



The Parachute Regimental Association Aberdeen Branch

HRH The Prince Charles, Duke of Rothesay, honorary branch life member

From The Chairman & Branch Trustees
Gentlemen,

Put McGuinness in dock too, say British officers. Army chiefs outraged that Saville inquiry may result in trial of ex-soldiers for Bloody Sunday



Martin McGuinness should face trial for murder in the wake of this week's long-awaited report into the Bloody Sunday massacre, say former British commanding officers who served in Ulster. Lord Saville's 12-year inquiry will conclude that a number of fatal shootings of civilians by British paratroopers were unlawful killings. However, senior ex-officers are outraged at the possibility of soldiers being prosecuted over the 1972 shootings while former IRA commanders such as McGuinness, the deputy first minister of Northern Ireland, escape censure. Major-General Julian Thompson, a Royal Marines commanding officer in south Armagh during the Troubles,

said that if Saville found UK troops guilty then individuals such as Sinn Féin's McGuinness should also be held to account. Thompson said: "In that case, let's prosecute the IRA as well, men like McGuinness. How about drawing a line under this unless we want to go and prosecute all the IRA guys who murdered as well? It's ironic that these guys [British soldiers] could be prosecuted and the people who've murdered 20 times more than they have are being allowed off." Colonel Richard Kemp, who completed seven tours in Northern Ireland, said it was a "serious error" to prosecute soldiers so long after the event. "And let's not forget that we have had IRA murderers let off and not prosecuted and brought into government," he said. "Let's open an investigation into some of Martin McGuinness's activities, shall we?" Paratroopers shot dead 13 unarmed men on a civil rights march in the Bogside in January 1972. A 14th man died of his wounds several months later. The killings became a seismic moment in the history of the Troubles and helped to increase the popularity of the Provisional IRA in the province.

The idea of former soldiers ending up in the dock for their role in events 38 years ago is already causing consternation in military and unionist circles. Calls for McGuinness to face justice will further stoke tensions ahead of this Tuesday's publication of the 5,000-page dossier. Politicians in London and Belfast fear that the conclusions of the Saville inquiry, which was set up to promote reconciliation in Northern Ireland, may have the opposite effect. Lord Trimble, the former Ulster Unionist party leader and Nobel peace laureate, has warned that if the conclusions went beyond those of the Widgery report in 1972 – which said that the troops' behavior had merely "bordered on the reckless" – there would be instant pressure to prosecute former soldiers for manslaughter or murder. McGuinness, the Sinn Féin MP who was second-in-command of the IRA in Derry during Bloody Sunday, is also expected to be criticized in Saville's report, according to sources who have seen it. During the Bloody Sunday tribunal, a British agent codenamed "Infliction" alleged that McGuinness fired on the army just before members of 2 Para fired on demonstrators, although another IRA informer – Willie Carlin – came out of hiding in 2001 to give evidence to Saville rejecting those allegations. McGuinness has called such claims "lunatic". Although the decision to put former troops in the dock would rest initially with Ulster's prosecution service, lawyers say victims' families might want to bring a private prosecution. The Saville inquiry involved 2,500 witness statements and cost almost £200m.

The PARA Regt Charter - explained

Brig John Lorimer was tasked by the Col Commandant to craft a charter for the Parachute Regiment. He writes 'I attach The Colonel Commandant's endorsed version of the Parachute Regiment Charter. In addition to the Colonel Commandant's endorsement, it has been agreed by a number of Regimental elders, including Generals Howlett, Smith, Jackson, Reith and Pike. The aim is for the Regimental Charter to endure. It exists to inform – at all levels – as well as attempting to encapsulate what makes us different, the spirit of the Regiment, our unique ethos and our vital ground. It should be described as 'The Parachute Regiment Charter' and can be quoted verbatim in writing and in discussion – in toto or in parte. The Charter can be used by all members of the Regiment, drawing on it for debates, presentations, speeches, articles and papers. Thank you to everyone who contributed to its drafting and staffing. We will review it again towards the end of the year, possibly after the completion of the SDR (Strategic Defence Review). In time, it is hoped that we will be producing poster-size versions, wallet-sized cards and a standard A4 version. In the meantime, please use this version; **I would be grateful if you would not amend it or create your own local version**'.

