

Minister stands firm on McCabe killers

From M^AIRTÍN Mac CORMAIC in Leinster House

THOSE persons convicted in connection with the death of Detective Garda Jerry McCabe do not qualify for early release under the terms of the Good Friday Agreement, the Dail was reassured this Wednesday night by Justice Minister, Mary Wallace.

Deputy Wallace was replying to a barrage of questions from Fine Gael and Labour deputies, including Limerick TDs, during angry exchanges arising out of the recent release of the four prisoners on compassionate grounds.

She rejected Opposition claims that the prisoners had been granted "early release by stealth".

She said the Garda authorities had been informed of the releases in question.

It was at their discretion whether the information was passed on to Jerry McCabe's widow, Ann, and her family.

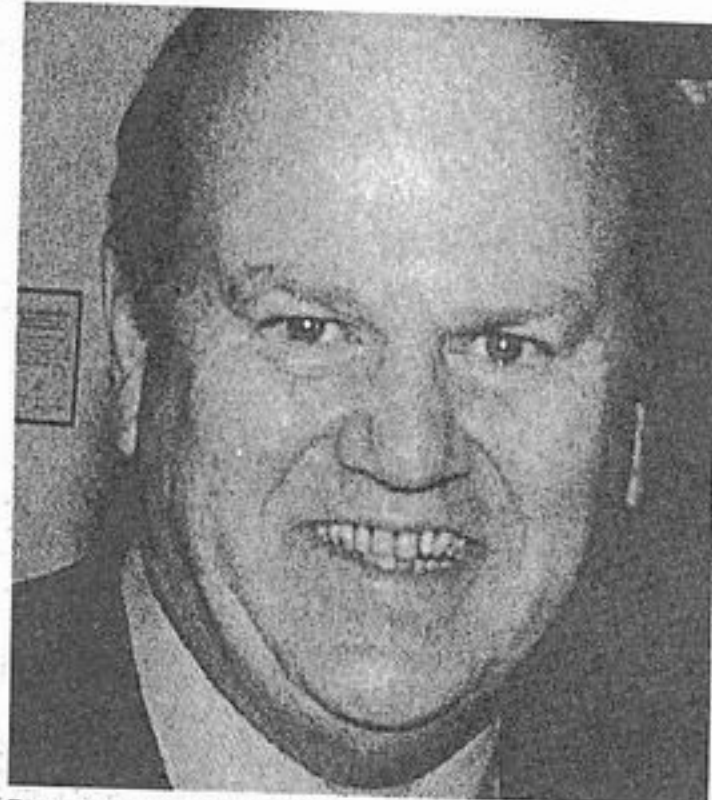
But she said Minister John O'Donoghue, who was addressing a United Nations conference on organised crime as the Dail debate was taking place, had asked

that steps be taken to ensure that Mrs McCabe was informed if any of the prisoners involved was granted compassionate parole in the future.

Fine Gael's Jim Higgins said it was ironic that the Minister of State should use the terms "compassionate parole" in relation to those people.

"Is she not aware that absolutely no compassion was shown to either Jerry McCabe or Ben O'Sullivan outside the post office in Adare when they were mown down in cold blood and summarily executed?" he asked.

"Was it not brought to the Minister of State's attention that in the past three weeks alone Ann McCabe expressed her absolute revulsion at the



Deputy Michael Noonan: did the Minister look behind letters seeking compassionate leave? (LL)

prospect that the early release of the killers of her husband should even be contemplated?

"Is she not aware that the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform and the Taoiseach have repeatedly assured the leaders of all parties in Opposition that there was no question of the Government countenancing the release of these people under the terms of the Good Friday Agreement?"

"Will she not be honest with the House and acknowledge that what we have here is, in effect, a stepping stone to full release?"

Mr Higgins said a "special regime" appeared to apply in this case—"a special regime which does not apply to bag snatchers, drug addicts or petty criminals."

"Is it not the case that all the accolades and medals for bravery and gallantry will be set to naught by virtue of this matter which hit the headlines by accident as a result of this leak?"

Ms Wallace said that since time immemorial the term "compassionate" had been used in relation to this type of release, but she would not use that terminology if she had a choice.

Labour's Deputy Jan

O'Sullivan said the decision was extraordinary and unprecedented in view of the seriousness of the crime committed, the statements

of Mrs McCabe and the relatively short portion of their sentences that the prisoners had served.

"Is there a political dimension attaching to this decision?" she asked.

"Has some agreement been reached with Sinn Féin or any other political grouping in respect of this matter?"

Deputy Michael Finucane said the Minister of State was aware of the sensitivities which applied in respect of this issue and of the groundswell of public opinion against the decision to release the prisoners.

"Is it not rather sad that we are obliged to question her about this matter which would not have come to light unless the GRA was alerted to the releases by some of its members and expressed its opinion on them?"

