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FIREARMS ACT, 1971.

and increased substantially the penalties for the unlawful possession of firearms other than "sporting firearms".

This Act, enacted in 1971, (3rd Police Service)

The Firearms Act, 1971 tightened up statutory controls existing at that time on firearms. In particular, it enabled the Garda Síochána to deal more effectively with the unauthorised possession of military type weapons. A particularly significant feature of the act is that its provisions in relation to the unlawful possession of firearms or ammunition with intent to endanger life or cause serious injury to property apply to lives and property outside as well as inside the State. This feature was built into the Act as a deterrent to any persons or groups who might contemplate using the territory of the State for unlawful armed activities outside the jurisdiction.

lawful possession of firearms

PROHIBITION OF FORCIBLE ENTRY AND OCCUPATION ACT, 1971.

This Act was introduced to deal with the problem of forcible occupation of other peoples property mainly at the instigation of quasi political groups. It also contains provisions dealing with forcible interference with the legitimate rights of owners and in some cases of the public as well. The legislation was introduced because of a pattern of organised and publically proclaimed campaigns by people against whom private individuals might be afraid to invoke the process of the civil law even if these processes were in themselves adequate at that time. In particular the Act dealt with the problem of "sit-ins" and "fish-ins" organised by subversive groups for the purpose of furthering their own aims and attracting publicity. The Act has been considered a success in dealing with the problems which gave rise to its introduction.

GARDA SÍOCHÁNA ACT, 1972.

This act repealed earlier legislation which limited the number of members of the Garda Síochána. The Government could now by way of a statutory instrument determine the strength of the force at all levels as they saw fit. In introducing the Bill in the Dáil in January, 1972, the Minister announced that the number of Gardaí would be increased by 600 in the 1972/73 financial year. This increase was in addition to an extra 400 announced in 1971, half of whom had been recruited by January, 1972. Furthermore this recruitment was additional to the filling of vacancies which had arisen at that time from normal wastage. In the overall period 1971 to 1973 (March) the approved strength of the Garda Síochána was increased by 1317 men (from 6560 to 7877).

PRISONS ACT, 1972.

This Act gives legislative authority for the transfer in certain circumstances of prisoners to military custody. The Act also enables the Minister to specify a place or places to be used as a prison or prisons. This measure was introduced in the Dáil and passed within 6 days of a major riot in Mountjoy Prison on the night of the 18-19 May, 1972.

OFFENCES AGAINST THE STATE (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1972.

The purpose of this Act was to amend and strengthen the law dealing with unlawful organisations so as to enable more effective action to be taken in respect of membership and activities of such organisations. Experience had shown that there were serious defects in the law existing at that date (November, 1972) particularly in so far as proving membership of unlawful organisations was concerned. The Act provides that the evidence of an officer of the Garda Síochána, not below the rank of Chief Superintendent, that he believes that an accused person was at a material time a member of an unlawful organisation will be admissible evidence for the court to determine.

SPECIAL CRIMINAL COURT.

The Government brought into operation on 30th May, 1972 Part V of the Offences Against the State Act, 1939 which established the Special Criminal Court. This step was taken at that time because the Government were satisfied that the ordinary courts were inadequate to secure the effective administration of justice and the preservation of public peace and order. At first 3 judges were appointed to serve on this court. Later in August, 1972 four additional judges were appointed to the Special Criminal Court. (The Special Criminal Court is authorised to make rules governing its own procedure but the ordinary rules of evidence - the same as those applicable in Central Criminal Court trials - apply in proceedings before it. In the Special Criminal Court cases are heard without a jury - invariably by three of the judges).

DIRECTIVES TO RADIO TELEFÍS ÉIREANN *(the Irish National Broadcasting Authority only)*

Section 31 (1) of the Broadcasting Authority Act, 1960 provides that:-

"The Minister (for Posts and Telegraphs) may direct the Authority in writing to refrain from broadcasting any particular matter or matter of any particular class and

the Authority shall comply with the direction".

This provision was invoked for the first time in October, 1971 following the broadcast of a television programme in which members of an illegal organisation were featured. In his direction to R.T.E. the Minister directed the Authority in writing

"to refrain from broadcasting any matter of the following class, i.e. any matter that could be calculated to promote the aims or activities of any organisation which engages in, promotes, encourages or advocates the attaining of any particular objective by violent means".

Section 31 of the 1960 Act was amended by the Broadcasting Authority Amendment Act, of 1976. In effect the Minister's directive of October '71 was incorporated into the new Act and a statutory order was then made under the amended Section 31 prohibiting R.T.E. from allowing members of certain illegal organisations to participate in broadcasts.

DEFENCE - 1969 - 1973.

1. Strengths etc.

Between September 1969 and March, 1973, the strength of the Permanent Defence Force increased by over 2,600 or 32% (from 8,016 on 30 September, 1969 to 10,618 on 31 March 1973). The First Line Reserve was called out on full time service (in August, 1969) and very many members of the F.C.A. were employed on security duties.