THE PARACHUTE REGIMENT CHARTER

"What manner of men are these who wear the maroon red beret? They are firstly all volunteers, and are then toughened by hard physical training. As a result they have that infectious optimism and that offensive eagerness which comes from physical well being. They have jumped from the air and by doing so have conquered fear. Their duty lies in the van of the battle: they are proud of this honour and have never failed in any task. They have the highest standards in all things, whether it be skill in battle or smartness in the execution of all peace time duties. They have shown themselves to be as tenacious and determined in defence as they are courageous in attack. They are, in fact, men apart – every man an Emperor." Field Marshal The Viscount Montgomery of Alamein

The Past

The Parachute Regiment was formed to provide the infantry arm of the Airborne formations raised during the Second World War, in order to deliver a specialised operational capability. Airborne forces were required to operate at reach, with a light logistic footprint, often beyond traditional lines of support. Special qualities were therefore demanded of the airborne soldier, whether launched into battle by parachute or glider. He was required to be physically fit and mentally robust. He had to demonstrate motivation, self-reliance, initiative and intelligence. Through rigorous selection and hard training, the airborne soldier was expected to develop a temper of mind that bred resilience, self-confidence and a fierce determination to succeed, whatever the difficulties. These qualities, constantly sought through training and selection, have continued to be nurtured through subsequent generations, and have proved a winning factor time and again on operations to the present day.

The Future

These special capabilities are demanded more than ever in an evolving operational environment where complexity, ambiguity and confusion abound. The requirement for speedy, preventive deployments is still paramount, where airborne soldiers may have to operate at the limits of endurance and sustainability. They must be light and agile, ready to deploy at short notice, inherently self-reliant and innovative, with the skill at arms, cunning and boldness to bring all their firepower to bear. They have to be a highly disciplined and professionally competent force, deployable by helicopter, aeroplane or parachute. Attaining this professional standard requires motivated volunteers whose qualities are above the norm. In sustaining the specialised capability that remains the hallmark of the Parachute Regiment, appropriate selection and training is as critical now as it ever was.

The Regimental Charter

The Parachute Regiment provides the capability to deploy an infantry force at short notice, in the vanguard of operations and in the most demanding circumstances. As such, it is trained and ready to form the spearhead for the Army's rapid intervention capability. Its watchwords are professionalism, resilience, discipline, versatility, courage and self-reliance. It is light by design, because this confers speed of reaction, and is expert at air-land deployments, by helicopter, aeroplane or parachute. It is trained to conduct a range of missions, from prevention and pre-emption tasks, to complex, high intensity war fighting. It is also trained to provide direct support to United Kingdom Special Forces, with whom it maintains close links and to whom it contributes a very significant proportion of manpower.

In sum, The Parachute Regiment's approach to the training and selection of its soldiers continues to foster those qualities of resilience and versatility recognised by its founding fathers as the rock on which its particular value is built. It remains a force for good and for all seasons in the Army.

Bingo

A man goes to the doctors. The doc checks him over, and says "sorry mate, but you have yellow 24, a nasty virus, so called as it turns your blood yellow and you only have 24 hours to live. There's nothing I can do for you - just go home and enjoy your final precious moments on earth." So he trudges home to the wife, and breaks the news. Distraught, she asks him to accompany her to bingo that evening so he can experience her idea of a night out, as he's never been there before. He gets his 1st card, and wins 4 corners - prize £350, and then gets any line and wins £3200. He also calls for a full house - and wins a grand. The national grid comes up and he wins a further £380,000. The bingo Caller gets him on stage, and says "son - I've never seen you in here in all my life, but you won 4 corners, any line, full house and the national grid - I've never met anyone so lucky." "Lucky??" he screamed, "lucky? I'll have you know I've got yellow 24." "F**** me," says the bingo caller, "You've won the raffle as well!"

