the United Nations Medal for ONUC. On 2 December 2017, surviving Jadotville veterans and members of veterans' families were presented with the Jadotville Medal (An Bonn Jadotville).

### ***Submissions to the Independent Review Group***

On the invitation of the Independent Review Group, the issue of recommending medals to personnel of 'A' Company who were not recommended by Lt Col McNamee for consideration in 1961 was advanced by veterans and family members during the Group's Consultation Module. These representations were by means of both oral representations during interviews conducted by the Independent Review Group, and by written submissions to the Group. In some cases, both written and oral representations were made. Please refer to Annex F for the nominal roll of those engaged in the Consultation Module.

The Independent Review Group fully considered each of the oral and written representations. Extracts of a sample number of these representations are included below.

- *Veterans*
  - The Independent Review Group noted the recommendation made by Comdt W.G. Donnelly (Retd) in his submission to the Chief of Staff, titled 'Congo 1961', dated December 1996, 'I strongly recommend that Comdt P. Quinlan and "A Company of the 35<sup>th</sup> Irish Battalion be acknowledged for their service in the Congo in 1961 – not just for the JADOTVILLE BATTLE which in fact was excellently executed'.<sup>45</sup>
  - The Independent Review Group noted that in a submission to the Chief of Staff in January 2020, Cpl John Gorman stated: 'A case to be made in awarding a posthumous Distinguished Service Medal with Honour to Comdt Quinlan. More than half of the living Jadotville veterans are of the same opinion and it would also appease everyone in the Jadotville family'.<sup>46</sup>
  - In an interview with the Independent Review Group, Capt Noel Carey said that he always assumed that Comdt Quinlan would get something, that Brig Raja's comments say it all. Those who genuinely deserve to be, should be honoured.

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<sup>43</sup> Defence Forces Regulations A19, Medals and Decorations, An Roinn Cosanta 1962.

<sup>44</sup> Instituted in 1989 and awarded to members of the Defence Forces who hold a medal for service with a UN mission, or a UN authorised mission.

<sup>45</sup> Comdt W.G. Donnelly (Retd), Congo – 1961, Submission to the COS, December 1996.

<sup>46</sup> Cpl John Gorman to Vice Admiral Mark Mellett, 7 January 2020.

With no exaggeration, justice must be done and seen to be done; justice was not done in Comdt Quinlan's case.<sup>47</sup>

- Sgt Paddy Hogan advised the Independent Review Group: 'if one is to get recognition, it should be for all. It wasn't one man who carried Jadotville it was 156'.<sup>48</sup>

- *Families*

- The Independent Review Group noted that on 7 September 2017 Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd) having summarised the actions involving Comdt Pat Quinlan in Katanga, requested that the 'highest medal be awarded (MMG with Honours)' to his father. The submission continued 'it would be very appropriate if this award could be organized for the 28 October [2017] and be announced by yourself at the unveiling of the Monument. In this regard it would be good to allow the sculptor time to add MMG letters to the bronze plaque on the Monument' [Coomakista Pass, road linking Caherdaniel and Waterville].<sup>49</sup>
- As part of his submission, BSM P.J. Higgins (Retd) stated: 'We must not allow the medals to be compromised in any way. We must protect the integrity of the individual medals, because if we don't, we will render the medals useless, and open to abuse by future medal award boards. The integrity of the Defence Forces must be protected'. 'No medals should be awarded and that the Battle of Jadotville be confined to history'.
- Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd) provided the Independent Review Group with a document outlining 'reasons why Col Pat Quinlan should be awarded the MMG (with honours) as requested by Deputy Noel Grealish TD in Dáil Éireann (Irish Parliament) and as requested/demanded on numerous occasions in social media by veterans of the Congo and other UN missions'.<sup>49</sup> The five page document recounts 'a list of activities which are the most prominent events involving A Coy, and more specifically Comdt Pat Quinlan'. This document which outlines events recorded in the Unit History of 35 Inf Bn, was also provided to the Minister for Defence and the Secretary General of the Department of Defence on 2 November 2020.<sup>50</sup>
- A document from Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd) and Comdt Pat Quinlan (Retd) submitted following their interview on 12 February 2021 states: 'certainly there was no hope or expectation that Pat Quinlan would be recommended [in 1961] for anything for reasons that should be apparent from this presentation [12 February] – despite the endorsement of the UN Indian Brigade Commander in Katanga'.<sup>51</sup>
- Comdt Pat Quinlan's (Retd) closing statement on 12 February 2021, later provided to the Independent Review Group in writing, included the following 'I believe Col Pat Quinlan then Comdt Pat Quinlan in 1961, was an example and definition of all that the Military Code of Leadership aspires to. He demonstrated the confident

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<sup>47</sup> Capt Noel Carey, interview with IRG, 19 January 2021.

<sup>48</sup> Sgt Paddy Hogan, interview with IRG, 18 February 2021.

<sup>49</sup> List of Documents, file 25, 13 provided by Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd) to the IRG, 3 February 2021.

<sup>50</sup> List of Document file 25, provided by Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd) to the IRG, 3 February 2021.

<sup>51</sup> Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd) and Comdt Pat Quinlan (Retd), Opening and Closing Statements to IRG, 12 February 2021.



leadership of character and competence with the unique values of respect, loyalty, selflessness, physical courage, moral courage, and integrity. He instilled these values in his men & Unit which can be seen in the manner in which they conducted their operations before, during and after the battle of Jadotville during their service in the CONGO.<sup>52</sup>

- Referring to ‘A’ Company’s period in captivity, Lt Col Ollie Barbour (Retd) advised: ‘Adverse effects during combat and captivity, moral support from Chaplain and Medical Officer, the loneliness of command. [Comdt Quinlan] Went above and beyond his training and experience, exemplar of leadership in captivity.’<sup>53</sup>

### **Chapters 8, 9 and 10 – Medals Boards Process**

#### *Military Medal for Gallantry*

The 1961 Medals Board considered five cases for the Military Medal for Gallantry and recommended Tpr Anthony Browne for posthumous award of the Military Medal for Gallantry, 2nd Class. Tpr Browne’s award was approved by Minister for Defence Kevin Boland TD on 22 September 1961.<sup>54</sup>

The 1962 Medals Board examined twenty-two recommendations for the Military Medal for Gallantry all of which originated in the 35 Inf Bn, including six from ‘A’ Company, and proposed that one Military Medal for Gallantry, 2nd Class, be awarded to Capt Art Magennis, Armd Car Gp, 35 Inf Bn. This recommendation was not endorsed by the Minister on the recommendation of the Chief of Staff. Capt Magennis was subsequently awarded the Distinguished Service Medal 1st Class consequent on a recommendation from the 1965 Medals Board.<sup>55</sup>

Since its institution in 1944, only eight Defence Forces personnel have been awarded the Military Medal for Gallantry. The Independent Review Group has noted that Tpr Browne was the only recipient of the Military Medal for Gallantry arising from service with ONUC. The Independent Review Group noted that whereas the 1965 Medals Board recommended the award of the Military Medal for Gallantry to Capt Art Magennis, 35 Inf Bn, he was subsequently awarded the Distinguished Service Medal. The Independent Review Group also noted that none of the twenty-two individuals, including six from ‘A’ Company, recommended by OC 35 Inf Bn were awarded the Military Medal for Gallantry.

In addition to Tpr Browne MMG, the other seven recipients are: Capt Adrian Ainsworth MMG, Lt Anthony Bracken MMG, Cpl Michael Jones MMG, Pte Michael Daly MMG and Pte Paul Coventry MMG with UNIFIL; Comdt Michael Lynch MMG with UNTSO; and Pte Thomas Metcalfe MMG in Ireland.

#### *Distinguished Service Medal*

The 1965 Medals Board adopted a working guide for the three classes of the Distinguished Service Medal:

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<sup>52</sup> Comdt Pat Quinlan (Retd) to the IRG, 12 February 2021.

<sup>53</sup> Lt Col Ollie Barbour (Retd), interview with IRG, 18 March 2021.

<sup>54</sup> Chapter 8 of the IRG’s Report.

<sup>55</sup> Chapter 8 and 9 of the IRG’s Report.

<b>Working Guide for Award of Three Classes Distinguished Service Medal</b>	
1st Class	For <b>Acts</b> (Bravery, Courage)
2nd Class	For <b>Leadership</b> and for acts or service meriting awards but not coming within the awards of 1st or 3 <sup>rd</sup> Class
3rd Class	For <b>Service</b> (Resource, Devotion to Duty)

The 1965 Medals Board held the view that fighting bravely and with competent skill was to be expected of all personnel. Being under fire and returning fire was not enough in itself to secure an award. Officers were expected to show resourcefulness and devotion to duty.

From 360 cases, the 1965 Medals Board recommended the award of the Distinguished Service Medal to sixty-five individuals, seventeen from 35 Inf Bn including three from 'A' Company, 35 Inf Bn. The 1965 Medals Board made no recommendations in respect of 295 individuals, including thirty from 'A' Company, 35 Inf Bn.

The 1965 Medals Board did not recommend eighty-five officers for the Distinguished Service Medal: one colonel, five lieutenant-colonels, thirty-one commandants and forty-eight captains / lieutenants. These included Capt Liam Donnelly and Lt Noel Carey from 'A' Company, 35 Inf Bn. Notwithstanding the content of their recommendations, the range of ranks and the number of non-awards for officers reflects significant moral courage by the 1965 Medals Board, and is indicative of the independence, integrity and credibility expected from Medals Boards.

***Military Advice: Retrospective Awards 2017***<sup>56</sup>

In 2017, following a Ministerial direction, the Chief of Staff initiated a staff study and archival investigation to provide a high degree of certainty to determine whether there was sufficient archival evidence to make retrospective awards to personnel of 'A' Company, 35 Inf Bn who were deployed to Jadotville in September 1961. This study and archival investigation was preceded by the determination of awards of those deployed in 1961, and by a staff study directed by the Chief of Staff in 2004, Col Christopher Moore's 'Jadotville Affair Report'.

The staff study and archival investigation scrutinised and examined:

- Unit documentation 35 Inf Bn,
- 'A' Company service records,
- Administrative Instruction regarding the custody of overseas documents issued to the 34 Inf Bn, (not reissued to 35 Inf Bn).

The staff study also consulted external sources.

In addition to referring to the availability or otherwise of archival evidence, the staff study and archival investigation observed that the prevailing Defence Forces Regulations and procedures do not permit a retrospective award for events in Jadotville.

<sup>56</sup> DCOS (Sp) to COS, Military Advice – Jadotville Awards, 23 May 2017.

In proposing a way forward, the report of the staff study and archival investigation advanced the following work streams:

- Regulatory change to enable retrospective awards, and the striking of a new unit award, its associated criteria and process,
- The examination of a posthumous award to Comdt Quinlan, and the examination of a unit award that recognises the significant of the action of ‘A’ Company and its personnel at Jadotville, the linking of a unit award to the unit citation issued on 17 September 2016.

In submitting the report to the Minister on 1 June 2017, the Chief of Staff stated that ‘political direction will now be required in order to provide the necessary policy framework within which to conduct any such retrospective investigation, bearing in mind that some key contemporaneous documentation cannot be located’.<sup>57</sup>

### ***Staff Advice 8 September 2020***<sup>58</sup>

In examining the issue that personnel of ‘A’ Company, 35 Inf Bn, who deployed in Jadotville had not been formally recognised for acts of bravery through the award of the Distinguished Service Medal, the following two courses of action were proposed on 8 September 2020.

- *Course of Action 1 – Status Quo.* ‘Status quo to remain, based on the fact that the 1962 Medals Board and 1965 Medals Board were ‘duly convened, assessed the merits of all nominations and testimony in the context of the evidence available at that time, and made recommendations for awards accordingly, now can NOT be satisfactorily re-examined as there is no documentary account of the deliberations of the boards and with the passage of time insufficient witness testimony or documentary evidence is available to enable this’. In 2017, the State duly recognised the deeds and actions of all members of ‘A’ Company by awarding An Bonn Jadotville with a unit citation’.
- *Course of Action 2 – Regulatory Change.* ‘Regulatory change to permit the examination of awarding the Military Medal for Gallantry or the Distinguished Service Medal to personnel who were not the subject of the consideration of an award arising from Jadotville’.

### ***Staff Advice 28 September 2020***<sup>59</sup>

A paper submitted by the Deputy Chief of Staff (Support) to the Chief of Staff analysing a course of action which would see the award of the Military Medal for Gallantry or the Distinguished Service Medal to Comdt Quinlan, stated that it would ‘most likely cause a precedent for other past cases to be re-examined,’ ‘the award would be unorthodox and potentially cause disquiet among members of A Coy who were previously recommended for awards’, ‘the uniqueness, importance and significance of the medal [An Bonn Jadotville] and citation could be devalued if a DSM is to subsequently awarded to the Coy Comd’.

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<sup>57</sup> COS to Minister for Defence, 1 June 2017.

<sup>58</sup> D COS (Sp) to COS, Jadotville – Medal Awards, 8 September 2020.

<sup>59</sup> D COS (Sp) to COS, Jadotville – Medal Awards, 28 September 2020.

### **Ministerial Request 19 October 2020<sup>60</sup>**

In referring to re-considering the possibility as an exceptional measure to have retrospective examination of the events at Jadotville in the context of the award of medals, on 19 October 2020 the Minister sought the views of the Chief of Staff on the following:

- i. the implications for the integrity of the Award of Medals system,
- ii. the feasibility of reversing decisions made by your predecessors given the passage of time and military advice in relation to the absence of records,
- iii. how re-consideration of previous Board's decisions could be undertaken, and
- iv. the provisions that would be necessary to enable you to undertake such a course of action, while protecting existing provisions in relation to the award of a medal

Concluding the letter, the Minister advised: 'As you are aware, in recent years this matter become [sic] a political issue, as well as a military one<sup>61</sup>.

### **Military Advice 9 November 2020<sup>62</sup>**

Responding to the Minister's letter dated 19 October, the Chief of Staff advised that he was in support of the attached 'draft findings and conclusions from DCOS (Sp) on the matter'. In the attachment, referring to an option which the Minister could take 'to issue an award by means of a specific yearly series DFR', the Deputy Chief of Staff (Support) advised that in order to

mitigate the associated risks to the well-established institutionalised process underpinned by Defence Forces Regulations, then it is recommended that an independent board external to the DF be established to consider the entire case, the evidence currently available and offer an opportunity for any new evidence to be presented. Thereafter, the board could independently make a recommendation on whether to award medals or otherwise for the Minister's consideration.<sup>63</sup>

On 18 December 2020, the Chief of Staff convened an Independent Review Group on Jadotville and promulgated the associated Terms of Reference.

### **Analysis of Data**

In February 1962, OC 35 Inf Bn recommended thirty-three of the 156 personnel serving with 'A' Company for consideration of an award. The remaining 123 individuals fall under the remit of paragraph 4d of the Independent Review Group's Terms of Reference. Since its establishment in December 2020, the Independent Review Group, on a continuous basis, endeavoured to identify individuals whose actions were 'not already the subject of a medal in respect of Jadotville'.<sup>64</sup> This process included analysing and evaluating archival documentation, including service records,

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<sup>60</sup> Minister for Defence to COS, Jadotville – Medal Awards, 19 October 2020.

<sup>61</sup> Executive Branch minute: since the award of the Jadotville Medal in December 2017, as of 24 September 2020, a total of 273 Representations and three secondary requests were received by the Department of Defence, 176 from the teachers and pupils of Malahide Community School, 55 from Ministers, Deputies, Senators, MEPs Councillors and County Council representatives, 22 from family members and surviving veterans of Jadotville and 20 from the general public.

<sup>62</sup> COS to Minister, 9 November 2020.

<sup>63</sup> DCOS (Sp) to COS, 23 October 2020.

<sup>64</sup> IRG Terms of Reference, 18 December 2020, paragraph 4d.

written submissions and oral testimony presented during the consultation module, leading to the assessment of individual actions during the Battle of Jadotville.

In order to fulfil paragraph 4d of its Terms of Reference, the Independent Review Group required primary source, evidence-based facts, which would provide a robust prima facie case for the Deputy Chief of Staff (Support) to initiate a process whereby an individual(s) should be recommended, or otherwise, to the Minister for Defence for the award of a medal, by a Medals Board convened by the Chief of Staff.

Availing of the following methodology, the Independent Review Group endeavoured to acquire primary source, evidence-based facts on the actions of individuals identified either by the Group, or during the course of the consultation module, by:

- An analysis of the data and material used in the compilation of Chapter 6 of its report: Katanga 1961 Re-examining the Operational Environment and the Battle of Jadotville,
- A review of the contents of Chapter 11 of its report: Seeking Recognition for ‘A’ Company, 1968 – 2020,
- An examination of material provided by means of written submissions,
- An examination of all information provided through interviews conducted with veterans of 35 Inf Bn, and with veterans’ families.

Whereas a number of individuals came to the notice of the Independent Review Group, based on the provisions of DFR A9 (New Series) Dress and Medals, and the above methodology, the Group ultimately identified only one of the 123 individuals of ‘A’ Company, 35 Inf Bn, who was not previously the subject of a recommendation for a medal in respect of Jadotville, and who merited further investigation, namely Comdt Pat Quinlan, company commander ‘A’ Company.

### ***Case Study – Comdt Pat Quinlan***

Following its agreed methodology, the Independent Review Group developed a case study for Comdt Pat Quinlan. The Independent Review Group’s case study in respect of Comdt Pat Quinlan is attached as appendix 1 of chapter 12.

