

Submarine may have damaged trawler

I.T.
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THE POSSIBILITY that a submarine may have been responsible for the damage sustained by the Killybegs-based fishing trawler, *Salve Regina*, off Malin Head, Co Donegal on Saturday morning, is one of the theories that will be examined in an official investigation into the incident.

The incident took place in calm seas about 20 miles out in the Atlantic Ocean when the trawler began taking in water into its holds and was in danger of sinking.

The vessel, skippered by Mr Shaun O'Carroll, carried a crew of seven. A British frigate, HMS *Adriedna*, rushed to the scene in response to the SOS and a helicopter from the frigate lowered water pumps onto the stricken trawler. Crewmen carried out emergency work by plugging a hole four inches by three inches in the hull of the trawler.

The damaged trawler was later escorted to the mouth of Lough Swilly by the *Adriedna* and the *Portrush* lifeboat then brought the trawler into Rathmullen Harbour, where it was drydocked immediately and an investigation began.

A source said last night. "The hold was full of water when assistance arrived and the refrigeration units on the trawler were completely destroyed and empty fish boxes were smashed. It was struck by an object."

The massive emergency operation was co-ordinated by Clyde coastguard, Scotland.

It was in the same area of the Atlantic that the trawler *Boy Shaun* mysteriously sank last September in ideal weather conditions with the loss of four fishermen, three of whom were from one family.

Nuclear-free zone Bill urged by CND

By Walter Kilroy

A CAMPAIGN to have legislation enacted which would make Ireland a nuclear-free zone was launched at the weekend at the annual general meeting of Irish CND.

A draft Bill was presented to the meeting in Dublin by Mr Joe Noonan, which would exclude visits by ships carrying nuclear weapons and overflights by aircraft transporting them. The Bill, based on the legislation banning such visits in New Zealand, would also require a written assurance to this effect from the commanding officer before such visits or overflights.

The meeting also heard from a group in the Isle of Man which monitors submarine activity in the Irish Sea. A major nuclear accident could occur as a result of a nuclear-powered submarine becoming entangled in fishing nets,

according to Mr Bernard Moffat, who is general secretary of the Celtic League.

There have been 31 incidents in the area involving submarines since 1982, three of them during the British "Purple Warrior" amphibious exercises in the Irish Sea last month. "Commercial fishing boats and other vessels are at risk, with the danger of loss of life," Mr Moffat said. "But the big danger is that there would be an accident involving a submarine which is nuclear-powered or is armed with intercontinental ballistic missiles.

"These submarines carry two pressurised water reactors, and the effects would be catastrophic. There would be nuclear pollution on a massive scale, which would take generations to clear up," he said.

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- 1 A British MoD spokesman said (7.12.87) that the skipper of the *Salve Regina* had told the engineer on the HMS *Adriedna* that he thought the damage had been caused when they struck the breakwater when leaving port the previous night. He also said that RN divers had spent several hours working in difficult conditions to repair the damage.
- 2 There was a small piece on this - about two paragraphs - in the *Guardian* of the same date, by Patrick Wintour. (The name of the *Adriedna* was misspelt, the MoD pointed out).
- 3 There were reports at the end of November/beginning of December that a body washed up on the west coast of Scotland was that of one of the crew of the *Boy Shaun*. This was the fishing boat which sank mysteriously off Malin Head (Co Donegal) on September 20th 1987.
- 4 The Irish government announced its decision on November 1st 1987 to extend the territorial limit to 12 miles. The Bill, entitled the Maritime Jurisdiction Bill, was published on December 10th. No date has been set for its introduction in the Dail (after which it goes to the Senate), but it may be an opportunity for some debate on the current situation in the Irish Sea.