"Does the Minister of State not believe that this will be seen by everybody as laying the groundwork for the full release of these people?" he asked.

Deputy Michael Noonan asked if the Minister would confirm that the Department of Justice



Deputy Jan O'Sullivan: Has some agreement been reached with Sinn Féin or any other political grouping in respect of this matter? (LL)

and the prison authorities had been provided with four doctors' letters on behalf of the four prisoners claiming that a close relative in each case was seriously ill.

He asked if the Department and the Minister had "decided not to look behind the letters and that the letters were the only grounds on which the decision to grant compassionate leave had been taken".

Earlier, Deputy Wallace pointed out that the four prisoners had been granted short periods of compassionate parole within the last few months.

"The applications for compassionate parole were considered in accordance with the normal criteria which applies in

such cases," she said.

"Nevertheless, I am assured that the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform was satisfied in each case that the granting of a period of compassionate parole was justified."

"I have no doubt that members share revulsion at the dreadful crimes committed by the prisoners in question."

"I understand particularly that releases of this kind can cause understandable distress to the family of the victim."

"However, the granting of compassionate parole has long been a feature of prison administration both here and elsewhere and each case must be assessed on its merits," said Deputy Wallace.

Bruce COLLEGE
DUBLIN · CORK · LIMERICK · BELFAST

19th Annual
Christmas Revision Course
2001

FOR JUNIOR AND LEAVING
CERTIFICATE STUDENTS

Tues. 2nd.- Sat. 6th.
JANUARY 2001

Past Exam Papers Analysed
Answering Techniques Developed
Study Skills Seminar
Summary Notes Supplied



Julie Kilmartin (Principal)
"Call me immediately to book
your Christmas Revision
Course!"

Early Booking is
Essential to Guarantee
Subject Choice

Julie Kilmartin
65 O'Connell St., Limerick.
Tel: 061-416811

Visit our website at: www.brucecollege.ie

SEASON'S GREETINGS

To all our clients and associates from everyone in



SHANNON DEVELOPMENT

and its subsidiary companies

Le Gach Dea-Ghui don Nollaig agus don Athbhliain

Shannon Free Airport Development Co Ltd,
Shannon Castle Banquets & Heritage Ltd,
Kilrush Creek Marina Ltd,
The National Technological Park Plassey Ltd.

CORPORATION OF LIMERICK

CLOSURE OF OFFICES

Limerick Corporation wishes to advise the public of the following Christmas arrangements.

The Corporation offices, including Motor Taxation office, will be closed as from close of business on Friday, 22nd December, 2000, until the morning of Friday, 29th December, 2000.

The offices will also be closed Monday, 1st January, 2001, and will re-open for business as normal on Tuesday, 2nd January, 2001.

B. Keating
City Manager & Town Clerk.

Corporation of LIMERICK Bardas

Gardai angered by temporary releases

By CLIODHNA McGOWAN

LIMERICK gardai have hit out at the Justice Department after two of the killers of Detective Garda Jerry McCabe let out of jail to visit sick parents, were found to have been living it up.

The Garda Representative Association (GRA) has strongly criticised what it called the "insensitivity of the Department of Justice in releasing the men who were clearly abusing the system of temporary release".

One was found have spent the night with a woman in a hotel while



Ane McCabe: utterly devastated (LL)

had been informed that he would be in Limerick. On the Saturday of the

"In the case of Jeremiah Sheehy, a member of the Garda Síochána was in a patrol car last Sunday morning and observed him in the company of a woman in the main street in Rathkeale."

"Clearly he was somewhat taken aback because he thought the man was serving a sentence in Castlereagh Prison."

"I have been in contact with Ann McCabe and she is completely and utterly devastated once again. She has made the point very categorically that she could have met that man on Saturday on the main street of Limerick, which is only 20 miles from Rathkeale."

Christmas Co

Fujitsu Siemen Scaleo

ONLY AT W

- Intel P111 850 Mhz. Processor
- 64 MB Ram
- 20GB Hard Disk
- DVD-ROM
- 16 Bit Audio On-Board
- Flat Panel 3D Speakers
- 56K Fax/Modem
- Keyboard & Wheel Mouse
- 15" SVGA Display
- 12 Month On-site Warranty



Cash Price	Total Cash Price	APR	35 Mth. @
£1199	£1483.92	15.4%	£41.21

Weekly price of
£9.51

SOFTWARE BUNDLE INCLUDES:

Windows 98, MS Word 2000, Works 2000, Money 2000 Standard, Encarta World Atlas 2000, Home Publishing 2000, Auto Route Express 2000, Picture It 2000, Age of Empire 11 (subject to availability).

Microsoft HP HEWLETT PACKARD

PSION EPSON Canon