The topics contained in the case study are: Commission; Career Courses; Promotions; Appointments 35 Inf Bn; Command and Control 13 September to 25 October; Battle of Jadotville 13 to 17 September; Complimentary Messages; Surrender Incidents, 35 Inf Bn, 13 & 14 September; ‘A’ Company’s Surrender, 17 September; Section 124 Defence Act 1954; Courts of Inquiry; Captivity, 18 September to 25 October; Comdt Quinlan’s Report to the Force Commander; Letter from Brig Raja; Personal File; Recommendations for Awards, 35 Inf Bn; Press statement, 23 December 1961.

Having evaluated its contents, the Independent Review Group concluded that the case study, attached as appendix 1, provides appropriate material from which to create a prima facie case for the recommendation of the posthumous award of a medal for Comdt Pat Quinlan.

### ***Comparable Cases – Military Medal for Gallantry***

Since the institution of the Military Medal for Gallantry in 1944, of the eight actions which merited this medal, ‘in recognition of the performance of any act of exceptional bravery or gallantry (other

than that performed on war service) arising out of, or associated with, military service and involving risk to life and limb',<sup>65</sup> there are no comparable cases to the case now being considered by the Independent Review Group.

### ***Comparable Cases – Distinguished Service Medal***

As previously mentioned, only two company commanders have been awarded the Distinguished Service Medal for the leadership of their sub-units in over sixty years of unit involvement in UN peacekeeping operations. Nevertheless, the Independent Review Group has identified these two awards as comparable cases for the award of a medal in the context of Comdt Quinlan:

- The Distinguished Service Medal 2nd Class: O.4938 Lt Col Patrick Barry awarded as OC B Coy, 33 Inf Bn.<sup>66</sup>
- The Distinguished Service Medal 2nd Class: O.6378 Comdt Joseph Fitzpatrick awarded as OC A Coy, 36 Inf Bn.<sup>67</sup>

Likewise, the Independent Review Group has identified the award of a Distinguished Service Medal 2nd Class, in respect of a Troop Commander serving in ONUC, as a comparable case for the award of a medal in the context of Comdt Quinlan:

- Capt Thomas Boyle was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal 2nd Class as Troop Commander of the Heavy Mortar Troop, 38 Inf Bn<sup>68</sup>. A total of three Distinguished Service Medals were awarded to personnel of this troop Capt Tom Boyle, Sgt John Quirke, and Cpl William Allen. Cpl Allen had served with 'A' Company during the Battle of Jadotville.
- Personnel of this sub-unit, including those who were awarded the Distinguished Service Medal, were drawn from 8 Heavy Mortar Battery, 4 Field Artillery Regiment, Columb Barracks, Mullingar.
- Capt Boyle's troop was deployed in continuous combat from 28 December 1962 to 21 January 1963.<sup>69</sup> Of significance to Comdt Quinlan's case, within his parent unit, Capt Boyle's Distinguished Service Medal 2nd Class was seen as an award for the Heavy Mortar Troop, a view shared by the troop commander.

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<sup>65</sup> DFR A 9 (New Series) Dress and Medals.

<sup>66</sup> Lt Col Patrick Barry's citation, GRO 10/1967: 'For distinguished service with the United Nations Force in the Republic of Congo, in displaying courage and leadership in September 1960, as a Commandant, whilst in command at Manono. Despite continuous threats of attack from a large body of Balubas, he so disposed his company that he succeeded in protecting the lives of 250 refugees and evacuating them to safety'.

<sup>67</sup> Comdt Joseph Fitzpatrick's citation GRO 10/1967: 'For distinguished service with the United Nations Force in the Republic of Congo, in displaying courage and leadership when securing an important position in Elizabethville on the 16th of December 1961. The leading platoon suffered casualties, but Commandant Fitzpatrick exposed himself repeatedly to fire and, by his personal courage, energy and leadership, maintained the impetus of the advance until the objective was attained'.

<sup>68</sup> Capt Tom Boyle's citation, GRO 10/1967: 'For distinguished and outstanding leadership with the United Nations Force in the Republic of the Congo. The heavy mortar troop commanded by Captain Boyle took part in numerous engagements in Katanga in December 1962 and January 1963 supporting Indian and Ethiopian troops as well as their own. On all occasions, the troop performed in a most efficient and praiseworthy manner, due to the example, leadership and devotion to duty of Captain Boyle.'

<sup>69</sup> Comdt James McCafferty DSM (Retd), BA (Hons), PhD, An Cosantóir, September 2017.



The Independent Review Group has also identified the following Naval Service awards as comparable cases for the award of a medal in the context of Comdt Quinlan:

- The Distinguished Service Medal with Distinction: O.8538 Lt Cmdr James Robinson, OC LÉ Aisling, air and sea recovery operations site of Air India Boeing crash, 23 June 1985.
- The Distinguished Service Medal with Distinction: O.9047 Lt Cmdr Mark Mellett, OC LÉ Orla, arrest of the ketch *Beirne* off south west coast on 13 July, 1993.

### ***An Bonn Jadotville***

Arising from service with 35 Inf Bn, Comdt Quinlan was awarded the United Nations Peacekeeping Medal<sup>70</sup> and the United Nations Medal for ONUC. On 2 December 2017, his son Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd) was presented with An Bonn Jadotville posthumously awarded to Col Pat Quinlan.

Having due regard to the integrity and status of An Bonn Jadotville, and having examined the case study attached as Appendix 1, the Independent Review Group concluded that this particular insignia is not sufficient, nor is it the sole award necessary, in order to provide appropriate recognition to Comdt Pat Quinlan for his actions as company commander 'A' Company, 35 Inf Bn.

### ***Defence Forces Medal Process***

#### *Integrity of Process*

The Independent Review Group fully endorses the integrity of the Defence Forces medal process, and the formal recognition by the State of 'A' Company through the award of An Bonn Jadotville and the unit citation. Since Comdt Quinlan was not previously recommended for an award, the integrity of the medal process will remain, provided the issue of retrospection is correctly addressed.

#### *Collective Award*

The Independent Review Group advances the view that Comdt Quinlan's case could be linked to his actions as a company commander, reflecting the comparable cases of Distinguished Service Medals awarded to company or troop commanders who served in ONUC and their associated citations. This approach should be seen as an award honouring all personnel of 'A' Company. The Independent Review Group hopes that this approach will be well received by veterans and veterans' families.

#### *Retrospective Awards*

The Independent Review Group contends that the retrospective awarding of a medal should only occur in the most extreme circumstances. The Independent Review Group's view in the case of Comdt Quinlan, is that the unique political, diplomatic and military environment associated with

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<sup>70</sup> Instituted in 1989, and awarded to members of the Defence Forces who hold a medal for service with a UN mission, or a UN mandated mission.

the Battle of Jadotville, and events encompassing Jadotville in 1961, amounts to such an extreme circumstance. This is an exceptional case. The Independent Review Group contends that this case should not be seen as a precedent for initiating retrospective awards in the Defence Forces.

#### *Regulatory Framework*

The Independent Review Group is of the opinion that an appropriate Defence Forces Regulation in the yearly series could provide the necessary provisions not alone to initiate an award process, but also to ensure that this particular case is seen as a unique, exceptional, and once-off case.

#### *Previous Decisions*

The proposal under consideration does not amount to reversing decisions made by previous Medals Boards, or to the Independent Review Group's knowledge, decisions by former Chiefs of Staff.

#### ***Medal Criteria***

In the context of its examination of the processes associated with the 1961 Medals Board, the 1962 Medals Board and the 1965 Medals Board, the Independent Review Group recalls:

- The 1961 Medals Board recommended one of the five cases for the Military Medal for Gallantry submitted for consideration,
- Twenty-two cases for the Military Medal for Gallantry were before the 1962 Medals Board, all from the 35 Inf Bn. Whereas the 1962 Medals Board recommended one officer for the Military Medal for Gallantry, the medal was not awarded by the Minister for Defence on the recommendation of the Chief of Staff. The officer in question was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal 1st Class following the deliberations of the 1965 Medals Board,
- Of the 360 cases before the 1965 Medals Board, none was in respect of the Military Medal for Gallantry,
- In selecting sixty-five personnel for the recommendation of the Distinguished Service Medal, the 1965 Medals Board adopted a working guide for the three classes of the medal.

#### ***Conclusions and Recommendation***

The Independent Review Group concludes that there is a prima facie case for the recommendation of the posthumous award of a medal for Comdt Pat Quinlan.

In respect of Comdt Pat Quinlan, the Independent Review Group has not discovered any primary source evidence that falls under the provisions of the Military Medal for Gallantry: 'the performance of any act of exceptional bravery or gallantry (other than that performed on war service) arising out of, or associated with, military service and involving risk to life and limb'.<sup>71</sup>

The Independent Review Group notes that the Distinguished Service Medal provides for 'acts of bravery, courage, leadership resource or devotion to duty, (other than any such act or duty

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<sup>71</sup> DFR A 9 (New Series) Dress and Medals.

performed on war service) arising out of, or associated with, service in the Defence Forces and not meriting the award of the Military Medal for Gallantry'.<sup>72</sup>

The Independent Review Group has identified primary source evidence which amounts to a robust prima facie case for the consideration of a recommendation for a Distinguished Service Medal award in respect of Comdt Pat Quinlan, company commander, 'A' Company, 35 Inf Bn.

Based on its understanding of the Battle of Jadotville and events encompassing Jadotville, and the analysis conducted in chapter 12 of its report, the Independent Review Group is of the view that there is a case for initiating a process to consider the award of a Distinguished Service Medal to Comdt Pat Quinlan.

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<sup>72</sup> See Chapter 4 of the IRG's Report.

## Chapter 12 - Appendix 1: Case Study

### Comdt Pat Quinlan 'A' Company 35 Inf Bn

#### *Commissioning, Career Courses and Promotions*

Born on 28 January 1919, commissioned on 1 July 1940, 2/Lt Patrick Quinlan was appointed to the Infantry Corps, and together with his cadet classmates 2/Lt Hugh McNamee and 2/Lt Edward Condon, was posted to the 1 Inf Bn, Renmore Barracks, Galway. These three officers were later to serve together in the 35 Inf Bn ONUC.

Capt Pat Quinlan completed the 13 Standard Infantry Course in November 1947, qualifying to fill appointments in the rank of commandant. As a member of the 15 Command and Staff Course, he graduated with distinction in August 1952, qualifying him to fill appointments in the rank of lieutenant-colonel, and staff officer appointments in Brigade, Command and AHQ. He was promoted to the rank of commandant on 1 March 1954.

On appointment as company commander, 'A' Company 35 Inf Bn, in 1961, Comdt Pat Quinlan had seven years' experience in the rank of commandant and was forty-two years of age. Comdt Pat Quinlan was promoted lieutenant-colonel on 12 June 1968. Although applying for UNTSO on 26 November 1973 for a colonel's appointment, he had only one overseas tour of duty – ONUC. Lt Col Quinlan served as OC 2 Inf Bn and Cathal Brugha Barracks from 1968 to 1969.

The response to a ministerial query in February 1975 regarding Lt Col Pat Quinlan's promotional prospects stated: 'Two years in present rank before retiring on age grounds. Having regard to his placing on the seniority list and his general suitability, his prospects as of now appear good'.<sup>1</sup> He was promoted Colonel on 28 September 1976 filling the appointment of OC Observer Corps. As School Commandant The Infantry School, Col Pat Quinlan was due to retire on age grounds on 28 January 1979, but the date was extended to 2 March 1979 for remuneration (pension) reasons.

Comdt Pat Quinlan was promoted to the ranks of lieutenant-colonel and colonel on seniority, in accordance with the provisions of DFR A15.

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<sup>1</sup> MA, service file, O.5176 Comdt Pat Quinlan.

### ***Appointments – 35 Infantry Battalion***

When the 35 Inf Bn was established in 1961, four members of the 13 Cadet Class were posted to the unit: O.5162 Comdt Hugh McNamee (Second in Command), O.5135 Comdt Edward Condon (Adjutant), O.5131 Comdt Seán Barrett (Operations Officer) and O.5176 Comdt Pat Quinlan (Company Commander ‘A’ Company).<sup>2</sup> Comdt McNamee was subsequently promoted to the rank of acting lieutenant-colonel when he assumed command of the 35 Inf Bn on 27 August 1961. On his return to Ireland, A/Lt Col McNamee retained the rank and was not reverted to the substantive rank of commandant.

### ***Command & Control – 13 September to 25 October***

The Battle of Jadotville was a company level hostile and violent defensive operation. In order to execute the operation and to achieve its mission, as company commander Comdt Pat Quinlan had readily available to him two levels of command echelons, namely at company and platoon levels. Comdt Pat Quinlan was not on his own. Of equal importance is that these two echelons were also available whilst in captivity. The echelons involved 2 commandants, 2 captains, 3 lieutenants, 2 senior NCOs, 5 sergeants, and 1 chaplain.<sup>3</sup> All of these individuals were part of the company’s chain of command and played a leadership and combat role in the Battle of Jadotville, and a leadership role in captivity. These individuals observed and supported Comdt Quinlan discharging his responsibilities during the Battle of Jadotville, 13 to 17 September, and subsequently when ‘A’ Company was held in captivity from 18 September to 25 October.

- At the Company HQ level, it consisted of Comdt Pat Quinlan (Company Commander), Capt Dermot Byrne (Second-in Command), Comdt Joseph Clune (Medical Officer), Capt Thomas McGuinn (Admin Officer), CS Jack Prendergast (the senior NCO) and CQMS Patrick Neville (Company Quartermaster Sergeant). Fr Joseph Fagan CF also played a significant role at this level during the battle and while in captivity.
- Likewise, the platoon commanders, together with their respective platoon sergeants, had command and leadership responsibilities during the Battle of Jadotville, and while in captivity:
  - No 1 Platoon: Lt Joseph Leech and Sgt Patrick Joyce,
  - No 2 Platoon: Lt Thomas Quinlan and Sgt Walter Hegarty,
  - No 3 Platoon: Lt Noel Carey and Sgt Kevin McLoughlan,
  - Support Platoon: Capt Liam Donnelly and Sgt Martin McCabe.
  - This level also included the attached Armoured Car Section: Lt Kevin Knightly and Sgt Colman Geary.

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<sup>2</sup> From a comparison of the available service numbers of members of the 13 Cadet Class, of which 49 members were commissioned, it appears their service numbers were assigned to them, not according to their final class placings, which has been the recent practice, but by the alphabetical order of the class member’s family name. Service number was therefore not an indication of seniority within the 13 Cadet Class.

<sup>3</sup> The command echelon derives from the officers and NCOs in ‘A’ Company: 2 commandants, 3 captains, 4 lieutenants, 2 senior NCOs, 11 sergeants, 30 corporals and 1 chaplain.

- When submitting his recommendations to the Adjutant-General in February 1962, as OC 35 Inf Bn, Lt Col Hugh McNamee included the following personnel, in 'A' Company's command and control echelons for the consideration of an award:
  - Capt Liam Donnelly (Platoon Commander),
  - Lt Thomas Quinlan (Platoon Commander),
  - Lt Noel Carey, (Platoon Commander),
  - Lt Kevin Knightly (Armoured Car Section Commander),
  - CS Jack Prendergast (Company Sergeant), and
  - Sgt Walter Hegarty (Platoon Sergeant).
- Lt Thomas Quinlan and Sgt Walter Hegarty were subsequently awarded a Distinguished Service Medal 2nd Class.<sup>4</sup>
- No witness statements in respect of Comdt Pat Quinlan were initiated either by personnel of 'A' Company, or by HQ 35 Inf Bn advancing an award process for Comdt Pat Quinlan. The Independent Review Group did not discover any recommendation for an award in respect of Comdt Pat Quinlan.
- During the course of the Independent Review Group's interviews with 'A' Company veterans, including Capt Noel Carey (Retd), the issue of recommendations for awards for personnel of the company, and the issue of individuals who were not recommended for the consideration of an award, was discussed.

### ***Battle of Jadotville 13 – 17 September***

Reference: Chapter 6, Katanga 1961: Re-examining the Operational Environment and the Battle of Jadotville.

Having analysed the Battle of Jadotville, the Independent Review Group believes that by the evening of 9 September 1961, 'A' Company's mission to protect the white population of Jadotville was redundant. Writing to Capt Liam Donnelly in 1993, Comdt Pat Quinlan remembered:

My recollection of your journey to Elisabethville on 9 September is that I sent you specially to explain our predicament and the hopelessness of our position at Jadotville to Lt Col McNamee, and to Cruise O'Brien – if possible, and to pass on my strong recommendation that 'A' Company be withdrawn as our stated mission was a complete misrepresentation of the true situation. The white people whom we were supposed to defend were openly hostile to UN. If the Company was not to withdraw, a new mission with strong reinforcements was necessary.<sup>5</sup>

Capt Liam Donnelly, who was the platoon commander of 'A' Company's Support Platoon, and who had gone to great lengths to get Comdt Quinlan's message through to the command structure

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<sup>4</sup> GRO 10/1967.

<sup>5</sup> Comdt Liam Donnelly private papers, Lt Col Quinlan to Comdt Donnelly, 20 January 1993.



in Elisabethville, advised the Chief of Staff in December 1996: ‘the lack of direction, information and material support from higher authority was difficult to fathom’.<sup>6</sup>

In preparation for imminent hostile attacks from the Katangese Gendarmerie, ‘A’ Company prepared defence positions at their allocated accommodation. Following the commencement of the battle, the initial defence positions of No 1 Platoon were vacated, and the personnel withdrew to new positions enabling the consolidation of the company’s defence posture, which reflected a perimeter defence scheme of manoeuvre and defensive fires.