Arnhem Calling - Hello my Aberdonian friends



I finally recovered from the bout of swine flu and pneumonia that I contracted just before the Arnhem 65th anniversary commemorations. Sadly due to illness I missed out on all that was going on in the Arnhem area over the Airborne week. I've made this report from what by my friends and what was in the local media. I was pleased to hear from the reports that I got, that it all went well. The weather was also perfect unlike my health at the time. On the Friday there was a planned march across the John Frost bridge to be led by a 150 strong pipe band from Scotland. The plan was that they would march just before the 19.00 hrs ceremony at the Airborne monument at the bridge end. One of the attending coach drivers had a problem with his logbook (he was over his driving hours) and refused to drive them to Arnhem from a village 50 km away. The band arrived 20 min late with another coach. Once they got going, it was an impressive site to see them marching over the John Frost Bridge. The John Frost bridge was fitted out with new name signs that were only fitted the day before. I have been battling for the last six months with the local Arnhem Council for new signs to replace the old ones. Now that they finally followed my idea and fitted new signs the old signs are now in my possession as they were given to me for disposal. The

signs are in the same style as the ones on Pegasus Bridge in Normandy. I plan to donate one for a worthy Para cause the UK, so if any of you has any good ideas on how to raise money with the signs for the good cause just let know. I knew that there were 8 members of the Aberdeen Branch that all met later on the Friday evening in the Waag (the Aberdeen HQ flag was flying on the Waag pole.) As you know from experience the Waag at that time was packed out the door. The owner told me that the staff were all wearing the Market Garden "I am a child of freedom" T-shirt's. What a magnificent sight they must have been. On Saturday Ginkel Heath was very busy but a bit disappointing. There were only Hercs flying inline one after another. It was originally planned for a mass drop at the same time but sadly it never materialised. I was involved in the (tandem) jump of Mike Sosabowski (grandson of the Polish general) on the original DZ at Driel. The pathfinder group Holland hoped to drop there from a Dakota (owner Paddy Green) but it stayed on the airfield with a blown up engine. They jumped from 2 Cessna's (not very spectacular!!) and all went well. Mike had to jump from higher altitude and he had a perfect jump but sadly on landing he broke his leg. Mike only discovered this after being back in the UK for 4 days and after an X-ray. A plan was made to do something new in the evening and that went very well and will be done next year again. With the help of 40 cadets of Christ's College Finchley CCF there was a string of torches leading from the escape point, near the church in Oosterbeek to the other side of the river Rhine, to symbolise the route the remaining Para's took to safety after the battle was lost in 1944. On Sunday there was a beautiful service on an overcrowded cemetery at Oosterbeek, but no flypast because of low cloud. I had many friends ringing me or trying to see me but I was in bed with 40 gr, so that was my "Airborne weekend" I still live in hope of the Aberdeen branch making another branch trip to Arnhem. Until then, Frans.

The 70th Anniversary dinner 14th August to commemorate The Formation of Airborne Forces

It was regrettable that the planned date for the dinner of the 24th July as first promised by the OTC had to be abandoned due to staffing issues caused by the cadets and their PSI's being on exercise in America. This was outwith my control and I apologise to anyone who may have changed plans to suit the 24th July which was then cancelled. As discussed at the last branch meeting we have now agreed and confirmed a new date of **Saturday 14th August** with AUOTC RQMS. The anniversary dinner set menu is as follows: Starter choice - Soup or Melon & Parma Ham. Main course choices are Chicken Rob Roy or Steak & Ale pie. Sweet choice is Sticky Toffee pudding or Apple pie, Cheese board with Port and Coffee or Tea. Wine will be available on the table which will be supplied by the branch and inclusive in the ticket cost of £10 per person. There will be a disco in the evening provided by Steve Adams. The times are 1900 for 1930 to 0100. Bar prices are much less than your normal high street prices so it should be a hard to beat priced evening. There will of course be a fund raising raffle so please try and bring something with you. We have already sold some 50 odd of the 80 tickets available so please let myself or any of the committee know if you require a ticket ASAP.

