

Explosions shatter shaky peace in Belfast

BELFAST (AP) — Two bombs shattered a calm in Northern Ireland Wednesday as the outlawed Irish Republican Army debated possible peace moves.

The bombs in Belfast, one of which was found and intentionally detonated by troops, caused no casualties. They came amid reports that William Whitelaw, the British minister named overseer of Northern Ireland, soon will order the release of 60 suspected guerrillas interned without trials.

The death toll from 32 months of communal violence between Roman Catholics and Protestants mounted to 294. Henry Miller, 79, died of injuries he suffered last month in a bomb blast that killed six other persons on Belfast's Donegall Street.

IRA terrorists were blamed for a bomb explosion Wednesday that set afire a youth employment office in Belfast. Three armed men hurled the explosive into the building as morning rush hour crowds filled the streets, the British army said.

A second bomb rocked the city's eastern quarter, damaging structures. It was being detonated by army experts who said they were unable to defuse it.

The army also reported a small cache of arms and ammunition was found buried in hospital grounds off the Catholic Falls Road district of Belfast.

There were indications that the IRA might be considering a halt in its guerrilla campaign, in response to mounting public pressure. Many Catholics have called on the IRA to cease hostilities and give a fair chance to the British peace plan, which installed Whitelaw and ended a half century of Protestant domination over the Catholic minority. Following up moves by the IRA in Londonderry to sound out Catholic opinion on reducing the violence, the movement's Sinn Fein political arm in Dublin said it also may contact "units in the field" to obtain the feelings of Catholics.

Peace-seeking Catholic women in Belfast's Andersonstown district, shouted down by the IRA earlier in the week, said they may meet in secret to discuss ways of quelling the gunfire.

In Londonderry, the Rev. William McGaughey, a local priest who serves 7,000 people in the Bogside and Brandywell Catholic enclaves, said he supported the suggested talks.

"The feeling here is that the people want the British initiative to be given a chance," he asserted. "I would encourage . . . anything that would promote an end to the violence."

Dublin IRA chief of staff Sean MacStiofain declared there would be no suspension of operations, at present. But he said he would welcome a conference of "all interests"—including Protestants—on the Northern Irish question.

In Belfast, sources in the Home Affairs Ministry said Whitelaw could be expected to release the 60 suspected terrorists within three weeks. There are among 700 men currently detained under the province's emergency detention rules.

One of the promises the British government made in assuming rule of Northern Ireland was that the practice would be phased out, providing no new violence resulted. A senior ministry official boarded a prison ship decked in Belfast to investigate the complaints of 132 inmates on a hunger strike. The inmates on the vessel, Maidstone, said they were unjustly held and fed contaminated food.

It was reported the official found living conditions reasonable and the food good but ordered increased recreation time for the detainees.

Two Catholic parliamentarians also appealed for a truce.

John Hume, Social Democratic Labor party member of the provincial Parliament, urged the IRA to end its campaign of terror but asked a comparable de-escalation by the British army.

Gerry Fitt, party leader and legislator in the London Parliament, said continued street battling "can only bring tragedy and unhappiness."

An Army spokesman announced that 600 extra British troops dispatched to Northern Ireland to reinforce security over a tense Easter weekend, would return to England Friday. Their departure will return British troop strength in the province to 14,500.

VANCOUVER, Wash.—A violent wind spawned by a thunderstorm whipped through Vancouver Wednesday, and seven persons were reported to have died as a result of the storm. A spokesman at St. Joseph Hospital said at least a dozen persons were in the intensive care unit of the emergency room, indicating their injuries were serious. A check of two Vancouver hospitals indicated as many as 125 persons may have been injured in the windstorm. The report of seven deaths came from Dr. Arch Hamilton, Clark County coroner. There was no immediate word on how the seven died.

WASHINGTON—The President's chief economic adviser, Herbert Stein, said Wednesday it would be foolhardy to predict that present economic controls will succeed without change. He said the Pay Board and Price Commission must be ready to modify their policies if necessary to get inflation down to the administration's goal of a 2 or 3 per cent rate by December. But at the same time Stein, chairman of the President's Council of Economic Advisers, said he remains confident that the goal can be met. A Los Angeles Times report said Wednesday that confidential studies found commission policies would lead to an annual inflation rate of 3½ to 4 per cent.

SAN JOSE, Calif.—A prosecutor crippled by a bullet in the Marin County courthouse shootout said publically for the first time Wednesday that he shot four abductors, three of whom died. In a voice quavering with emotion, Deputy Dist. Atty. Gary Thomas, 34, testified from a wheelchair at the Angela Davis trial about the Aug. 7, 1970, shootout. Thomas, 34, recreated the scene in a van outside the courthouse as the armed men tried to flee the San Rafael courthouse with himself, a judge and two jurors as hostages.

SAIGON—The North Vietnamese attack in the far north has triggered "the decisive battle for the survival of the country," President Nguyen Van Thieu declared Wednesday. He disclosed he had asked for Maximum U.S. air and naval support. Thieu said the North Vietnamese are trying to capture South Vietnam's two northern provinces to use as bargaining pawns in a settlement of the war. In a 15-minute radio and television speech that followed a two-day visit to the northern battle zone, Thieu told the nation that the North Vietnamese advance southward had been halted for the most part and the enemy had suffered heavy casualties.