As recorded in Chapter 6: ‘The performance and endurance under fire by personnel of ‘A’ Company, along with their weapons handling and tactical ability, confirms that ‘A’ Company was a well led, mature and cohesive fighting force, born out of service, training and experience, under the leadership of Comdt Pat Quinlan, supported by CS Jack Prendergast, the platoon commanders, platoon sergeants and chaplain’.

The military doctrine associated with perimeter defence offers missions such as the defence of key terrain, or defence of an installation.<sup>7</sup> However, on 13 September, ‘A’ Company’s mission, objectives and desired end state in Jadotville had radically changed. Its mission was now one of survival, and avoiding unnecessary casualties and loss of life. Comdt Quinlan’s focus was primarily on force protection in order to minimise the vulnerability of personnel and equipment, together with defensive fires which successfully halted and repulsed the attacking Gendarmerie.

On account of the planning, direction and execution of the defence, this moral and commendable restated mission was fully achieved by ‘A’ Company under Comdt Quinlan’s command. From a strength of 156 personnel, only five were wounded in action. Of greater significance, despite being in combat from 13 through 17 September, no one from ‘A’ Company was killed in action.

### ***Complimentary Messages – Battle of Jadotville***

Reference: Chapter 6, Re-examining the Operational Environment, encompassing the Battle of Jadotville.

On 14 September, headquartered in Elisabethville, the Commander of Katanga Command, Brig K.A.S. Raja telexed the Force Commander Lt Gen Seán MacEoin, headquartered in Leopoldville, of his ‘horror’ at hearing of an air attack in Jadotville; adding that ‘A’ Company was also mortared, Brig Raja continued they were ‘holding out gallantly’.<sup>8</sup>

At 0635hrs on 16 September, the following message was received by Comdt Pat Quinlan from Lt Gen Seán MacEoin: ‘We all here admire and commend you and your men on your gallant stand. The whole UN Force, our own people, and in fact the world are watching the outcome of your brave efforts. Inform all men under your command go bfuil cabhair ag teacht go luath, and that you have already earned yourselves the name of heroes’.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Comdt Liam Donnelly, ‘Congo – 1961: submission to the Chief of Staff (1996).

<sup>7</sup> It is noteworthy that in the presentation made by the Military College on Perimeter Defence, and in the Doctrinal Manuals and Handbooks the IRG was provided with, the minimum force used in such operations was a battalion.

<sup>8</sup> UNA, S/840/3/4, Brig Raja to Lt Gen MacEoin, 1545, 14 September 1961.

<sup>9</sup> UNA, S/840/2/7, Lt Gen MacEoin to Brig Raja and Lt Col McNamee, no time noted, 15 September 1961.

Responding at 0645hrs on 16 September in a message to HQ 35 Inf Bn, Comdt Pat Quinlan stated: ‘Many thanks to Force Commander for msg. Seasfamid go dtí an fear deireanach, ach chuir an cabhair anocht agus go láidir. Cuir uisce’.

At 0900hrs on 16 September, Col Joseph P. Emphy, OC Western Command passed a message through HQ ONUC to Comdt Quinlan stating that he was ‘proud of your gallant stand. You are constantly in our prayers’.<sup>10</sup>

At 1930hrs on 16 September, Comdt Pat Quinlan advised HQ 35 Inf Bn that during the afternoon he had negotiated a ceasefire with the mayor of Jadotville, after the mayor had requested a ceasefire. This would enable the resupply of ‘A’ Company with food and water. He added ‘we have NOT, repeat NOT surrendered.’<sup>11</sup> Lt Col Hugh McNamee replied ‘Comhgairdeas Pat’.<sup>12</sup>

At 1830hrs on 17 September, Lt Gen Seán MacEoin reported from Elisabethville that

it now appears the garrison at Jadotville has been overwhelmed by vastly superior forces. I shall tell you about casualties later ... we have very little information as to what exactly has taken place since 1400 hrs yesterday, but it would appear that the Coy has been hopelessly outnumbered. ... the Coy has acquitted itself well during the week in a difficult situation.<sup>13</sup>

Recorded by Comdt Edward Condon, Adjutant 35 Inf Bn: ‘You did well. You have earned every military honour. Every blessing on you all.’<sup>14</sup>

### ***Surrender Incidents – 35 Inf Bn – 13 & 14 September***

In addition to ‘A’ Company’s surrender in Jadotville on 18 September, two other surrenders took place in the 35 Inf Bn:

- On 13 September, an element under the command of Lt Thomas Ryan occupied Radio College during Operation Morthor. The personnel were surrounded by Katangese Gendarmerie, who subsequently took over the position.
- On 14 September, a patrol under the command of Comdt Pat Cahalane departed HQ 35 Inf Bn for Radio College, was ambushed and subsequently surrendered to the Gendarmerie. Cpl Michael Nolan RIP and Tpr Pat Mullins RIP were on this patrol.
- Both elements were held in captivity with ‘A’ Company and were released on 25 October.

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<sup>10</sup> UNA, S/840/2/7, (FC 540) Lt Gen MacEoin to Lt Col McNamee, 16 September 1961.

<sup>11</sup> Comdt Quinlan to Lt Col McNamee, 1930, 16 September 1961, quoted in Rose Doyle with Leo Quinlan, *Heroes of Jadotville. The soldier's story* (Dublin, 2006), p. 129.

<sup>12</sup> MA, ACC, 2016/24, ‘A’ Company radio log.

<sup>13</sup> NAI, DT S161371/61, GIB press release, 2150, 17 Sept. 1961.

<sup>14</sup> Rose Doyle with Leo Quinlan, *Heroes of Jadotville. The soldier's story* (Dublin, 2006), p. 151. Comdt Condon was a close friend of Comdt Pat Quinlan.

### ***Surrender – ‘A’ Company – 17 September***

Reference: Chapter 6, Re-examining the Operational Environment, encompassing the Battle of Jadotville.

In fixed defensive operations such as the Battle of Jadotville, the term ‘culmination’ refers to that point in time and space, where the defender (‘A’ Company) has either successfully denied the enemy his objective, or no longer has the capability to defend successfully.

For the defending UN company commander in Jadotville, knowing and accepting that he no longer has the ability to defend his position, and the need to avoid unnecessary loss of life, required audacious decision-making by Comdt Pat Quinlan, irrespective of the political, diplomatic, or military objectives and end-state.

On 17 September, with limited freedom of movement, an acute shortage of ammunition, food and water, coupled with mental and physical fatigue, and with no chance of reinforcement and resupply, ‘A’ Company had reached its decisive culmination point. Its combat power ratio to that of the Katangese Gendarmerie had dropped below that required for the continued conduct of its defensive posture. As such, ‘A’ Company’s redefined survival mission could no longer be achieved. ‘A’ Company had arrived at its tactical culmination point: it no longer had the capability to defend successfully.

With the collapse of the negotiated ceasefire, a surrender was a military and moral necessity. It was the only feasible course of action. As the tactical commander in the field, 80 miles from his battalion headquarters, the surrender achieved Comdt Pat Quinlan’s desired outcome and end-state, on his favourable terms.

However, during the course of a voice conversation at 0745hrs on 15 September, Comdt Pat Quinlan was ordered by Lt Col Hugh McNamee ‘NOT to surrender unless instructed from here. ‘A’ Coy said they would hold out’.<sup>15</sup> The Independent Review Group has noted that this specific conversation is recorded in the Battalion’s radio log, yet the conversation is not included in ‘A’ Company’s radio log which was transcribed during captivity.

Between 0745hrs on 15 September and 2000hrs on 17 September, despite discussing the imminent surrender with his officers, there is no record of Comdt Pat Quinlan seeking permission from HQ 35 Inf Bn to enter into a surrender, or reporting when he actually signed surrender documents, in the Battalion Unit Journal, the Battalion Radio Log, ‘A’ Company’s Radio Log, or Annex B of the Unit History.

It was not until 2000hrs on 17 September that the first recorded message of the surrender was sent by ‘A’ Company to HQ 35 Inf Bn: ‘I have surrendered honourably to Munongo. We keep our arms in the hotel. I regret this was necessary’.<sup>16</sup> Comdt Pat Quinlan recorded in the Unit History

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<sup>15</sup> MA, box, ‘Jadotville Medals Queries’, 35 Inf Bn radio log, 0745hrs, 15 September 1961.

<sup>16</sup> MA, box, ‘Jadotville Medals Queries’, 35 Inf Bn radio log, entry for 2000hrs, 17 September 1961.

that ‘We decided at this stage that the only road open to us was to accept this surrender further action would have resulted in the complete annihilation of our men’.<sup>17</sup>

At 2120hrs, Comdt Pat Quinlan advised HQ 35 Inf Bn that ‘A’ Company are remaining in Jadotville with a combined guard of company personnel and Gendarmerie. Referring to the surrender, he implied that it was a ‘cause of heartbreak’ for him, and that there was no other option except ‘death by fighting or disease’. Comdt Pat Quinlan also requested information on the political and military situation.<sup>18</sup>

Later at 2226hrs on 17 September, HQ 35 Inf Bn advised ‘A’ Company that it had sent information to Sector B regarding the ‘géilleadh’ [surrender], and praised all company personnel for the ‘seaseamh glórmhar a dhein tú [glorious stand they did]’<sup>19</sup>

Leading up to the act of surrender, the leadership, risk management, decisiveness and professional judgement of Comdt Pat Quinlan, reflected that which would be expected from an officer of higher rank. This tactical sound decision to surrender, in a complex and uncertain violent environment, required strength of will, humanity, and moral courage from Comdt Pat Quinlan. Comdt Pat Quinlan placed the lives of his men, and the needs and aspirations of their families, before the advancement of his military career.

In the context of United Nations peacekeeping, the surrender decision ended brutal hostilities, which had resulted in significant Katangese Gendarmerie casualties from lethal force effected in self-defence by personnel of ‘A’ Company. Given Comdt Pat Quinlan’s force protection objective, the surrender must be viewed as ‘mission accomplishment’. The surrender enabled the company commander to conduct follow-on peacekeeping operations with all of his personnel on release from captivity, and to return to Ireland with all of his personnel, the latter being a noble and principled objective.

Nevertheless, not all officers and enlisted personnel of ‘A’ Company were in agreement with the surrender decision.<sup>20</sup> A view shared by some in Elisabethville and in Dublin.

The misinterpretation of the decision by some members of the Defence Forces had lasting adverse effects for all personnel of ‘A’ Company, including Comdt Pat Quinlan, when they were released from captivity on 25 October, and, in particular, from their return to Ireland in December 1961, which many still experience in 2021. This matter is covered in detail in Chapter 11: Seeking Recognition for ‘A’ Company 1968 – 2020.

### ***Section 124 Defence Act 1954***

In September 1961, Section 124 of the Defence Act 1954, prescribed for capital offences by commanders when in action. One such offence was ‘when capable of making a successful defence surrenders ... his unit to the enemy’. It is reasonable to propose a supposition that by 17 September, ‘A’ Company was no longer in a position to make ‘a successful defence’ in Jadotville.

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<sup>17</sup> MA, 35 Inf Bn Unit History, Annex B, para 32, p. 7.

<sup>18</sup> MA, box, ‘Jadotville Medals Queries’, 35 Inf Bn radio log, entry for 21200hrs, 17 September 1961.

<sup>19</sup> MA, box, ‘Jadotville Medals Queries’, 35 Inf Bn radio log, 15 September. 1961. Recorded in ‘A’ Company radio log as 2226hrs, received at 2325hrs.

<sup>20</sup> A point made strongly to the IRG by many interviewees.

### ***Courts of Inquiry***

A Court of Inquiry was not convened by OC 35 Inf Bn in the aftermath of the Battle of Jadotville. Likewise, Courts of Inquiry were not convened following the death of Tpr Edward Gaffney on 13 September, and Cpl Michael Nolan and Tpr Pat Mullins on 15 September.<sup>21</sup> Tpr Mullins was initially posted as Missing in Action presumed dead. If a Court of Inquiry was held in respect of the Battle of Jadotville, along with its associated wider issues, it is highly likely that associated issues would have been resolved in 1961 / 1962.

### ***Captivity – 18 September to 25 October 1961***

Reference: Chapter 6, Re-examining the Operational Environment and the Battle of Jadotville.

After decommissioning their weapons, at 1000hrs on 18 September 1961, the 156 personnel of ‘A’ Company were bussed into Jadotville. They paraded through the town. Comdt Pat Quinlan had the men look their best, to show ‘we might have run out of ammunition but there was a bit of fight left in us.’<sup>22</sup>

As conveyed to the Independent Review Group, for many ‘A’ Company personnel, the experience of captivity, with its constant uncertainty as to what the future would bring, and uncertainty regarding the intentions of the Katangese, was as bad, if not worse, than the experience of combat.

Personnel were kept occupied with PT, lectures, discussions, ‘question-time’ and indoor games. ‘A’ Company was not permitted to drill or practice unarmed combat, and had limited facilities for outdoor games.

On 23 September, personnel of ‘A’ Company were joined by twenty-five 35 Inf Bn personnel, including Comdt Cahalane and Lt Ryan, and six Italians who were taken in Elisabethville. Comdt Pat Quinlan was the ranking senior officer in captivity. The 187 UN personnel in captivity were transferred to Kolwezi on 11 October. On 15 October, the six Italians were released. ‘A’ Company, together with the other twenty-five Irish personnel, were released in Elisabethville on 25 October. They were received by Lt Col Hugh McNamee, the Battalion Staff, and a Guard of Honour drawn from HQ Company and ‘B’ Company, 35 Inf Bn.

Whereas they had an understanding of the Geneva Conventions, yet never expecting to be held in captivity, Comdt Quinlan, and the officers and NCOs of ‘A’ Company, received no formal training or education to endure and survive the uncertainty, fear, boredom and stress of captivity.

In accordance with the Law of Armed Conflict, as the senior officer in captivity, Comdt Pat Quinlan liaised with Dr Hoffman of the International Committee of the Red Cross to protect the lives and dignity of his men, and ensure the provision of acceptable standards of accommodation, food, welfare, and medical and hygiene care. When visited by President Tshombe, as the ranking officer in captivity, Comdt Pat Quinlan ‘protested very vigorously against the breaking of not only the verbal promises, but also the written guarantees of the surrender’.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> All three ‘killed in action’.

<sup>22</sup> Pte Tom Gunn, interview with IRG, 28 January 2021.

<sup>23</sup> MA, Unit History, 35 Inf Bn Annex B, p. 9.

Mastering the unpredictable nature of captivity, understanding the culture and objectives of the guards, managing time, developing daily routine including exercises and entertainment, and minimising depression, all required senior level leadership in an uncharted environment from Comdt Pat Quinlan.

Deprived of their liberty for thirty-eight days, enduring unfavourable conditions, which included violence, intimidation and reprisals, Comdt Pat Quinlan established the required conditions for the maintenance of morale of the individual peacekeeper and the esprit de corps of not only the personnel of 'A' Company but all 187 UN personnel in captivity. Communications with families in Ireland were restored, and recorded and written messages were passed back and forth from Katanga.

When released in Elisabethville on 25 October the retention of 'A' Company's cohesion and esprit de corps in captivity enabled it to transition to a fully operational company with its capabilities maintained. The company fully reintegrated into the 35 Inf Bn, and became readily deployable for peacekeeping duties in Elisabethville. In December, 'A' Company took an active combat role in Operational Unokat.

During Operation Unokat, 'A' Company personnel were in action clearing the route to the old airport in Elisabethville and during the Battle of the Tunnel. Comdt Pat Quinlan led a successful 'commando-style' raid on the Socopetrol oil storage depot, his men destroying the facility with anti-tank weapons, and leaving the storage tanks burning for days.

### ***Comdt Quinlan's Report to the Force Commander***

Comdt Pat Quinlan's report dated 25 October 1961, on 'A' Company's operations and experiences in Jadotville from their departure from Elisabethville on 3 September 1961 to their release from captivity on 25 October 1961, was submitted in person to Lt Gen Seán MacEoin.<sup>24</sup> According to Comdt Pat Quinlan, the report was written 'from memory in Leopoldville' when he and Lt Col McNamee were meeting Lt Gen MacEoin. This report was later included, with no changes in substance, as Annex B on the Battle of Jadotville in the 35 Inf Bn's Unit History<sup>25</sup>.

### ***Letter from Brig Raja, HQ Katanga Command***

Brig Raja spoke highly of Lt Col McNamee and Comdt Quinlan. The letter dated 2 December 1961 and reproduced in chapter 6, praising both officers, which Brig Raja sent to Lt Gen MacEoin, was in reality a polite compliment and not the basis of an award for Comdt Quinlan as many have later argued.

### ***Service Record***

The Independent Review Group has noted the documents in Comdt Quinlan's service record, held in Military Archives, Cathal Brugha Barracks, referring to his service with the 35 Inf Bn.

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<sup>24</sup> MA, OS, ONUC, 35INFBN, 3/5, Comdt Pat Quinlan to Lt Gen Seán MacEoin, 31 October 1961.

<sup>25</sup> MA. Unit History 35 Inf Bn.



***Recommendations for Awards – 35 Inf Bn***

Reference: Chapter 9, 1962 Medals Board Process.

The 35 Inf Bn's Unit History stated that recommendations for awards of recognition were made in February 1962 in the following classes:

- Award of Bonn Míleata Calmachta: 6 Officers, 11 NCOs and 5 Privates: 22.
- Recognition of Meritorious Service: 8 Officers 16 NCOs and 19 Privates: 43.
- Promotions: 5 NCOs and 3 Privates: 8.

