

NORTHERN IRELAND: POSSIBLE SECURITY MEASURES

Current Security Policy

The most effective counter to the terrorist campaign will continue to be effective and well-targeted operations by the police, supported by the Armed Forces, operating within the law.

2 A number of initiatives to enhance further the operational effectiveness of the security forces are in hand. These include:

- in intelligence, improving the IT support available to RUC Special Branch; building on recent initiatives to improve co-ordination; and improving intelligence coverage of particular areas (eg South Armagh);
- in command and control, developing further the work of the Province Executive Committee, and extending, where possible, tour lengths for key Army appointments; and
- in the use of resources, ensuring that tasks are appropriately distributed and effectively carried out.

3. In April NI Committee will be reviewing the appropriateness of current force levels.

Legislative Framework

4. The Chief Constable earlier this year put forward various proposals for changes to the emergency legislation; most were already being examined by an NIO-led working group. The areas being examined include:

- 7. Internment remains a power available to both the British and Irish - possible changes to the right to silence;
- (on both sides of the border) it could be highly damaging to the terror - admissibility of accomplice evidence, and of previous convictions;
- Mr Reynolds recently to rule out internment as an option in the Republic; it is never easy to see how internment, once introduced, adjustments to the burden and standard of proof in certain cases;
- internationally and domestically.
- Information - admissibility of intercept material;
- 8. The Joint Declaration has already significantly increased the pressure - safeguarding the anonymity of witnesses; and that the continuing violence is a direct result of FIRA's refusal to end its campaign;
- changes to rules of disclosure/discovery.

5. Most of the proposed changes raise practical and presentational difficulties. Nevertheless, a number of them are now before Ministers, and detailed work on others is in hand.

Chilcot/Dalton

9. The Chilcot/Dalton Group, co-chaired by the Permanent Secretaries of the NIO and the Republic's Department of Justice, was set-up in December 1991 to review North/South security co-operation.

6. Powers to tackle terrorist finance are being strengthened by measures in the Criminal Justice Bill now before Parliament: further measures in this field are being considered.

Internment

7. Internment remains a power available to both the British and Irish Governments. If timed correctly and implemented effectively (on both sides of the border) it could be highly damaging to the terrorists. But there are a number of serious potential drawbacks: Mr Reynolds has appeared recently to rule out internment as an option in the Republic; it is never easy to see how internment, once introduced, can be brought to an end; and it would be open to public criticism, both internationally and domestically.

Information Strategy

8. The Joint Declaration has already significantly increased the pressure on the republican movement, by making it clear that the continuing violence is a direct result of PIRA's refusal to end its campaign, and underlining its increasing isolation both from the vast majority of people in Ireland, North and South, and internationally. That pressure will need to be maintained and enhanced through a co-ordinated information strategy.

Chilcot/Dalton

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10. Areas being examined include:

- police structures to counter terrorism;
- border flight safety zones;
- radio communications between the British Army and the Garda;
- the establishment of Joint Automatic Fingerprint Recognition (AFR);
- joint weapons and explosives database;
- police exchange visits; and
- examination of methods of inhibiting terrorist production of home-made explosives.

11. We will continue to press this agenda with the Irish at all levels. If there is not an end to PIRA end to violence in the near future, our case for improving security co-operation will be strengthened.

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Extradition

12. Irish legislation to close the existing loophole regarding the political offence exception was to be introduced into the Dail before Christmas but has again slipped, due to a combination of technical problems and pressure on Parliamentary time. The technical difficulties appear to have been resolved: the bill is to be published in the Christmas recess.

13. Early passage of this legislation would be both useful in itself, and a public demonstration of the Irish Government's commitment to security co-operation.

Northern Ireland Office
29 December 1993

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NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE
30 DEC 1973
SR DIVISION

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- PS/Sir John Wheeler (L&B) - B
- PS/Michael Ancram (L&B) - B
- PS/PUS (L&B) - B
- PS/Mr Fell - B
- Mr Legge - B
- Mr Thomas - B
- Mr Bell - B
- Mr Deverell - B
- Mr Steele - B
- Mr Watkins - B
- Mr Williams - B
- Mr Brooker - B
- Mr Daniell - B
- Mr Leach - B
- Mr Maccabe - B
- Mr Rickard - B
- Mr Archer, RID - B
- HMA Dublin - B

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- Mr Brooker - B
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- HMA, Dublin - B
- Mr Archer, RID - B
- Mr Hallett, SRD - B

(all w/o intelligence assessment)

Mr Thomas - B

NORTHERN IRELAND - STATE POLICE

1. I found Mr Archer's 21 December minute to you a helpful survey of some of the options which might be open to us.
2. There are real attractions in the idea that the Joint Declaration might itself provide the "framework" for new talks (through the SDP would doubtless distance itself from that). As Mr Archer seems to suggest, this might circumvent what would be difficult and possibly protracted negotiations in Liaison Group - the Irish draft leaked to the Irish Press would require substantial amendment to bring it to a point where it could form a "framework" for new talks and in any event they would adjust their Irish Press stance to align it with the JD.
3. I wonder therefore if Michael Ancram should specifically press the NI parties on whether, in light of the above...

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