Jury deadlocked on conspiracy charges

Berrigan, nun convicted on smuggling counts

HARRISBURG, Pa. (AP) — The Rev. Philip Berrigan and a nun who served as his lieutenant in the anti-war movement were convicted Wednesday of smuggling letters in and out of a federal prison, but the jury deadlocked on charges that they conspired with five other defendants to kidnap presidential aide Henry Kissinger. The five were freed by the jury deadlock.

"These verdicts are yours and yours alone, and you don't need to justify them or explain them to anybody," U.S. District Court Judge R. Dixon Herman told the nine women and three men as he dismissed them after their week-long quest for a verdict that ended with their split decision.

"There will be many, many people who disagree and there will be just as many who agree," added Herman, a bald 61-year-old jurist appointed to the bench in 1969.

At the heart of the government's case was the three-pronged conspiracy charge—accusing the "Harrisburg Seven" of scheming to kidnap Kissinger, blow up government heating tunnels in Washington and vandalize draft boards in several Eastern cities.

But this went by the boards as a result of the jury's verdict.

Instead, Berrigan and his assistant in the Catholic anti-war left, Sister Elizabeth McAlister, were convicted of smuggling half a dozen letters in and out of

Lewisburg, Pa., federal penitentiary after the priest entered in 1970 to begin a term he still is serving.

The other five defendants were not involved in the letter smuggling, and thus not included in any way whatsoever in the verdict. It was returned at 4:09 p.m.

The five defendants on whom the jury could not agree were Egbal Ahmad, 41; the Rev. Neil McLaughlin, 31; the Rev. Joseph Wenderoth, 36; Anthony Scoblick, 31 and his wife, Mary Cain Scoblick, 33.

Ahmad, the only non-Catholic among the group, is a Pakistani Moslem associated with the Adlai Stevenson Institute of International Affairs in Chicago. McLaughlin and Wenderoth are Roman Catholic priests, Scoblick is a former Josephite priest and his wife is a former nun.

The defendants had smiled and embraced in the locked courtroom in advance of the jury's entry, as word of a possible deadlock spread.

With the announcement that the jury had deadlocked on five of the defendants but convicted Berrigan and Sister Elizabeth the air of relief vanished. Neither the convicted priest nor the nun displayed any emotion, however.

The jury had convicted Berrigan on Easter Sunday on a single count of smuggling a letter out of the Lewisburg, Pa., federal penitentiary on May 24, 1970.

His emissary at the time was a fellow convict, Boyd Douglas Jr., who a week later became an FBI informant against the priest.

Douglas, 31, was a star government witness at the trial, which revolved also around an exchange of 24 letters in all between Berrigan and Sister Elizabeth.

The defense characterized Douglas as an agent provocateur, saying of his connection with the peace movement:

"He infiltrated, he activated, he betrayed."

Lynch, however, said in reply that the defense "hacked at him but they never were able to change his testimony."

The Sunday conviction made Berrigan liable to 10 years in prison. The three smuggling counts added by the jury Wednesday carry an additional 30 years.

Currently the priest is serving a six-year federal prison sentence for destroying draft records in Maryland in a case unrelated to the trial.

Sister Elizabeth, 32, a 5-foot-7 brunette, who was suspended with pay as an art history instructor at the Marymount College in Tarrytown, N.Y., faces 10 years on each of the three smuggling convictions.

The trial began Jan. 24 in a ninth floor courtroom of Harrisburg's downtown federal building.

Four weeks were required to

pick a jury and six alternates and it was not until Feb. 21 that the actual proceedings got underway.

The government presented 64 witnesses before resting March 23, with Douglas the most important of the 64.

The defense surprised the prosecution and the court on March 24 when it rested its case without calling a single witness.

The defendants later announced that this decision was their own, agreed to by a four-to-three vote among themselves.

The saga of the Harrisburg Seven began quietly in federal courtrooms where the sentences totaling six years were handed to Berrigan for destroying draft board records in Baltimore in 1967 and Catonsville, Md., the following year.

Appeals failed. Berrigan tried to elude prison by going into hiding, but the FBI caught up with him in less than three weeks. On May 1, 1970, he entered Lewisburg penitentiary.

Waiting for the 48-year-old priest that spring day was Douglas, 31, nearing the end of a five-year term for bank fraud and armed assault on a federal agent.

Douglas was free to leave the penitentiary daily for a study-release program at Bucknell—the only one of 1,800 Lewisburg convicts so favored at the time.

Was Douglas' entry into the Bucknell program a convenient arrangement by forward-looking

government agents anticipating Berrigan's arrival? The defense asked. "It was my own idea," Douglas replied.

"I asked Philip Berrigan if there was anything I could do for him, the informer said. 'I said I thought I could get a letter out for him if that's what he wanted.'"

From the outset, Douglas made copies of letters Berrigan exchanged with Sister Elizabeth—24 in all, including two dealing with the proposal to kidnap Kissinger. These copies ended up in the hands of the FBI.

Douglas claimed he turned informer in early 1970 when confronted with an incriminating letter discovered in Berrigan's cell. The defense called the motive greed.

In the year following his Dec. 16, 1970, parole from Lewisburg, Douglas received \$9,200 from the FBI for expenses and services. He had asked for a "reward" of a tax-free \$50,000 for his continued service as an informer. He said he was turned down.

On Nov. 27, 1970, FBI director J. Edgar Hoover—seeking additional funds for the bureau—revealed what he described as a plot to blow up the Washington tunnel system and kidnap an as yet unidentified high government official.

From that point on, the defense claimed, the FBI went all out to produce evidence that would support the Hoover charges through an indictment.