The Independent Review Group has not discovered any documents initiating a case for an award in respect of Comdt Pat Quinlan.

***Press Statement – 23 December 1961***

Comdt Pat Quinlan explained to journalists on his return to Ireland that in Jadotville he and his men were surrounded had no water and would be massacred if they did not fall in with Katangese demands made by Interior Minister Godefroid Munongo. Comdt Quinlan emphasised to journalists when asked about the surrender that he 'would never like to feel the same way again. It was the first time, perhaps, that an Irish officer was faced with such responsibility and such a decision but under the circumstances it was the only one to take as the alternative facing me was the massacre of my men.'<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> *Irish Independent*, 23 December 1961.

## Chapter 13

# Independent Review Group's Recommendations

### Introduction

In accordance with its Terms of Reference, the Independent Review Group 'may make recommendations in relation to possible awards in respect of Jadotville'.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, resulting from the large spectrum of its work, especially its interface with veterans and veterans' families, the Independent Review Group is offering nineteen recommendations which emerge from its research, analysis and conclusions, under the following five headings:

- Veterans' Affairs,
- Military History: UN Operations,
- 1961, 1962, 1965 Medals Boards,
- Medal Awards 2021: 'A' Company, 35 Infantry Battalion, and
- Defence Forces Medals Process: 2021.

### Veterans' Affairs

#### 1. *Trauma Management: 2021*

During its consultation process the Independent Review Group spoke with veterans and family members about the psychological and emotional impact on their lives as a result of service in Katanga. The Independent Review Group has a limited understanding of trauma management, and it recognises that some veterans experienced little adverse effects as a result. However, it also became aware that many veterans and family members were deeply affected by the experience. This experience continues for many of them.

Aware of the duty of care owed to those it interviewed, the Independent Review Group strongly recommends that:

- The Defence Forces should now engage with ONUC veterans, focussing initially on those who served with the 35 Infantry Battalion and 1 Infantry Group, to identify, to offer, and to arrange support to those requiring it.

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<sup>1</sup> Annex A, IRG Report.

- The Defence Forces should review, with a view to expanding, its Mental Health and Well-being Strategy to support the wider Defence Community of serving personnel, veterans, and their families.
- Both the Department of Defence and the Defence Forces should enhance their financial and material support for Veterans' Centres and Drop-in Centres operating under the auspices of the Organisation of National Ex-Service Personnel (ONE) and the Irish United Nations Veterans' Association (IUNVA).
- In order to refer personnel for appropriate treatment on retirement or on transition to civilian employment, the Defence Forces should endeavour to identify personnel who may be susceptible to mental health issues attributable to military service, arising from experiences or actions on operational deployments, in training environments, or on disaster and humanitarian operations.

2. ***Commissioner for Veterans' Affairs***

The Independent Review Group recommends that the Government appoints a Commissioner for Veterans' Affairs, who through a statutory office of veterans' affairs and a Defence Forces Covenant, would act as an 'ambassador' for veterans. The Commissioner should coordinate veteran support across government departments and local authorities, should enhance collaboration between recognised veterans' associations, should provide transition support for retirees (including advice on disability pensions), and should provide much needed advice, assistance and support to veterans and their families.

3. ***Honouring Family Support 1961: Plaque in Custume Barracks***

In recognition of the role of parents, wives and families residing in Athlone, Galway, Mullingar and elsewhere during the Battle of Jadotville and the subsequent period in captivity, the Independent Review Group strongly recommends that a plaque in their honour be affixed to the memorial honouring personnel of 'A' Company, 35 Infantry Battalion in Custume Barracks, Athlone.

4. ***60th Anniversary: September 2021***

The Independent Review Group recommends that the 60th Anniversary of Jadotville should be a State-led event, focussing on veterans and veterans' families, placing them at the centre of the ceremony, which should be an all-inclusive military ceremony encompassing Jadotville, Elisabethville and Kamina.

## **Military History: UN Operations**

5. ***Authoritative and Systematic Study***

The Defence Forces should undertake an authoritative and systematic study of its involvement in the major peace support operations, beginning with the Congo, with a view to using these for research, instructional and educational purposes in the Military College, in the other Defence Forces' training institutions, and throughout the Defence Forces itself.

6. ***Official Histories of Defence Forces Operations***

Based on its experiences researching the Defence Forces involvement in Katanga in 1961, including Elisabethville, Jadotville and Kamina, the Independent Review Group recommends that the Defence Forces undertakes a series of reference publications covering major deployments and operations at home and overseas.

## **1961, 1962, 1965 Medals Boards**

7. ***Medals Boards***

Having analysed the material in Military Archives from the 1961, 1962 and 1965 Medals Boards, examined the processes conducted by these three Medals Boards, and its review of the provisions of DFR A5 Courts of Inquiry, DFR A19 (1948), DFR A19 (1965),<sup>2</sup> DFR A9 (New Series) (2001) and Rules of Procedure, the Independent Review Group is strongly of the view that there is no merit in reopening the recommendations of the 1961, 1962 and 1965 Medals Boards.

Accordingly, the Independent Review Group recommends that the deliberations, findings and recommendations of the 1961, 1962 and 1965 Medals Boards should not be reopened.

8. ***'A' Company Personnel Recommended for an award in 1961 (33)***

Grounded on its:

- analysis of the Battle of Jadotville and events encompassing Jadotville,
- coupled with information conveyed by veterans and families during interviews,
- the contents of Chapter 9: 1962 Medals Board and Chapter 10: 1965 Medals Board,
- and following extensive research, no new primary source evidence was identified which, along with the relevant 1961 witness statements, would lead to a robust prima facie case for the consideration of a recommendation for a medal,

excluding Lt T. Quinlan, Sgt W. Hegarty and Pte J. Freery who were awarded a Distinguished Service Medal, the Independent Review Group recommends that none of the other thirty-three members<sup>3</sup> of 'A' Company 35 Infantry Battalion, who were previously the subject of a recommendation for an award in respect of Jadotville, should be reconsidered for a recommendation for a medal.

## **Medal Awards: 2021 'A' Company 35 Infantry Battalion**

9. ***'A' Company personnel not recommended for an award in 1962 (123)***

Based on its:

- analysis of the Battle of Jadotville and events encompassing Jadotville,
- coupled with information conveyed by veterans and veterans' families during interviews,

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<sup>2</sup> The reprinted version of DFR A19 (Medals and Awards) promulgated in 1965, incorporated all amendments issued since 1948.

<sup>3</sup> Includes Cpl William Allen, Cpl Francis Williams and Pte Matthew Quinlan who in 1962 were recommended for promotion, and not for the consideration of a recommendation for a medal.

- the contents of Chapter 9: 1962 Medals Board and Chapter 10: 1965 Medals Board,
- and following extensive research and analysis no primary source evidence was identified which would lead to a robust prima facie case for the consideration of a recommendation for a medal,

the Independent Review Group recommends that, with the exception of Comdt Pat Quinlan, none of the remaining 123 individuals of 'A' Company, 35 Infantry Battalion who were not previously the subject of a recommendation for an award in respect of Jadotville, should be considered for a recommendation for a medal.

10. ***Prima Facie Case***

The Independent Review Group recommends that since a prima facie case now exists, a medal process be initiated, without delay, for the consideration of a recommendation of a posthumous award of the Distinguished Service Medal for Comdt Pat Quinlan.

11. ***Honouring 'A' Company***

The Independent Review Group recommends that Comdt Pat Quinlan's case should focus on the activities of 'A' Company under his leadership as company commander, reflecting comparable cases of Distinguished Service Medals awarded to company and troop commanders who served in ONUC.

12. ***Not establishing a precedent***

Since the unique political, diplomatic and military environment associated with the Battle of Jadotville, and events encompassing Jadotville in 1961, amounts to 'extreme circumstances', the Independent Review Group recommends that Comdt Pat Quinlan's case should not be seen as a precedent for initiating retrospective awards in the Defence Forces.

13. ***Unique, exceptional once-off case***

The Independent Review Group recommends that the Defence Forces Regulation in the yearly series should include the necessary provisions not only to initiate an award process, but also to ensure that Comdt Quinlan's case is seen as a unique, exceptional, and once-off case.

## **Defence Forces Medals Process: 2021**

14. ***Strategic Review***

The Defence Forces should review the system of awarding medals to ensure its regulations and administrative instructions provide for a clear, coherent and comprehensive awards system that is overseen by an appropriate, independent, permanent Medals Award body that will bring oversight, accountability, objectivity, and transparency to it. This is essential to ensure the integrity and credibility of the medals awards system is maintained and protected.

15. ***Award of Medals***

The Defence Forces should ensure the decision to award a medal is based solely on the recommendation and supportive evidence made for it to a Medals Board. The Medals Board's decision should not be influenced by the number of cases before it, or by considerations such as regional or sector balance in the distribution of awards.

16. ***Existing Medal Citations***

The existing citations linked to the award of a medal should be reviewed, with a view to adding clarity and relevant information for each citation. The text of citations and details of the actions for which they were awarded should be placed in the public domain by the Defence Forces.

17. ***An Bonn Jadotville***

The integrity and status of An Bonn Jadotville should be retained. An Bonn Jadotville should be afforded due respect in recognition of the actions of 'A' Company while serving with ONUC in Jadotville, September 1961.

18. ***Regulatory Basis: Unit Citation***

The status of the Unit Citations should be clarified through the provision of a regulatory basis.

19. ***Committee System***

The concept of a military committee system for awarding medals to remove it from the control of the regulations governing Rules of Procedure and Courts of Inquiry should be examined.





## Annex A

# TERMS OF REFERENCE



Óglaigh  
na hÉireann  
IRISH DEFENCE FORCES

Óglaigh na hÉireann  
Chief of Staff  
Vice Admiral Mark Mallott (DSM)



17 December 2020

### Independent Review Group Members

#### TERMS OF REFERENCE INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF AWARDS - JADOTVILLE

#### References:

- A. DFR A9 (New Series) Dress and Medals.
- B. Letter from COS to Minister for Defence on Jadotville Medal Awards, 10 November 2020.

#### BACKGROUND

1. The Battle of Jadotville, which took place from 13 to 17 September 1961 was a Coy level Perimeter Defence operation involving A Coy, 35 Inf Bn ONUC (Opération des Nations Unies au Congo). The defensive operation was highly significant, during a period of intense operational activity over a number of months. In recent times the issue of the proposed award of medals in relation to this operation has been raised in a number of fora. On foot of advice to the Minister in accordance with Ref B, an independent expert review of the entire case and associated evidence available will be conducted by a Review Group.

#### COMPOSITION

2. The Review Group will consist of the following members:
  - a. Brigadier-General Paul Pakenham (Retired) (Group Chairperson).
  - b. Dr Michael Kennedy, Royal Irish Academy.
  - c. Commandant Billy Campbell (Retired).
  - d. RSM Michael Dillon (Retired).
  - e. Ms Linda Hickey, Military Archives.

#### ASSEMBLY

3. The group will assemble in **Military Archives, Cathal Brugha Bks at 1000hrs on the 07 January 2021**, and thereafter as directed by the Review Group Chairperson.

#### TERMS OF REFERENCE

4. In the course of the independent review in respect of military medals in relation to the 'Battle of Jadotville' from 13 to 17 September 1961, the Independent Review Group will examine, report and make recommendations as required by the following Terms of Reference (TORs):



Óglaigh na hÉireann, Office of the Chief of Staff  
Cathal Brugha Bks, Óglaigh na hÉireann, Ballharán Stáisiún, Droichead Nua, Contae Chill Dara, W12 AD93, Éire  
Defence Forces Headquarters, Station Road, Newbridge, Co. Kildare, W12 AD93, Ireland

[www.military.ie](http://www.military.ie)



Óglaigh  
na hÉireann  
IRISH DEFENCE FORCES

STRENGTHEN  
THE NATION

- a. The Review Group will consider ONUC's operational environment in Katanga, and in particular in Elizabethville and Jadotville.
  - b. The Review Group will consider the historical evidence and processes in relation to all recommendations for military medals received with respect to the events at Jadotville or encompassing Jadotville.
  - c. The Review Group will engage with national and international stakeholders (including Jadotville veterans) as appropriate, with a view to uncovering any additional or new evidence in this case.
  - d. The Review Group may consider the actions of individuals not already the subject of a recommendation for a medal in respect of Jadotville.
  - e. The Review Group will report its findings to the Chief of Staff. The Review Group may make recommendations in relation to possible awards in respect of Jadotville.
5. Legal counsel will be made available to support the work of the group as required.
  6. The Review Group will submit interim reports as deemed necessary to the Chief of Staff, with a final report to be submitted not later than 31 March 2021.

Signed this 18<sup>th</sup> day of December 2020 at Defence Force Headquarters.

**MARK MELLETT**  
**VICE ADMIRAL**  
**CHIEF OF STAFF**



Óifig an Chéim Foirne, Office of the Chief of Staff  
Ceanchoisir Oiglaigh na hÉireann, Bóthar an Stáisiún, Geoghead Nua, Cosán Chill Dara, W12 AD93, Éire  
Defence Forces Headquarters, Bowen Road, Newbridge, Co. Kildare, W12 AD93, Ireland

[www.military.ie](http://www.military.ie)

## Annex B

# BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Primary sources

#### Ireland

##### *Interviews with veterans of 'A' Company 35 Inf Bn*

808554 Pte Leo Boland (No 3 Pl) [Cpl]	808552 Pte William Keane (Coy HQ) [Cpl]
O. 7767 Lt Noel Carey (No 3 Pl) [Capt]	810865 Pte Paul Malone (Sp Pl)
810219 Pte Charlie Cooley (No 1 Pl)	808261 Pte Frank McManus (No 3 Pl) [Sgt]
810800 Pte John Dreelan (Coy HQ - Medic)	808117 Pte Joe O'Kane (Sp Pl) [Cpl]
804685 Pte Michael Dunne (Coy HQ-Armourer) [Sgt]	809174 Pte John Shanagher (No 1 Pl) [Cpl]
810143 Pte Thomas Flynn (Sp Pl)	809693 Pte Noel Stanley (No 1 Pl) [Sgt]
810428 Cpl Sean Foley (No 3 Pl)	810567 Pte James Tahaney (Sp Pl)
832073 Pte John Gorman (No 1 Pl) [Cpl]	810383 Cpl Sean Tiernan (No 2 Pl)
809385 Pte Michael Greene (Wpns Pl)	809014 Pte Michael Tighe (No 2 Pl) [CQMS]
800068 Pte Tom Gunn (No 3 Pl) [Cpl]	810264 Cpl Tadhg Quinn (Sp Pl)
807860 Pte Paddy Hogan (Sp Pl) [Sgt]	

##### *Interviews with veterans of 1 Inf Gp*

811160 Cpl Muiris de Barra (1 Inf Gp) [CQMS]

##### *Interviews with personnel 35 Inf Bn*

Brig Gen JJ Farrell (Pl Comdr 'B' Coy)	Sqn Sgt Dessie Keegan (Armd Car Gp)
Lt Col Seán Hennessy (Armd Car Gp)	Brig Gen Patrick Purcell (Sig Offr Bn HQ)

##### *Relatives of personnel 'A' Company 35 Inf Bn*

Geraldine Armstrong (New Zealand)	Daughter of Pte Gerald Hennelly
Veronica Boland	Daughter of Pte Leo Boland
Garry Boland	Son of Pte Leo Boland
Collette Byrne	Daughter of CQMS Patrick Neville
Stephan Byrne	Grandson of CQMS Patrick Neville
Comdt Aidan Donnelly (Retd)	Son of Capt Liam Donnelly
Andra Flynn (Australia)	Wife of Pte Thomas Flynn
BSM P.J. Higgins (Retd)	Nephew of Pte Joseph McGuinness
Elizabeth Hennelly (New Zealand)	Wife of Pte Gerald Hennelly
Mary Gilsenan	Daughter of Sgt Frank Gilsenan
John Greene (UK)	Son of Pte Michael Green
Grace Grouden	Daughter of Sgt Martin McCabe
Deborah Kerr:	Daughter of Cpl John Kerr
Kathleen Lafferty	Daughter of Cpl John McAnaney
Lt Cmdr John Leech (Retd)	Son of Lt Joseph Leech
Declan McCabe (USA)	Son of Sgt Martin McCabe
Sgt John McCarton (Retd)	Son of Tpr Patrick McCarton
Brig Gen Liam MacNamee (Retd)	Son of Lt Col Hugh McNamee
Niamh Malone	Daughter of Pte Francis Malone
Michaela Moody	Grandniece of Gnr Billy Keane
Maureen Molloy	Daughter of Pte Sean McEntee
Brendan Molloy	Son-in-Law of Pte Sean McEntee
Rosalinda Murphy	Daughter of Pte Joe Duff
Martin O'Connor (Australia)	Son of Sgt Thomas O'Connor
Joseph Prendergast	Son of BSM Jack Prendergast
Alice Quinlan	Sister of Pte Matthew Quinlan

*Independent Review Group - Jadotville*

Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd)	Son of Comdt Patrick Quinlan
Comdt Pat Quinlan (Retd)	Son of Comdt Patrick Quinlan
Patricia Redmond	Wife of Pte Jimmy Redmond
Jim Redmond	Son of Pte Jimmy Redmond
Joe Relihan (Retd)	Son of Cpl Joseph Relihan
Liam Roche (Scotland)	Son of Cpl Christopher Roche
John Sweeney	Son of Pte Bernard Sweeney
Comdt Danny Tiernan (Retd)	Son of Sgt George Tiernan
Tony Tahaney	Son of Pte James Tahaney
Nicola Toolan (UK)	Daughter of Pte Daniel Hegarty
Leo Williams	Son of Cpl Francis Williams
Michael Williams	Son of Cpl Francis Williams