In order to make more troops available for security duties at home, the strength of the Irish contingent serving with the United Nations in Cyprus was reduced by about two thirds in January, 1972. (249 personnel repatriated out of a total of 376).

2. Expenditure

Between 1969 and 1973, expenditure on Defence more than doubled - from £14.4 million in 1969/70 to £29.6 million in 1972/73. There were substantial purchases of equipment in connection with the security situation. These included aircraft, helicopters, riot control equipment, vehicles and communications equipment.

3. Border Posts, Patrols, Aid to the Civil Power

Military posts and permanent military check points were established at various locations along the Border. Patrols from these posts continually covered the Border road network. These patrols had instructions to detain any persons found carrying arms illegally.

There was a significant increase in the involvement of the Defence Forces in internal security matters and in the scope of their aid to the Garda Síochána e.g. assisting the Gardaí at road check points; protection of explosive materials; guarding of vital installations; provision of bomb disposal teams.

4. Explosives

Most privately-owned magazines were closed down and the explosives withdrawn to military barracks. Full time guards were provided for the limited number of magazines which continued to operate. Military escorts were provided for explosive material in transit.

5. Weapons

In 1972 every person residing in the State was required to surrender to the Garda Síochána any revolver or pistol or rifle of a calibre in excess of .22 inches in his possession, together with any ammunition therefor. Most of these weapons and of other unlicensed weapons seized by the Gardaí were stored in military barracks.

ROINN AN TAOISIGH

Meán Fómhair, 1977.

Estimated cost of Security Operations arising out of the Northern Ireland Situation

(£000)

Year	Gards Síochána						Prisons	Courts	Criminal Injuries (Personal) Compensation	Totals
	Pay and Allowances	Travel and Incidental	Uniforms and Personal Accessories	Radio and Other Equipment	Transport	Garda Totals				
1969/70	1,170	47	27	6	50	1,300	20	-	-	1,320
1970/71	1,440	58	33	7	62	1,600	50	-	-	1,650
1971/72	1,620	65	37	8	70	1,800	80	-	-	1,880
1972/73	2,250	91	51	11	97	2,500	400	20	-	2,920
1973/74	3,240	131	73	16	140	3,600	360	38	-	3,998
1974 (9 months)	3,149	127	72	17	135	3,500	1,000	36	150	4,686
1975	7,270	322	125	169	314	8,200	1,086	58	300	9,644
1976	7,813	353	150	473	398	9,187	1,714	81	173	11,155
1977 (estd)	8,455	415	193	200	350	9,613	1,920	82	200	11,815
Totals	£36,407	1,609	761	907	1,616	41,300	6,630	315	823	49,068

PAY. ALLOWANCES etc.: Permanent Defence Force. Reservists on full-time service and civilian employees

<u>1968/69</u>	<u>1969/70</u>	<u>1970/71</u>	<u>1971/72</u>	<u>1972/73</u>	<u>1973/74</u>	<u>Ap/Dec 1974</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1977</u>
£8.9m	£10.3m	£13.4m	£14.7m	£20.3m	£23m	£20m	£41m	£53.8m	£58m

Special allowances were introduced in January 1972 for personnel on duty in Border areas. An allowance was introduced in May 1974 for personnel engaged in certain security duties in other areas. The cost of these allowances is included above and will amount to about £1.7m in 1977.

Strength of Permanent Defence Force on 31 Dec each year

<u>1969</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1971</u>	<u>1972</u>	<u>1973</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>28 Feb 1977</u>
8,252	8,242	8,983	10,466	10,654	11,602	13,516	14,527	14,592

Cost of Purchases of Equipment

	<u>1968/69</u>	<u>1969/70</u>	<u>1970/71</u>	<u>1971/72</u>	<u>1972/73</u>	<u>1973/74</u>	<u>Ap/Dec 1974</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1977 (Est)</u>
Defensive Equipment	£511,000	£367,000	£256,000	£1,184,000	£1,281,000	£1,298,000	£1,430,000	£1,933,000	£1,788,000	£2,993,000
Transport Fuel etc.	£244,000	£312,000	£394,000	£565,000	£1,091,000	£1,064,000	£1,306,000	£2,231,000	£1,647,000	£2,322,000
Aircraft, Signal Equipment & General Stores	£308,000	£245,000	£331,000	£598,000	£956,000	£1,123,000	£951,000	£1,618,000	£2,586,000	£3,625,000
Building & Furnishings	£241,000	£386,000	£363,000	£432,000	£834,000	£1,071,000	£1,167,000	£2,151,000	£2,552,000	£3,014,000

Since 1969 it has been necessary to provide units of the Defence Forces in the Border area. A gradual build-up since then has resulted in 3 Infantry Battalions and a Motor Squadron being located there. This has meant that accommodation has had to be provided in a string of locations extending from Letterkenny through Finner Camp (the only occupied Post in the area prior to 1969) Manorhamilton, Monaghan, Castleblayney areas to Dundalk. A new Barracks was constructed in Monaghan. It was necessary to renovate the other posts and to provide new billets etc. in these posts.