Twa men frae Aiberdeen, one aul' geezer and one young, are pushing their shopping cairts aroon' Mugiemoos TESCO store when they collide intae wan' anither. The aulder chap says to the young guy, 'Sorry about that son, I'm looking for my wife, and I wisnae payin' attention tae faur I was gan.' The young bloke says, 'That's OK. It's a coincidence. I'm looking for my wife, too. I canae find her and I'm getting a little desperate.' The old bloke says, 'Well, maybe we can help each other. Whit does your wife look like?' The younger Aberdonian guy says, 'Well, she is 24 year auld, tall, wi' blonde hair, big blue eyes, long legs, big knockers, and she's wearing techt white shorts, a halter top and nae bra. 'Whit does your wife look like?' The auld mannie says..... 'Disnae matter --- let's look for yours.'

Charity Collection at Tesco Extra Danestone Bridge of Don

Tesco Extra Danestone Bridge of Don 3rd and 4th July. From the committee meeting of the 16th June it was mad rush to design and agree a layout for the mobile banners we agreed to purchase for use at our charity collections and especially for the 2 day event at Tesco. With the banners only arriving from the manufacturers on the Friday and last minute printing of the bucket labels we were ready just in time. Tesco were very accommodating to us and moved



some floor displays and even gave us a table and chairs. With the banners set up and the first shift of collectors all smartly dressed with blazers and berets the fun started. We were there to seriously collect money but it was all good fun and I have to say I was impressed with the public's response to us, not only by giving their cash but their kind words of support for not only the Parachute Regiment but for what all the branches of military services are going in general. I can personally tell you, regardless of whatever the media may portray, the public we met throughout the weekend were nothing but grateful to our Armed Services. With all the collected cash in the safe hands of Alan Ross the next major job was to count it! Alan, ably assisted by Ian Ross, the pair of them started

at 1400 on the Monday and by 1800 reported that we had collected an amazing £1830. However at the time of writing the newsletter Alan had deposited the money with our bank who then recounted it and informed Alan that he had actually deposited £1,918.51 so it just goes to show accountants can't count! All kidding and joking apart it was an awesome collection and special thanks go to Brig Hardie, Alan Ross, Ian Baxter, Bob Campbell M.M., Brian Reed, Bill Andrew, Sid Stephen, Bill Morgan and Norman Mearns. I also thank Heather Walker, Tesco charity coordinator, and Chris Saunders one of the managers for allowing us access to the store and last, but not least, the great and exceptionally generous Aberdeen public. Heather Walker has very kindly invited us back again to collect on the premium date of Sunday 19th December. Being so close to Xmas I'm sure it will be another memorable collection and a day of fun and laughter.

Update regarding distribution of collected funds

When we first discussed the charity collections we agreed that we would donate to Erskine and the Parachute Regiment Charity. With the revised figure from the 3rd & 4th of July's collections, the committee and I have agreed to donate £1000 to Erskine for use at the Fairview care home in Danestone Bridge of Don and £1000 to the Parachute Regimental Charity. Catherine Cowie of Erskine will advise a date for us to attend the care home and present a cheque to Muriel Gammy the care home manager. We will also involve Tesco and get some pictures into the media. A cheque for £1000 will be sent to the Reg Charity at RHQ PARA. We will be holding further collections just as soon as we can get confirmed dates set up.

Best Regards

Bob Crocker, Chairman

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Remember Meetings now start at 1930

Next Branch meeting takes place on Wednesday 28th July 2010, 1900 hours for 1930 hours

To Airborne, the world O'er, Shall brithers be for a' that

Disclaimer.

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