*Defence Forces Headquarters*

Registry files

*Department of Defence*

Registry files

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'A' Administration Section files on medals and medals boards

Assistant Chief of Staff series files

Chief of Staff series files

Computer generated records

Jadotville relatives digital recording (1961)

Department of Defence

3/ Series

Jadotville Medals Queries

Medals Boards files

1961 Medals board

1962 Medals board

1965 Medals board

Files relating to subsequent boards

Overseas Collection

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- 1 Infantry Group
- 35 Infantry Battalion
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Unit Histories

- 1 Infantry Group
- 35 Infantry Battalion
- 36 Infantry Battalion

Private Collections

- Maj Gen Seán Collins-Powell (PC 16/1/83)
- Col Jim Condon papers (PC 346)
- Col Edward Doyle (PC 309)
- Col Joseph Emphy papers (PC 20161)
- Brig Gen James Flynn DSM (ACC 2016/24)
- Lt Gen Seán MacEoin DSM (PRCN 1/2 and sub parts)
- Brig Gen Patrick Purcell (PC 58)
- Col Pat Quinlan (PC 304)
- Comdt Pearse Wheatley (PRCN 73/1/7)

Service Records

- Officers and enlisted personnel files

Military Archives Oral History Project

- Comdt Art Magennis DSM (OHP/2)
- Lt Gen Gerry McMahan DSM (OHP/4) (OHP/5)
- Col Seán Norton DSM (OHP/3)
- Cpl Seamus McDermott (OHP/8)

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*Donegal Democrat*

*Irish Examiner*

*Irish Times*

*Leitrim Observer*

*Munster Express*

*Offaly Independent*

*Sunday Life*

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*Connaught Tribune*

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*The Kerryman*

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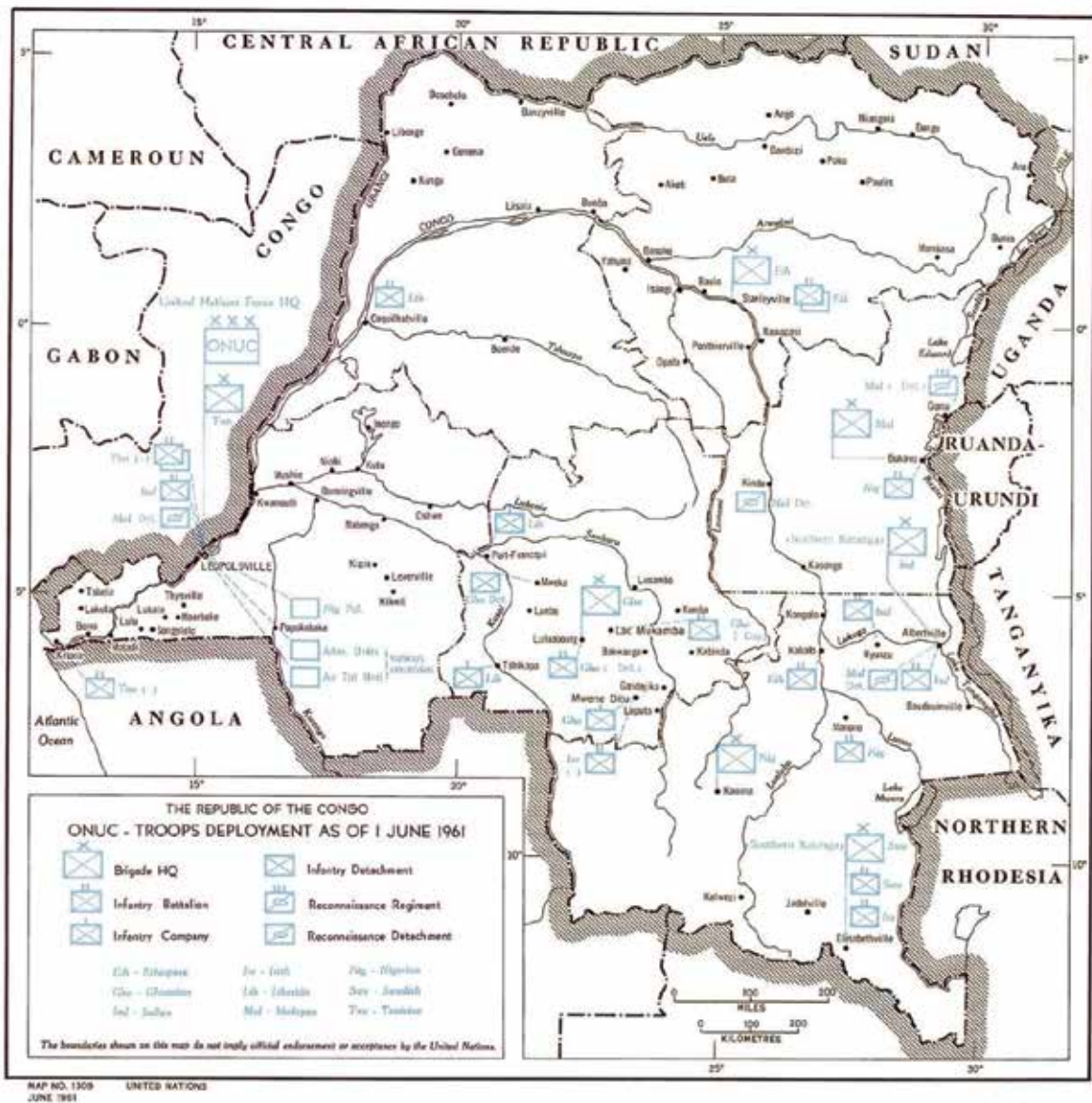
Annex C

MAPS



1: Congo and Ireland – a comparison



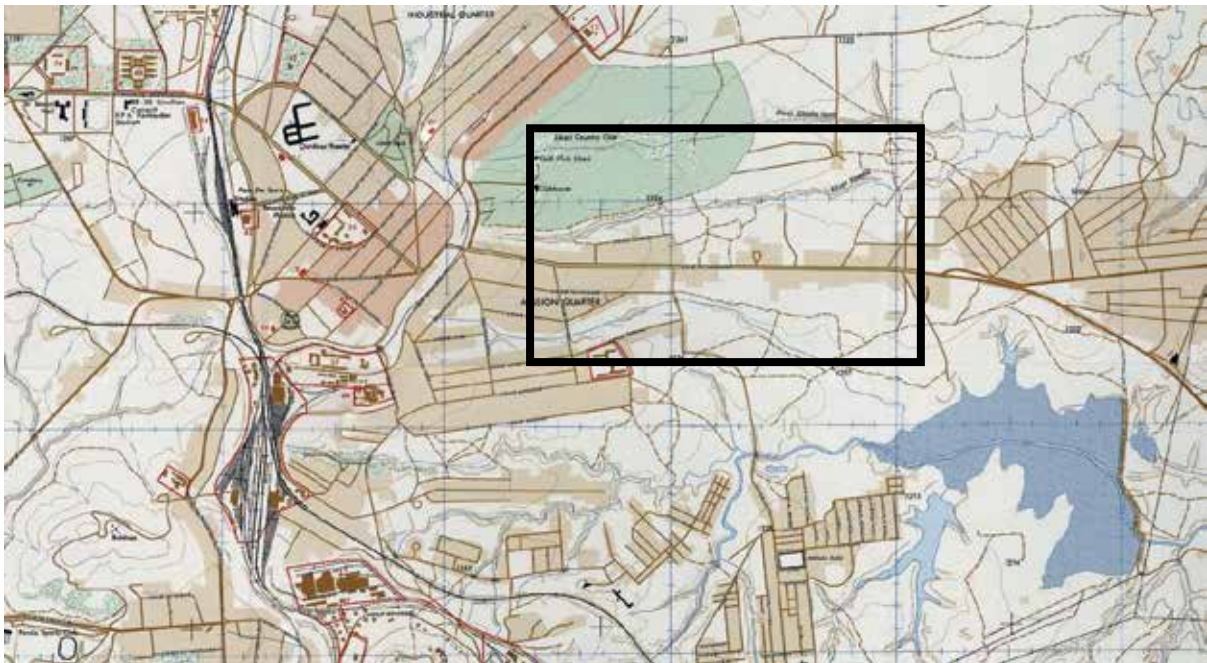


2: ONUC – deployment (1 June 1961) (United Nations)



3: Katanga (1962) (United Nations)





4A: Jadotville – detail from city map (oriented north), box shows A Coy's Area of Operations



4B: A Coy positions 13-17 September 1961. Positions based on a map by Lt Noel Carey held in Military Archives, Cathal Brugha Barracks, Dublin

(4A and 4B reproduced under licence: United States government ([https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:1980\\_Likasi\\_map\\_Zaire\\_txu-oclc-71752615.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:1980_Likasi_map_Zaire_txu-oclc-71752615.jpg)), "1980 Likasi map Zaire txu-oclc-71752615", Detail of eastern city limits of Jadotville, <https://creativecommons.org/publicdomain/zero/1.0/legalcode>).

Annex D1

**‘A’ Company Group 35 Inf Bn – Initial A Coy Recommendations (1961), 35 Inf Bn Recommendations (1962) and Final Awards (where made)**

No	Army No	Rank	Surname	First Name	Sub-Unit	Initial Recommendation From A Coy <sup>1</sup>	Lt Col McNamee’s Recommendation	Award
1	801545	Sgt	Hegarty	Walter	A Coy	Meritorious Service Medal / Medal <sup>2</sup>	Military Medal for Gallantry	DSM
2	73505	CS	Prendergast	Jack	A Coy	Medal	Military Medal for Gallantry	
3	94808	Sgt	Monaghan	John	A Coy	Medal	Military Medal for Gallantry	
4	810264	Cpl	Quinn	Tadhg	A Coy	Medal	Military Medal for Gallantry	
5	809687	Pte	Galvin	Michael	A Coy	Medal	Military Medal for Gallantry	
6	809650	Pte	Hennelly	Gerald	A Coy	Medal <sup>3</sup>	Military Medal for Gallantry	
7	O.7440	Capt	Donnelly	William	A Coy	Commendation	Recognition of Meritorious Service	
8	O.7767	Lt	Carey	W.N.	A Coy	Commendation	Recognition of Meritorious Service	
9	O.7645	Lt	Knightly	Kevin	Armd Car Gp	Commendation	Recognition of Meritorious Service	
10	O.7668	Lt	Quinlan	Thomas	A Coy	Commendation	Recognition of Meritorious Service	DSM
11	421402	Sgt	Kelly	Thomas	A Coy	Commendation	Recognition of Meritorious Service	
12	805649	Sgt	Rea	James	A Coy	Commendation	Recognition of Meritorious Service	
13	804723	Cpl	Lucey	James	Armd Car Gp	Commendation	Recognition of Meritorious Service	

<sup>1</sup> These recommendations were initiated by a number of officers and NCOs, see Chapter 9 above. It is not correct to call them ‘Comdt Quinlan’s recommendations’, although it is assumed they were submitted to HQ 35 Inf Bn for Lt Col McNamee’s approval.

<sup>2</sup> Sgt Hegarty was also recommended for an award by Lt Col Mortimer Buckley, OC 32 Inf Bn (MA, Medals Board, ‘A’ Admin Box 1, Lt Col Buckley to Adjutant-General, 27 February 1962).

<sup>3</sup> Not yet verified against service record as Pte Hennelly’s personal file has yet to be located.

No	Army No	Rank	Surname	First Name	Sub-Unit	Initial Recommendation From A Coy <sup>1</sup>	Lt Col McNamee's Recommendation	Award
14	98807	Cpl	McDonagh	John	A Coy	Commendation	Recognition of Meritorious Service	
15	94809	Cpl	McDonnell	Tom	A Coy	Commendation	Recognition of Meritorious Service	
16	810428	Cpl	Foley	John	A Coy	Meritorious Service <sup>4</sup>	Recognition of Meritorious Service	
17	808117	Pte	O'Kane	Joe	A Coy	Commendation	Recognition of Meritorious Service	
18	809016	Pte	Larkin	Robert	A Coy	Commendation	Recognition of Meritorious Service	
19	88511	Pte	McCormack	Michael	A Coy	Commendation	Recognition of Meritorious Service	
20	860048	Pte	Gunn	Tom	A Coy	Commendation	Recognition of Meritorious Service	
21	810219	Pte	Cooley	Charles	A Coy	Unknown <sup>5</sup>	Recognition of Meritorious Service	
22	809683	Pte	Brennan	Michael	A Coy	Commendation	Recognition of Meritorious Service	
23	809693	Pte	Stanley	Noel	A Coy	Commendation	Recognition of Meritorious Service	
24	810143	Pte	Flynn	Thomas	A Coy	Commendation	Recognition of Meritorious Service	
25	207463	Pte	O'Brien	Joseph	B Coy	Commendation <sup>6</sup>	Recognition of Meritorious Service	
26	81154	Cpl	Allen	William	A Coy	Promotion <sup>7</sup>	Promotion	
27	77210	Cpl	Williams	Francis	A Coy	Promotion	Promotion	
28	810997	Pte	Quinlan	Matthew	A Coy	Promotion	Promotion	
29	96739	Cpl	McManus	John	A Coy	Meritorious Service	Meritorious Service	
30	809014	Pte	Tighe	Michael	A Coy	Meritorious Service	Meritorious Service	

<sup>4</sup> Not yet verified against service record as Corporal Foley's personal file has yet to be located. Cpl Foley included the recommendation in his submission to the IRG.

<sup>5</sup> Not yet verified against service file as Private Cooley's personal file has yet to be located.

<sup>6</sup> On 10 September, Pte Joe O'Brien B Coy, volunteered to drive A Coy's saloon from Lufira Bridge to Jadotville and remained with A Coy.

<sup>7</sup> Cpl Allen was awarded a DSM 2nd Class in 1967 for service with the 38 Inf Bn.

*Independent Review Group - Jadotville*

<b>No</b>	<b>Army No</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Surname</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>Sub-Unit</b>	<b>Initial Recommendation From A Coy<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Lt Col McNamee's Recommendation</b>	<b>Award</b>
31	809856	Pte	Molloy	Daniel	A Coy	Meritorious Service	Meritorious Service	
32	810214	Pte	Nicell	James	A Coy	Meritorious Service	Meritorious Service	
33	809084	Pte	Feery	James	A Coy	Meritorious Service	Meritorious Service	DSM

Fr Joseph Fagan does not appear on this list as it is not clear by whom and for what award he was recommended for consideration. There are no relevant details on his service record. Fr Fagan was attached to 35 Inf Bn HQ and there is no evidence before the Independent Review Group to indicate whether he was nominated for award in this capacity or for his time attached to 'A' Company Group.

## Annex D.2

### 'Jadotville Medal List'<sup>1</sup>

#### 'Recommendations for Awards under DFR A10, A15, A19'

Names circulated from 2018 in support of award of medals. Columns A to E are the original list, columns F to H are comments added by IRG following analysis of the list.

(A) No	(B) Rank	(C) Name	(D) 'A' Coy Sub-Unit	(E) Parent Unit	(F) Actual recommendation from 'A' Company to OC 35 Inf Bn	(G) Actual recommendation for consideration by Lt Col McNamee to the Adjutant-General	(H) For action at
<b>'Recommendations for Military Medal for Gallantry' (6)</b>							
73505	Coy Sgt	Prendergast, Jack	Coy HQ	6 Bn	Medal	MMG	Jadotville
94808	Sgt	Monaghan, John	Sp Pl	6 Bn	Medal	MMG	Jadotville
801545	Sgt	Hegarty, Walter	2 Pl	1 Bn	Meritorious Service/Medal	MMG	Kamina, Jadotville, Elisabethville <sup>2</sup>
810264	Cpl	Quinn, Tadhg	Sp Pl	1 Bn	Medal	MMG	Jadotville
809650	Pte	Hennelly, Gerald	3 Pl	4 Fd Engr Coy	Medal	MMG	Jadotville
809687	Pte	Galvin, Michael	1 Pl	4 Fd Engr Coy	Medal	MMG	Jadotville <sup>3</sup>
<b>'Recommendations for 'DSM' (medal did not exist in 1961; no recommendations were made for it)' (34)</b>							
7440	Capt	Donnelly, Liam	Sp Pl	5 FAR	Commendation	Meritorious Service	Jadotville
7645	Lt	Knightly, Kevin	Cav Tp	Mot Sqn	Meritorious Service	Meritorious Service	Jadotville
7767	Lt	Carey, Noel	3 Pl	17 Bn	Commendation	Meritorious Service	Jadotville
7668	Lt	Quinlan, Tom	2 Pl	1 Bn	Commendation	Meritorious Service	Jadotville, Elisabethville <sup>4</sup>
<del>73505</del>	<del>Coy Sgt</del>	<del>Prendergast, Jack</del>	<del>Coy HQ</del>	<del>6 Bn</del>	N/A	For MMG alone	N/A
<del>94808</del>	<del>Sgt</del>	<del>Monaghan, John</del>	<del>Sp Pl</del>	<del>6 Bn</del>	N/A	For MMG alone	N/A
<del>801545</del>	<del>Sgt</del>	<del>Hegarty, Walter</del>	<del>2 Pl</del>	<del>1 Bn</del>	N/A	For MMG alone	N/A
421402	Sgt	Kelly, Tom	Sp Pl	6 Bn	Commendation	Meritorious Service	Jadotville
77210	Cpl	Williams, Frank	Coy HQ	Sigs	Promotion	Promotion	Jadotville
805649	Cpl	Rea, James	1 Pl	1 Bn	Commendation	Meritorious Service	Jadotville
804723	Cpl	Lucey, James	Cav Tp	Depot Cav	Commendation	Meritorious Service	Jadotville
94809	Cpl	McDonnell, Tom	Sp Pl	6 Bn	Commendation	Meritorious Service	Jadotville
810428	Cpl	Foley, John	3 Pl	1 Bn	Unknown	Meritorious Service	Jadotville

<sup>1</sup> A copy of this list was provided by Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd) to the IRG and the IRG discussed it in detail with Comdt Quinlan and his brother Comdt Pat Quinlan (Retd) on 12 February 2021.

<sup>2</sup> Awarded a DSM in 1967 for actions in Elisabethville and Jadotville.

<sup>3</sup> Name not on original list and added by IRG. Also communicated to Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd) and Comdt Pat Quinlan (Retd) at their 12 February 2021 meeting with the IRG.

<sup>4</sup> Awarded a DSM in 1967 for actions in Elisabethville and Jadotville.

98807	Cpl	McDonagh, John	3 Pl	1 Bn	Commendation	Meritorious Service	Jadotville
96739	Cpl	McManus, John	Sp Pl	MPC	Meritorious Service	Meritorious Service	Elisabethville
<del>810264</del>	<del>Cpl</del>	<del>Quinn, Tadhe</del>	<del>Sp Pl</del>	<del>4 Bn</del>	N/A	For MMG alone	N/A
<del>425332</del>	<del>Cpl</del>	<del>Lynch, Michael</del>	<del>3 Pl</del>	<del>6 Bn</del>	N/A	For 39 Inf Bn	N/A
808117	Pte	O'Kane, Joe	Sp Pl	6 Bn	Commendation	Meritorious Service	Jadotville
809016	Pte	Larkin, Robert	1 Pl	6 Bn	Commendation	Meritorious Service	Jadotville
80511	Pte	McCormack, Michael	1 Pl	4 S&T	Commendation	Meritorious Service	Jadotville
800068	Pte	Gunn, Tom	3 Pl	1 Bn	Commendation	Meritorious Service	Jadotville
810219	Pte	Cooley, Charles	1 Pl	1 Bn	Unknown	Meritorious Service	Unknown
810143	Pte	Flynn, Thomas	Sp Pl	1 Bn	Commendation	Meritorious Service	Jadotville
809014	Pte	Tighe, Michael	2 Pl	6 Bn	Meritorious Service	Meritorious Service	Jadotville, Elisabethville <sup>5</sup>
809854	Pte	Molloy, Daniel	Sp Pl	6 Bn	Meritorious Service	Meritorious Service	Elisabethville
810214	Pte	Nicell, John	Sp Pl	6 Bn	Meritorious Service	Meritorious Service	Elisabethville
809084	Pte	Feery, Jim	Sp Pl	6 Bn	Meritorious Service	Meritorious Service	Elisabethville <sup>6</sup>
809613	Pte	Stanley, Noel	1 Pl	6 Bn	Commendation	Meritorious Service	Jadotville
809683	Pte	Brennan, Michael	1 Pl	6 Bn	Commendation	Meritorious Service	Jadotville
<del>809650</del>	<del>Pte</del>	<del>Hennelly, Gerald</del>	<del>3 Pl</del>	<del>4 Fd Eng Coy</del>	N/A	For MMG alone	N/A
810997	Pte	Quinlan, Matt	Sp Pl	1 Bn	Promotion	Promotion	Jadotville
<del>809687</del>	<del>Pte</del>	<del>Galvin, Michael</del>	<del>3 Pl</del>	<del>4 Fd Engr Coy</del>	N/A	For MMG alone	N/A
807159	Tpr	McCarton, Patrick	Cav Tp	4 Mot Sqn	No recommendation found	No recommendation	N/A
-----	Rev Fr	Fagan Joseph	Chaplain	Air Corps	Unknown	Meritorious Service	Unknown

<sup>5</sup> To have been awarded a DSM in 1967 for actions in Elisabethville and Jadotville.

<sup>6</sup> Awarded a DSM in 1967 for actions in Elisabethville.



## Annex E

# The Katangese Gendarmerie – a brief introduction

Who were the Katangese Gendarmerie? They were the defence forces of the secessionist state of Katanga. Established shortly after 11 July 1960, the date Katanga declared its independence from the Congo, with the objective of defending Katanga against probable invasion by the Congolese National Army, they were also part of the wider apparatus of the nascent state of Katanga which its government used to project its independence. These also included a head of state, the political party Conakat, a flag, a national anthem, a system of state financing and a separate currency as well as limited and generally unsuccessful attempts at seeking international recognition for their secessionist state. These were all set within a myth of national origin, a ‘usable past’ as Professor Miles Larmer put it, as well as the experience since the 1920s of local self-government somewhat separate from that of the rest of the Congo which was ruled directly from Leopoldville.<sup>1</sup>

Irish accounts of the Battle of Jadotville tend to dismiss the Gendarmerie, properly titled Armée du Katanga, the Katangese Army as mere tribal fighters.<sup>2</sup> They portray them as a rabble, as guerrillas and often in a somewhat pejorative sense. However, research by Professor Miles Larmer and Dr Erik Kennes, which has been drawn upon for what follows below, as well as a range of documentary material sourced in UN archives in New York show the Katangese Gendarmerie as a structured light infantry force of widely varying capability augmented by some armoured assets and with limited but effective air support.<sup>3</sup>

There is no detailed structured military history of the Katangese Gendarmerie and what follows below is often from glimpses of the force which appear across a variety of archival and published sources.<sup>4</sup> Contacts with Congolese academics in Lubumbashi (formerly Elisabethville) indicated there was no local historiography to draw upon.<sup>5</sup> The most up to date work is *The Katangese Gendarmes and war in central Africa*, by Professor Miles Larmer and Dr Erik Kennes published in 2016.<sup>6</sup>

In assessing the Gendarmerie, a distinction needs to be made between mobile groups of international mercenaries in the pay of the state of Katanga who operated with a large degree of autonomy countering the civil war in the north of Katanga and the forces under the command of Belgian and French mercenaries who co-ordinated the Katangese response to Operation Morthor and initiated the attack against ‘A’ Company in Jadotville in September 1961.

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<sup>1</sup> Professor Miles Larmer, interview with IRG, 27 April 2021.

<sup>2</sup> Named the Katangese Army in November 1960, the term never gained widespread use.

<sup>3</sup> The IRG would like to thank Professor Larmer for the valuable insights he provided to the IRG during an interview on 27 April 2021.

<sup>4</sup> The IRG would like to thank Col George Kerton and Col Dick Heaslip for kindly providing several significant documents from United Nations archives which enabled the IRG to build up its picture of the Katangese Gendarmerie.

<sup>5</sup> We are very grateful for the help given by Professor Donatien Dibwe de Mwembu and his colleagues at the University of Lubumbashi and would like to thank them for their assistance.

<sup>6</sup> Miles Larmer and Eric Kennes, *The Katangese Gendarmes and war in central Africa* (Bloomington, 2016).

However, the significant point to push home here is that the rank-and-file troops were local Katangese and it was they who were doing the majority of the fighting in 1961 in Jadotville and elsewhere.

The Gendarmerie were a force of varying effectiveness and combat efficiency, their chains of command were often ad hoc and political direction was often absent. However, during the September 1961 fighting at Jadotville it is very likely that the Gendarmerie in the town were operating to local political direction given the interest shown in events in the town by Katanga's Minister of the Interior Godefroid Munongo.<sup>7</sup>

Initially the Gendarmerie were established from a cadre of 350 local soldiers who had formerly served with the Congolese Force Publique. According to Catherine Hoskyns the force was founded out of 700 unemployed Africans and 300 Belgian civilians.<sup>8</sup> It was initially modelled along the lines of the former Force Publique.

Belgian Major Guy Weber was appointed Katangese President Moïse Tshombe's military advisor and Major Jean-Marie Crèvecoeur was appointed commander of the Katangese army.

By November 1960, the Gendarmerie were organised in an established pattern of battalions divided into companies which in turn were divided into platoons and sections. Order of battle was at times arbitrary and numbers in sub-units did not necessarily follow established norms. A UN Intelligence Report suggested that Gendarmerie company strength was 'about 125 ... the strength of their battalion varies and there does not appear to be any standard organisation.'<sup>9</sup> On this point Tshombe told British diplomats

that there was a European concept of military operations, but that this was different from the African concept. The African concept was to operate in penny packets round the clock with no administrative tail. When his men, for example, needed food they took a jeep to find their womenfolk who would always be ready with a bowl of porridge. It was a technique of guerrilla war.<sup>10</sup>

In December 1960, the Gendarmerie numbered 6,000 to 7,000, with 2,000 based twenty kilometres from Jadotville at Shinkolobwe, and 1,000 in Katanga's capital Elisabethville. There was one white officer in charge of each company, platoons were African-led and a small number of mercenaries were in command of mixed African-European mobile groups.<sup>11</sup>

A British Foreign Office account in January 1961 numbered 223 officers and NCOs plus 200 soldiers making up a new Gendarmerie 'foreign legion'. International volunteers came from South Africa and Belgium, but the spread was very mixed and included French, Polish, Italian, British

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<sup>7</sup> Our thanks to Maurin Picard for provision of documents from UN archives showing Munongo's presence in Jadotville at the time of the fighting between the Gendarmerie and 'A' Company.

<sup>8</sup> Catherine Hoskyns, *The Congo since independence* (Oxford, 1965), p. 163.

<sup>9</sup> UNA, S/805/19/2/9, 'Fortnightly intelligence summary', HQ Katanga area, 6 June 1962.

<sup>10</sup> TNA, FO 371/154889, 'Report by Mr Neil Ritchie', October 1961.

<sup>11</sup> Catherine Hoskyns, *The Congo since independence* (Oxford, 1965), p. 283.

and German. The Gendarmerie were said to be suspicious of white officers, there had been tribal disputes amongst personnel and several minor mutinies.<sup>12</sup>

In early 1961 the Gendarmerie had their first major experience of combat countering the Baluba rebellion in North Katanga. The 'Group Mobile' force of Gendarmerie in North Katanga was assessed as 300-400 strong with 60 trucks and officered by Belgians.<sup>13</sup> The Gendarmerie were armed with .5 machine guns, bolt action rifles, automatic weapons and 81mm mortars and at least one field gun.<sup>14</sup> They also had armoured cars with 37mm machine guns and jeeps with machine guns mounted. These operations, often bloody, brought a degree of Katangese control to the area.

<b>Gendarmerie commanders and command districts based on British Foreign Office assessments (February to May 1961)</b>		
Moise Tshombe: Commander-in-chief		
Col Guy Weber: Military advisor to Tshombe		
Maj Jean Marie Crèvecoeur: Commander Gendarmerie		
Commandant/Major Perrard: Deputy Commander		
	Headquarters	Area of Operations
Comdt Jacques	Albertville	Tanganyika
Comdt Baravaux	Kamina	Lomami
Comdt Tackoen	Kolwezi	Lualama

Overall strength was judged to be 600 Europeans and 8,000 Katangese.<sup>15</sup> Recruitment was continuing with the aim to bring overall strength up by many thousand.

In mid-February 1961 Belgian Foreign Minister Pierre Wigny told the British ambassador in Brussels 'that the relatively small number of Belgian officers and men engaged by Tshombe were of decisive importance in a military sense, it was they who kept the Gendarmerie in the Katanga together and maintained a reasonable degree of discipline.'<sup>16</sup> The British consul in Elisabethville learned from Col Weber that 'Katanga troops are useless without a stiffening of the whites in proportion of at least 1 to 10. This would require a build up of whites to 700.'

From spring 1961, Belgian influence on the Gendarmerie began to diminish. British consul in Elisabethville A.G. Evans suggested to London that 'it seems more than likely that the command of the Katanga Forces will be entrusted to the French Colonel Trinquier who is said to have signed a contract yesterday and to be bringing out twenty-five French staff officers.'<sup>17</sup><sup>18</sup>

<sup>12</sup> TNA, FO 371/154995, Scott to Foreign Office, for War Office, 25 January 1961.

<sup>13</sup> UNA, S/213/3/3 (D-473), Dayal to Hammarskjöld, 20 February 1961.

<sup>14</sup> These figures are gathered from a variety of UN and Foreign Office estimates and may not be accurate. They are given for illustration only.

<sup>15</sup> Larmer and Kennes, *Katangese Gendarmes*, p. 49.

<sup>16</sup> TNA, FO 371/155102, Nicholls to Foreign Office, 16 February 1961.

<sup>17</sup> TNA, FO 371/154878, A.G. Evans, British Consulate Elisabethville to Foreign Office, 1 February 1961.

<sup>18</sup> TNA, FO 371/154879, Dunnett, Elisabethville to Foreign Office (No. 169), 17 April 1961.

In April 1961 Gendarmerie at Nyunzu were seen by ONUC to be ‘well equipped, each soldier carrying an automatic weapon and recoilless weapons’; their strength at Nyunzu being an estimated 300 including ‘one platoon of European mercenaries.’<sup>19</sup>

As to the individual soldiers, a late-April, early-May 1961 ONUC liaison officers’ visit to Northern Katanga learned from a ‘Katanga officer’ that the ‘CONGOLESE soldier gets excited firing whole magazine without aiming – NO fire control – brave against Balubas doubtful against disciplined troops.’<sup>20</sup> As the officer referred specifically to ‘Congolese’, this officer may have been seeking to make a distinction between his Gendarmerie forces and Congolese ANC forces.

A May 1961 British estimate put the Gendarmerie at 7,000 in ‘effective strength’ and reported that they ‘operate in commando companies.’<sup>21</sup> A mercenary platoon might be made up of three to four Europeans and ten to twelve Congolese.<sup>22</sup>

However, an assessment of the Gendarmerie by the Irish 34 Inf Bn concluded that Katangese officers were ‘largely ineffectual’ and that Belgian regular officers were ‘generally typical professional soldiers’. They were ‘ex-NCOs and judged to be professionals, tough “Black and Tan” types.’ The report distinguished these officers with officers recruited in Rhodesia, South Africa, and Australia which it

loosely called soldiers of fortune but they are seldom Black and Tan types. They are not ruthless enough. Generally they want a job ex-RAF types, planters who failed, adventurers. Many thought their duties would be mostly police work.

These mercenaries were ‘objectionable to everyone’<sup>23</sup>

Within these glimpses of the Gendarmerie that emerge for the spring and summer of 1961 occasionally there is reference to Jadotville. Through April and May 1961 there was estimated to be one company of Gendarmerie stationed in Jadotville under the command of Belgian officer Comdt André Protin.<sup>24</sup> Nearby at the depot at Shinkolobwe, there were 300 to 400 mercenaries. An ONUC report suggested there was a South African company at Shinkolobwe divided into four platoons. The ONUC assessment was that ‘the troops are equipped with FN rifles [and] hand grenades and have plenty of ammunition in stores. Two Bren guns in each platoon. The Gendarmerie seems to be short of medical supplies.’<sup>25</sup>

The main employers in Jadotville, Union Minière were ‘greatly concerned at Munongo’s unfriendliness and scorched earth plans. They are having increasing difficulty in inducing key

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<sup>19</sup> UNA, S/213/1/13, ‘Ops Katanga’, 25 April 1961, Abbas, Lt Gen MacEoin to Bunche.

<sup>20</sup> UNA, S/805/15/2, ‘Report of LO’s visit to Units of the MSF’.

<sup>21</sup> TNA, FO 371/155005, War Office, ‘Order of Battle. United Nations and Republic of Congo’, memo for Director of Military Intelligence, May 1961.

<sup>22</sup> UNA, S/213/1/13, ‘OPS Katanga’, 4 May 1961.

<sup>23</sup> NAI, DT S16137/I61, ‘Report on 34 Inf Bn Moves – April 1961’.

<sup>24</sup> UNA, S/213/1/13, ‘Directions for Section Commanders’, Colonel Jean Marie Crevecoeur, April 1961. Protin had commanded Gendarmerie at Mitwaba. See also UNA, ‘Situation of Katangese Gendarmerie on 15 May 1961.’

<sup>25</sup> UNA, S/213/1/13, South Katanga, E’Ville to ONUC LEO, 16 May 1961.

Belgian personnel to remain.<sup>26</sup> Perhaps this was an early indication of why Union Minière were anxious to have an ONUC presence in the town.

<b>Gendarmerie commanders and command districts based on British Foreign Office and ONUC assessments (18 May 1961)</b>		
Moise Tshombe: Commander-in-chief		
Colonel Guy Weber: Military advisor to Tshombe		
Jean Marie Crèvecoeur: Commander Gendarmerie land forces		
Chief of Staff: Comdt Liegeois		
G1: (Admin) Comdt de Troyer		
G2: Int Comdt Verdickt		
G3: Ops Comdt Matthys		
G4: Logs Comdt Grally		
	Headquarters	Area of Operations
Comdt Jacques	Albertville	Tanganyika
Comdt Baravaux	Kamina	Lomami
Comdt Tackoen	Kolwezi	Lualama
Comdt Delville	Kongolo	Unknown
Comdt Protin	Manono	Unknown
Major Muké	PM Bn	Elisabethville
Lt Col Volont	Air Force	Katanga

ONUC had some difficulty forming a comprehensive assessment of Tshombe's forces. One reason was that the Gendarmerie

does not have a fixed "model organisation". Companies are organized in 3 or 4 sections according to the needs of the missions to be accomplished. Battalions, organized in the same way consist of 3 or four companies, according to circumstances. There seem to be approximately twelve Battalions constituted at this time.<sup>27</sup>

Estimated total strength was of 5,000 made up of battalions of 450-600 men according to the number of companies established with roughly 150 per company and forty to fifty per section. ONUC reported that the plan was to raise total strength to 7,000 as soon as possible.<sup>28</sup>

Other developments included the recruitment and training of a parachutist battalion which would be half European and half Congolese with a Belgian commander and a French deputy. Artillery had been ordered, but Crevecoeur later said he was 'quite satisfied with mortars for the moment.'<sup>29</sup>

<sup>26</sup> TNA, FO 371/154880, Dunnett to FO, 17 May 1961. See also note attached to Welensky to Douglas Home, 15 May 1961.

<sup>27</sup> UNA, S/787/11/1, 'Meeting held in Elisabethville from 11 May to 20 May 1961 ...', 23 May 1961.

<sup>28</sup> UNA, S/787/11/1, 'Meeting held in Elisabethville from 11 May to 20 May 1961 ...', 23 May 1961.

<sup>29</sup> UNA, S/805/15/2, South Katanga Elisabethville to ONUC, Leopoldville, 3 June 1961.

Weber and Crevecoeur were asked to leave Katanga in May 1961. On the removal of the Belgian cadre the Gendarmerie did not collapse. Now under command of Lt Gen Norbert Muké Masaku, formerly a military policeman in Elisabethville, discipline was maintained, as was military efficacy in operations countering UN in September 1961.

By the summer of 1961 there were 142 Katangese officers in the Gendarmerie.<sup>30</sup> While Roger Falques was a significant force in overseeing the Gendarmerie counterattack after Operation Morthor, in practice command of the Gendarmerie was in Katangese hands. Falques was ‘in effect Chief of the General Staff during the fighting of September and December 1961’.<sup>31</sup> To reiterate, the bulk of the fighting was done by local personnel.

ONUC in Katanga had constantly played down the effectiveness of the Gendarmerie. In June 1961 they concluded that they ‘should not be considered ... as a constituted army’ and that their ‘combat power [was] mediocre.’ Thus, the Gendarmerie did ‘not constitute a considerable nor a dangerous “enemy” force.’ This was a fatal mistake in Operation Morthor. Katanga’s forces were capable of fighting back and despite OC Katanga Command Brig Raja’s estimates that they would not respond, they did with ability and effect, fighting the UN to a stalemate in Elisabethville and causing the failure of Operation Morthor to overthrow Tshombe’s government.

Miles Larmer and Erik Kennes point out that during and after Operation Morthor

the UN was unprepared for the level of resistance experienced from the Katangese gendarmerie, it is also true that the Katangese operation in August-September 1961 was in significant part a successful bluff, convincing UN commanders that they faced a much larger Katangese force than was in fact the case.<sup>32</sup>

By September 1961 the Gendarmerie were estimated to be 13,000 strong, with 3,000 men in Elisabethville and 2,000 in the wider Jadotville area.<sup>33</sup> Despite this growth in numbers, discipline and organisation left much to be desired and there was poor command and morale was poor.<sup>34</sup>

There was another Katangese force, based specifically in Jadotville. Lt Col Bjorn Egge, Military Information Officer, Katanga Command, informed Lt Gen MacEoin on 1 June 1961 that Union Minière had established a

special army Unit based in JADOTVILLE which is to be used to protect mines and plants in case of trouble. Personnel are mainly “white”. The unit is equipped with machine-guns mounted on jeeps and trucks. Mortars are available to it. The unit will provide patrols for Elisabethville and other important areas during any emergency. “White” guards are to be located in mines and plants to keep Congolese workers under observation.

<sup>30</sup> Larmer and Kennes, *Katangese Gendarmes*, p. 47.

<sup>31</sup> UNA, ‘The Mercenaries of Katanga’, undated.

<sup>32</sup> Miles Larmer and Erik Kennes, ‘Rethinking the Katangese Secession’, *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 42:4 (2014), pp741-61.

<sup>33</sup> Hoskyns, *Congo*, p. 405 quoting Conor Cruise O’Brien.

<sup>34</sup> Larmer and Kennes, *Katangese Gendarmes*, p. 48.



It has not been established whether the above mentioned unit is part of the Katangese Gendarmerie or whether it is an independent emergency unit.<sup>35</sup>

Gendarmerie commanders in Jadotville, Michel de Clary and Henri Maurice Lasimone also played on perceptions of the numbers of Gendarmerie facing 'A' Company, as did Katangese Interior Minister Godefroid Munongo.

In October 1962 ONUC estimated that there was one company or a reduced strength battalion in Jadotville with a battalion under instruction and a transport company at Shinkolobwe.<sup>36</sup> However, numbers fluctuated. A February 1962 estimate of Gendarmerie strength in Jadotville was 'two battalions with some supporting arms and transport.' There was a company between Elisabethville and Lufira Bridge.<sup>37</sup> ONUC estimates were that 'three battalions minus should take on Jadotville' with one troop of heavy mortars, one troop armoured cars along with command and control.<sup>38</sup>

The Katangese Gendarmerie were a very mixed force, they were the prototype neophyte army of Katanga. Effectiveness varied as did training and leadership. They were armed with an array of weapons including modern weapons – automatic rifles and machine guns - which were as good as, if not better than, the weapons of Irish ONUC battalions.

ONUC found that its underestimation of the abilities of the Katangese Gendarmerie in September 1961 was to cost it considerably.

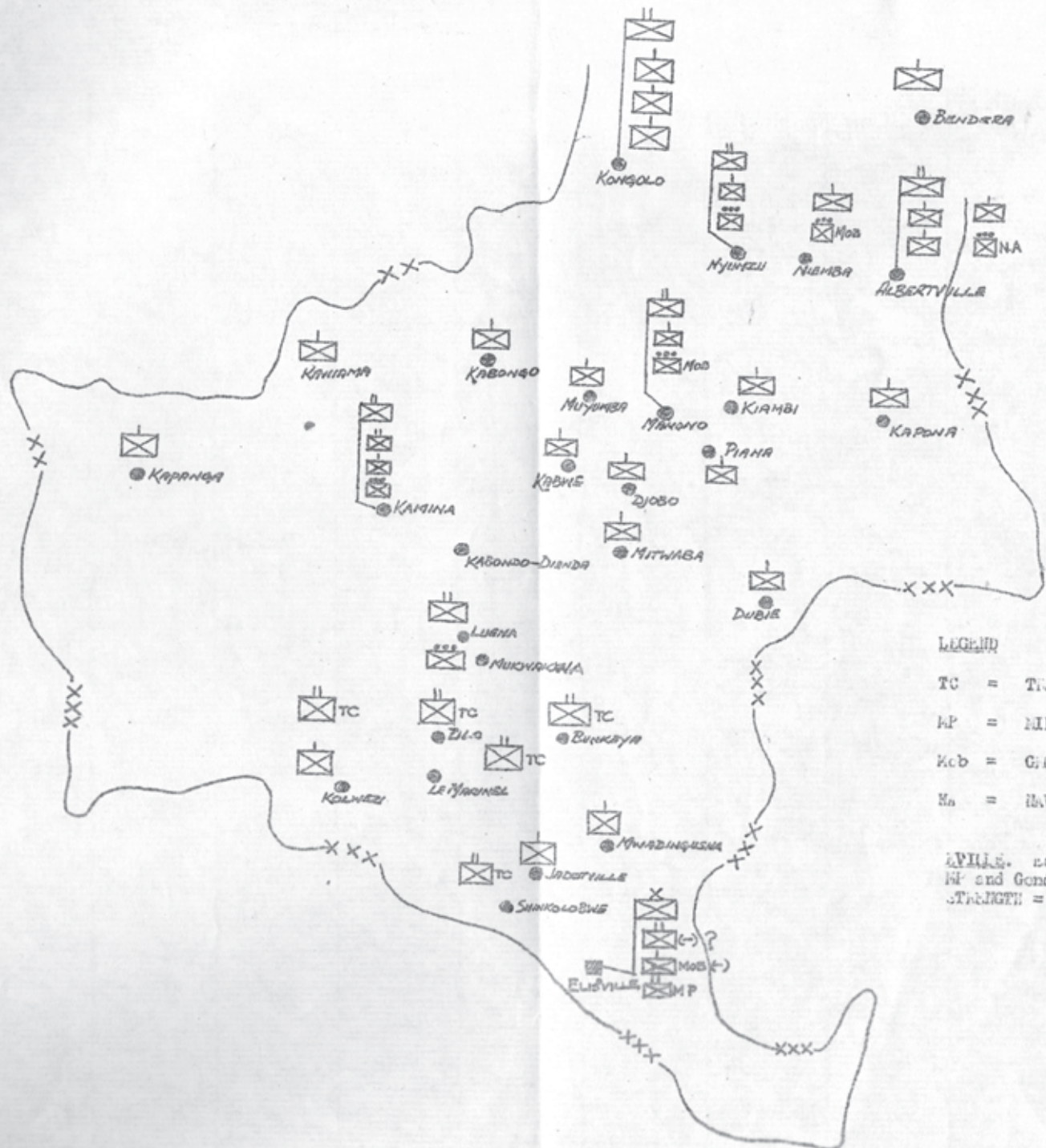
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<sup>35</sup> UNA, S/788/6/3.

<sup>36</sup> See Pierre Davister and Philippe Toussaint, *Croisettes et Casques bleus* (Brussels, 1962), p. 255.

<sup>37</sup> UNA, S/805/19/2, Fortnightly Intelligence Summary, Katanga Command, 3 March 1962.

<sup>38</sup> From an undated appreciation of the situation by Brigadier Raja in UN archives. See also, B. Chakravorty and S.N. Prasad, *The Congo Operation 1960-63* (Delhi, 1976), pp 117-145.



LEGEND

- TC = TRAINING CAMP
- MP = MILITARY POLICE
- Mcb = GROUP MOBILE
- Ma = NAVAL FLUTILLA

ALBERTVILLE. est 1500 combat troops incl Group Mobile, MP and Gend. Incl other services TOTAL MILITARY STRENGTH = 2000/2200 Military personnel.

**Annex F**

**NOMINAL ROLL - CONSULTATION MODULE**

<b>Veterans Interviewed - 'A' Company 35 Infantry Battalion &amp; 1 Infantry Group (21 +1) (22)</b>	
808554 Pte Leo Boland (No 3 Pl) [Cpl] O. 7767 Lt Noel Carey (No 3 Pl) [Capt] 810219 Pte Charlie Cooley (No 1 Pl) 811160 Cpl Muiris de Barra (1 Inf Gp) [CQMS] 810800 Pte John Dreelan (Coy HQ – Medic) 804685 Pte Michael Dunne (Coy HQ - Armourer) [Sgt] 810143 Pte Thomas Flynn (Sp Pl) 810428 Cpl Sean Foley (No 3 Pl) 832073 Pte John Gorman (No 1 Pl) [Cpl] 809385 Pte Michael Greene (Sp Pl) 800068 Pte Tom Gunn (No 3 Pl) [Cpl]	807860 Pte Paddy Hogan (Sp Pl) [Sgt] 808552 Pte William Keane (Coy HQ) [Cpl] 810865 Pte Paul Malone (Sp Pl) 808261 Pte Frank McManus (No 3 Pl) [Sgt] 808117 Pte Joe O’Kane (Sp Pl) [Cpl] 809174 Pte John Shanagher (No 1 Pl) [Cpl] 809693 Pte Noel Stanley (No 1 Pl) [Sgt] 810567 Pte James Tahaney (Sp Pl) 810383 Cpl Sean Tiernan (No 2 Pl) 809014 Pte Michael Tighe (No 2 Pl) [CQMS] 810264 Cpl Tadhg Quinn (Sp Pl)
<b>Veterans Indirectly or Directly Contacted – 'A' Company 35 Infantry Battalion (24) All Fully Supportive of the Independent Review Process</b>	
810792 Pte Joe Bracken [CQMS] 809947 Pte Robert (Bobby) Bradley [Sgt] 808910 Pte John Conway 808073 Pte Tom Cunningham [Gnr] 806778 Sgt Geffery Cuffe [CS] 435951 Pte Albert Dell 808510 Pte Maurice Doyle 808714 Pte John Dowler 809015 Pte Tony Dykes RIP 809084 Pte James Feery DSM [CQMS] 810143 Pte Thomas Flynn 810793 Pte Dominick Harkin	810213 Pte Henry Hegarty 808114 Pte James Gormley 808092 Pte James Meyler 96739 Cpl John McManus 810000 Pte Michael McDermott 801511 Pte Robert Orr 810656 Pte Michael O’Farrell, [Sgt] 807790 Pte Timothy Sullivan 810163 Pte Christopher Powell [CS] 810945 Pte Daniel Regan [Sgt] 809771 Pte James Scally [Gnr] 808563 Pte John Stanford

<b>Relatives Interviewed - 'A' Company 35 Infantry Battalion (38)</b>	
Geraldine Armstrong (New Zealand) Veronica Boland Garry Boland Collette Byrne Stephan Byrne Comdt Aidan Donnelly (Retd) Andra Flynn (Australia) BSM P.J. Higgins (Retd) Elizabeth Hennelly (New Zealand) Mary Gilsenan	Daughter of Pte Gerald Hennelly Daughter of Pte Leo Boland Son of Pte Leo Boland Daughter of CQMS Patrick Neville Grandson of CQMS Patrick Neville Son of Capt Liam Donnelly Wife of Pte Thomas Flynn Nephew of Pte Joseph McGuinness Wife of Pte Gerald Hennelly Daughter of Sgt Frank Gilsenan

<b>Relatives Interviewed - 'A' Company 35 Infantry Battalion (38)</b>	
John Greene (UK)	Son of Pte Michael Greene
Grace Grouden	Daughter of Sgt Martin McCabe
Deborah Kerr	Daughter of Cpl John Kerr
Kathleen Lafferty	Daughter of Cpl John McAnaney
Lt Cmdr John Leech (Retd)	Son of Lt Joseph Leech
Declan McCabe (USA)	Son of Sgt Martin McCabe
Sgt John McCarton (Retd)	Son of Sgt Patrick McCarton
Brig Gen Liam MacNamee (Retd)	Son of Lt Col Hugh MacNamee
Niamh Malone	Daughter of Pte Francis Malone
Michaela Moody	Grandniece of Gnr Billy Keane
Maureen Molloy	Daughter of Cpl Sean McEntee
Brendan Molloy	Son-in-Law of Cpl Sean McEntee
Rosalinda Murphy	Daughter of Pte Joe Duff
Martin O'Connor (Australia)	Son of Sgt Thomas O'Connor
Joseph Prendergast	Son of BSM Jack Prendergast
Alice Quinlan	Sister of Pte Matthew Quinlan
Comdt Leo Quinlan (Retd)	Son of Comdt Patrick Quinlan
Comdt Pat Quinlan (Retd)	Son of Comdt Patrick Quinlan
Patricia Redmond	Wife of Pte Jimmy Redmond
Jim Redmond	Son of Pte Jimmy Redmond
Joe Relihan	Son of Sgt Joseph Relihan
Liam Roche (Scotland)	Son of Cpl Christopher Roche
John Sweeney	Son of Pte Bernard Sweeney
Comdt Danny Tiernan (Retd)	Son of Sgt George Tiernan
Tony Tahaney	Son of Pte James Tahaney
Nicola Toolan (UK)	Daughter of Pte Daniel Hegarty
Leo Williams	Son of Cpl Francis Williams
Michael Williams	Son of Cpl Francis Williams

<b>Relatives Who Were in Contact with Review Group 'A' Company 35 Infantry Battalion (8)</b>	
Linda Conway	Sister-in-Law of Pte John Conway
CS Brian Geary (Retd)	Son of Sgt Colman Geary
Ailish McDermott	Daughter of Pte Michael McDermott
Donna Maher (UK)	Daughter of Pte Edward Maher
Bridget Meyler	Daughter of Pte James Meyler
Ger Shanahan	Son of Trooper John Shanahan
Bernadette Quinlan	Sister of Pte Matthew Quinlan
Pat Quinlan	Brother of Pte Matthew Quinlan

<b>Personnel Interviewed - 35 Inf Bn (4)</b>	
Brig Gen James J Farrell (Pl Comdr 'B' Coy)	Sqn Sgt Dessie Keegan (Armd Car Gp)
Lt Col Seán Hennessy (Armd Car Gp)	Brig Gen Patrick Purcell (Sig Offr Bn HQ)



<b>Military Experts, Academics and Historians Interviewed (29 +1)</b>	
Lt Col Oliver Barbour MSc (Retd)	Trauma Management
Lt Col Oliver Barbour MSc (Retd)	C&S Sch 1993 Syndicate
Col Tony Bracken MMG (Retd)	Medal Module
Dr Thomas G. Bradbeer	US CGSC College, Fort Leavenworth Study Group
Col Enda Breslin (Retd)	Study Group April 2004
Col Brendan Delaney	Operational Module, Perimeter Defence
Prof Donatien Dibwe de Mwembu	University of Lubumbashi
Rose Doyle	Author, <i>Heroes of Jadotville, The Soldiers' Story</i>
Lt Col Oliver Dwyer DFHQ	Medal Module, Analysis 2017
Brig Gen Paul Fry (Retd)	Operation Module, Air Power
Col Richard Heaslip (Retd)	Medal Module
Comdt Damian Kelleher	Mil Col, Operational Module - Perimeter Defence
Col George Kerton (Retd)	Operational Module, Katanga Operations
Prof Edmond Kibawa	University of Lubumbashi
Prof Miles Larmer	African History, St Antony's College, Oxford
Lt Col John Martin	OIC Personnel Support Section
Brig Gen Chris Moore (Retd)	Medal Module & Review of Jadotville June 2004
Col Mairead Murphy	Director Medical Branch
Comdt Pdraic McDunphy (Retd)	Command & School 1993 Syndicate
Comdt James McCafferty DSM (Retd)	Academic, Operational and Medal Modules
Dr Swapna Kona Nayudu	Historian, Analysis of Katanga Operations 1961
Maurin Picard	Journalist, Analysis of Katangese Gendarmerie
Col J.J. O'Reilly (Retd)	Medal Module
Declan Power	Author, <i>Siege at Jadotville</i>
Lt Col Gareth Prendergast	Thesis, Military Master Arts & Science, Leavenworth
Lt Col Andrew Richardson (Retd)	Command & School 1993 Syndicate
Lt Col Seamus Rouine (Retd)	Command & School 1993 Syndicate
Lt Gen Jim Sreenan DSM (Retd)	Former Chief of Staff
Dr Andreas Tullberg	Lund University
Cpl Michael Whelan	Historian, Author, Curator, Poet

## Annex G

### SUBMISSIONS

<b>Veterans (5)</b>
Capt Noel Carey (31 Dec 20)
Cpl John Foley (3 Mar 21)
Cpl John Gorman (7 Jan 21)
Pte Michael Greene (3 Mar 21)
CQMS Michael Tighe (12 Jan 21)

<b>Relatives (17)</b>
Adrian Bradley (30 Jan 21)
Comdt Aidan Donnelly (3 Feb 21)
Declan McCabe (1 Feb 21)
BSM P.J. Higgins (12 Feb 21)
Deboragh Kerr (28 Jan 21)
Lt Cmdr John Leech (24 Apr 21)
Brig Gen Liam MacNamee: Personal Perspective ONUC 1965 (11 Jan 21)
Margaret Orr (28 Jan 21)
Joe Prendergast (16 Jun 21)
Bernadette Quinlan (8 Feb 21)
Comdt Leo Quinlan: Battle of Jadotville (21 Dec 21)
Comdt Leo Quinlan: Integrity, Impartiality and Independence of IRG (10 Jan 21)
Comdt Leo Quinlan: Opening and Closing Statements (14 Feb 21)
Comdt Pat Quinlan: Opening and Closing Statements (14 Feb 21)
Pat Quinlan (12 Feb 21)
John Sweeney: Biography of Father – Private Bernard Sweeney (30 Apr 21)
Frank Williams (14 Jun 21)

<b>Military Experts &amp; Academics (13)</b>	
Lt Col Oliver Barbour	Trauma Management (11 Mar 21)
Sgt Paul Clarke	Jadotville Personnel (21 Jan 21)
Col Brendan Delaney	Doctrine, Defence Operations (26 Feb 21)
Col George Kerton	Katanga Ops, Weapons, Medals, Gendarmerie, (Jan–Feb 21)
Brig Gen J.J. Farrell	Force Kane (21 Jan 21)
Brig Gen Paul Fry	Analysis of Weapons Effects, CM 170 Aircraft (25 Feb 21)
Col Richard Heaslip	Military Medals and Awards (21 Jan 21)
Comdt Damien Kelleher	Perimeter in Defence Presentation (9 Mar 21)
Comdt James McCafferty DSM	Chapter 7 – PhD Thesis, Jadotville & An Cosantóir Article
Lt Col Daragh McKevitt	DFR Award of Medals (25 Feb 21)
BQMS Ger O'Connor	Medal Options (11 Jan 21)
Col Terry O'Neill	'A' Company (1 Mar 21)
Lt Col Gareth Prendergast	2013 MMA Thesis, Force Protection, Chapter on Jadotville



## Annex H

### KEY PLAYERS

#### Congo – Government

Name	Appointment
Joseph Kasavubu	President
Cyrille Adoula	Prime Minister

#### Katanga – Government

Name	Appointment
Moise Tshombe	President
Godefroid Munongo	Minister of the Interior
Jean-Baptiste Kibwe	Minister for Finance
Lt Gen Norbert Muké	Commander Katangese Gendarmerie

#### Katanga – Mercenaries Gendarmerie

Name	Appointment
Roger Falques	Senior Mercenary during Battle of Jadotville, located in Elisabethville
Maj Henri Lasimone	OC Opposing Force in Jadotville
Maj Michel de Clary	Operations Officer, Opposing Force in Jadotville

#### Congo - ONUC

Name	Appointment
Lt Gen Seán MacEoin (Lt Gen Seán McKeown)	ONUC Force Commander, (Leopoldville), [See below] (ONUC Force Commander, (Leopoldville),
Rajeshwar Dayal (India)	Representative of UN Secretary-General in Congo [To May 1961]
Ralph Bunche (USA)	Representative of UN Secretary-General in Congo [From May 1961]
Dr Sture Linner (Sw)	Officer in Charge (May 1961 – Jan 1962)
M. Mahmoud Khiari (Tu)	Chief Civilian Operations
Dr Conor Cruise O'Brien	UN Secretary-General's Representative Katanga
Brig K.A.S. Raja (India)	Officer Commanding Katanga Command (Elisabethville)
Col Jonas Waern (Sw)	Officer Commanding Sector B (Elisabethville) [See below]
Col Jonas Waern (Sw)	Officer Commanding XII Swedish Battalion (Elisabethville)
Lt Col Olaf MacNeill	HQ ONUC
Lt Col Bjorn Egge (Sw)	Military Information Officer, Katanga Command
Lt Col G.S. Paul (India)	Chief of ONUC Military Operations

#### Congo – Irish Battalion – 35 Infantry Battalion - Elisabethville

Name	Appointment
Lt Col Olaf MacNeill	Officer Commanding, 35 Infantry Battalion (16 Jun – 26 Aug)
Lt Col Hugh McNamee	Officer Commanding, 35 Infantry Battalion (27 Aug – 18 Dec)
Comdt Hugh McNamee	Second-in-Command, 35 Infantry Battalion (June – 26 Aug)
Comdt John Kane	Intelligence Officer, 35 Infantry Battalion (June – 27 Aug)
Comdt John Kane	Second-in-Command & Operations / Intelligence (28 Aug – Dec)
Comdt John Kane	Commander Force Kane I & II
Comdt Edward Condon	Adjutant, 35 Infantry Battalion
Comdt Seán Barrett	Operations Officer, 35 Infantry Battalion (28 Aug - Dec)

Comdt Michael Heffernan	Operations Officer, 35 Infantry Battalion
Comdt Pearce Wheatley	Quartermaster, 35 Infantry Battalion
Capt Gerry Melinn	Signals Officer, 35 Infantry Batttalion
Comdt P.J. Barry	Company Commander, HQ Company
Comdt Patrick Quinlan	Company Commander, 'A' Company Group
Comdt Alo McMahon	Company Commander. 'B' Company Group
Comdt Tom O'Neill	Company Commander, 'C' Company Group
Comdt Pat Cahalane	Officer Commanding, Armoured Car Group
Capt Art J. Magennis	Second-in-Command, Armoured Car Group
Lt Patrick Purcell	Signal Platoon, HQ Company

### Congo – Irish Battalion – 'A' Company

Name	Appointment
Comdt Patrick Quinlan	Company Commander, 'A' Company
Capt Dermot Byrne	Second-in-Command, 'A' Company
Comdt Joseph Clune	Medical Section, 'A' Company
Fr Joseph Fagan CF	Chaplain
Capt Thomas McGuinn	Administrative Officer 'A' Company
Capt Liam Donnelly	Platoon Commander, Support Platoon, 'A' Company
Lt Joseph Leech	Platoon Commander, No 1 Platoon, 'A' Company
Lt Tom Quinlan	Platoon Commander, No 2 Platoon, 'A' Company
Lt Noel Carey	Platoon Commander, No 3 Platoon, 'A' Company
Lt Kevin Knightly	Section Commander, Armoured Car Section
Lt Lars Fröberg (Sw)	Interpreter (French Language)
CS Jack Prendergast	Company Sergeant, 'A' Company
CQMS Patrick Neville	Company Quartermaster-Sergeant
Sgt Patrick Joyce	Platoon Sergeant, No 1 Platoon
Sgt Walter Hegarty	Platoon Sergeant, No 2 Platoon
Sgt Kevin McLoughlin	Platoon Sergeant, No 3 Platoon
Sgt Martin Mc Cabe	Platoon Sergeant, Support Platoon
Sgt Colman Geary	Section Sergeant, Armoured Car Section

### Congo – Irish Units (Less 35 Infantry Battalion)

Name	Appointment
Lt Col Mortimer Buckley	Officer Commanding, 32 Infantry Battalion
Lt Col Richard Bunworth	Officer Commanding, 33 Infantry Battalion
Lt Col John C. O'Donovan	Officer Commanding, 1 Infantry Group (Kamina)

### United Nations – New York

Name	Appointment
Dag Hammarskjöld (Sw)	Secretary-General (10 April 1953 – 18 September 1961)
U Thant (Burma)	Secretary-General (30 November 1961 – 31 December 1971)
Maj Gen Indar Rikhye (India)	Military Advisor, UN Secretary-General
Frederick Boland	Permanent Representative (Ambassador) of Ireland to the United Nations New York (1955-64)
Sir Patrick Dean	Ambassador of Great Britain to the United Nations, New York
Brendan Nolan	Chargé d'Affaires, Irish Permanent Representation, United Nations, New York (1959 – 1964)

## Ireland

Name	Appointment
Sean Lemass	Taoiseach 1959 - 1966
Frank Aiken	Minister for External Affairs 1957 - 1969
Kevin Boland	Minister for Defence 1957 - 1961
Gerard Bartley	Minister for Defence 1961 - 1965
Con Cremin	Secretary, Department of Foreign Affairs
Stephen Kearney	Assistant Secretary, Department of Defence
Patrick J. Kilcullen	Principal Officer, Department of Defence
Lt Gen Seán MacEoin	Chief of Staff 1960 & 1962 - 1971
(Lt Gen Seán McKeown)	(Chief of Staff 1960 & 1962 - 1971)
Maj Gen Seán Collins-Powell	Chief of Staff 1961 - 1962, Adjutant-General 4/1962 - 1/1969
Col P.J. Hally	Adjutant-General 4/1957 - 4/1962
Col Thomas J. Gray	Director of Plans and Operations & President 1961 Medals Board
Lt Col Olaf MacNeill	Member, 1961 Medals Board
Comdt D.E. Ó Cuanacháin	Member, 1961 Medals Board
Col Joseph P. Emphy	OC Western Command 3/1961, Assistant Chief of Staff 8/1962 - 1/1969
Col E. 'Ned' Shortall	Director Plans and Operations & President 1965 Medals Board
Col Eoghan O'Neill	Director Training
Col S. O'Broin (John Byrne)	Deputy Adjutant-General
Col J. K Cogan	President, 1962 Medals Board
Lt Col R.F. Dalton	Member, 1962 Medals Board
Lt Col R. O'Sullivan	Member, 1962 and 1965 Medals Boards
Lt Col James J. Caseley	OIC 'A' Administration Section, & Member 1965 Medals Board
Comdt F. Neill	Secretary, 1962 & 1965 Medals Boards

## Belgium and UK

Name	Appointment
Paul Henri Spaak	Belgium Foreign Minister, Brussels
Henri Crémer	Belgium Consul General, Elisabethville
Denzil Dunnett	British Consul in Elisabethville

## Annex I

### KEY EVENTS

United Nations	
21 Feb 61	Security Council Resolution 161/61: Use of Force
18 Sep 61	Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld killed in plane crash
24 Nov 61	Security Council Resolution 169/61: Use of Force

'A' Company 35 Infantry Battalion	
25 Jun 61	'A' Company arrive on Elisabethville from Ireland
28 Aug 61	Operation Rumpunch
1 & 2 Sep 61	On instructions, Force Mide withdraws from Jadotville
3 Sep 61	'A' Company Group deployed to Jadotville
6 Sep 61	'A' Company patrol to Kolwezi
13 Sep 61	Operation Morthor
13 - 17 Sep 61	Battle of Jadotville
17 Sep 61	Surrender Documents Signed in Jadotville
18 Sep - 25 Oct	'A' Company in Captivity: Jadotville and Kolwezi
14 - 20 Dec 61	Operation Unokat (Elisabethville)
23 Dec 61	Last elements of 'A' Company depart for Ireland
Feb 64	Submission of Unit History

Medal Process	
24 Feb 61	Convening of 1961 Medals Board (ONUC)
22 Sep 61	Award of MMG for Tpr A. Browne ONUC
9 Feb 62	OC 35 Inf Bn submitted recommendations for awards to the AG
29 Mar 62	Convening of 1962 Medals Board (ONUC)
8 Feb 64	Institution of Distinguished Service Medal
27 May 65	Convening of 1965 Medals Board (ONUC and UNFICYP)
4 Jun 68	Presentation of DSMs for ONUC and UNFICYP

Defence Forces	
9 Dec 96	Comdt Liam Donnelly's Submission to Chief of Staff
23 Mar 04	Comdt Liam Donnelly's Resubmission to Chief of Staff
26 Apr 04	Submission of Col Breslin' Study Group's Report
6 Jul 04	Submission of Col Moore's Report (Analysis and Recommendations)
18 Dec 20	Terms of Reference, Independent Review Group – Jadotville

Ceremonial	
19 Nov 05	Unveiling of Commemorative Plaque, Custume Barracks, Athlone
24 Nov 06	Presentation of Scrolls - Mr Noel Tracy TD Minister of State
23 Feb 07	Unveiling of Portraits, Lt Col McNamee & Comdt Quinlan Military College
21 Dec 09	Nominal Roll incorporated on Memorial, Custume Barracks, Athlone
23 Jul 10	50 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Deployment to ONUC, Casement Aerodrome, Baldonnel
17 Sep 11	50 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Activities, incl. Wreath Laying, Custume, Barracks Athlone
17 Sep 16	55 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Jadotville, Presentation of Unit Citation, Custume Barracks
2 Dec 17	Presentation of An Bonn Jadotville, Custume Barracks, Athlone

## Annex J

### WEAPONS AND AMMUNITION<sup>1</sup>

<b>35 Inf Bn Weapons</b>	
Carl Gustaf SMG	374
FN Automatic Rifle	272
.38 Revolver	56
.303 Vickers MMG	7 (Inf) 11 (Cav)
Bren LMG Mk III	44
60mm Mortar	14
81mm Mortar	7 (Handed over by the 34 Inf Bn)
Carl Gustaf 84mm Anti-Tank Rifle	13
Energa Grenade Launchers	51

<b>35 Inf Bn Ammunition Stock</b>	
First Line Holdings in Elisabethville: 19 Days Small Arms, 18 Days Mortar and 7 Days Anti-Tank, based on WW2 parameters <sup>2</sup>	
.303 LMG Ball	96,800 rounds (32,000 used)
.303 LMG Tracer	9,680 rounds (Expenditure Unknown to IRG)
.303 Medium Machine Gun Ball	182,000 rounds (Expenditure Unknown to IRG)
.303 Medium Machine Gun Tracer	28,600 rounds (7,000 used)
9mm Gustaf SMG	290,304 rounds (120,000 used)
7.62mm FN Rifle	136,000 rounds (57,000 used)
60mm Mortar HE	1,692 (574 used)
60mm Mortar Smoke	396 (36 used)
84mm Anti-Tank Rifle	390 (146 used)
Energa Anti-tank Grenades	265 (140 used)
No. 36 Grenades	684 (500 used)
Smoke Grenades	600 (47 used)
Lachrymatory Grenades	400 (476 used) (Likely 76 grenades acquired)

<b>Company Weapons</b>	
Carl Gustaf SMG	78 per Company
FN automatic rifle	64 per Company
Vickers MMG	2 per Company
Bren LMG	12 per Company
60mm Mortar	3 per Company
Carl Gustaf 84mm Anti-Tank Rifle	3 per Company
Energa Grenade Launchers	17 per Company

<sup>1</sup> MA, Unit History, 35 Inf Bn.

<sup>2</sup> DOD, 532/2004 pt 1, Col Shortall, D Plans and Ops, memo for supplementary question 233 Dáil Éireann, 8 November 1961.

<b>35 Inf Bn Ammunition Allotment – Guide Only Redistribution Required – Independent Missions<sup>3</sup></b>				
<b>Weapon</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>On Man</b>	<b>Coy Reserve</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Line with Company</b>
<b>FN Auto-Rifle</b>	7.62mm	100	200	200
<b>Gustaf SMG</b>	9mm	216	216	432
<b>LMG with Gun</b>	.303 Ball	750	450	1000
<b>LMG with Gun</b>	.303 Tracer	75	45	100
<b>MMG</b>	.303 Ball	3500	6500	3000
<b>MMG - Inf</b>	.303 Tracer	350	650	300
<b>MMG - Cav</b>	.303 Tracer	700	1300	600
<b>Energa - Man</b>	Ballistite	10	10	-

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<sup>3</sup> MA, Unit History, 35 Inf Bn, p 153.