



An Chartlann Náisiúnta
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Background Note

Collusion between members
of the Security Forces and Loyalist paramilitaries.

There is a long history of suspicion and, in some cases, evidence (Miami Showband massacre), of collusion between members of the security forces and loyalist paramilitaries which, in recent times, has largely focussed on the UDR and, to a growing extent, on the Territorial Army (a force similar to the FCA, which is not involved in internal security work in Northern Ireland).

UDR:

Since its formation in January 1970, at least 130 members of the regiment have been convicted of serious offenses, including 16 who have been convicted of murder, and 7 convicted of manslaughter. The most recent published official* figures show that in the 28 month period from 1 January 1986 to 30 April 1988, a total of 28 serving members were convicted of serious crimes, including murder, which involved the use of firearms - ie. a rate of one a month. In a recent letter to Kevin McNamara M. P., the

* There is considerable doubt among observers regarding the accuracy of army statistics on the extent of UDR criminality. A recent book on the British Army in Northern Ireland (Pig in the Middle) quotes the example of Brian Roberts, a UDR member who, in 1981 used his personal protection weapon to carry out a number of sectarian attacks including the murder of a Catholic youth. He resigned from the UDR while in police custody and therefore does not figure in Army statistics.

Ministry of Defence admitted that in the period from 1 January 1985 to 1 September 1989, a total of 73 serving members of the UDR were effectively discharged having been involved in a terrorist/criminal offence -ie. a rate of almost one every three weeks. Overall, at this point in time, there are 6 people with security force connections (5 UDR and 1 Territorial Army) before the Courts in Northern Ireland charged with the murders of 4 people.

Among the most noteworthy cases in recent times have been the following:

Arms raids: There were two major arms raids on UDR barracks in 1987 which involved collusion between members of the UDR and UDA - Coleraine, where 198 weapons were stolen; and Palace Barracks, where 18 weapons were stolen. There was a further raid last year on Malone Road barracks involving the theft of two rifles. [The extent of this problem is perhaps best exemplified by a report from Embassy London on private comments made recently to John Keegan, Defence Correspondent of the Daily Telegraph by a former Commanding Officer of the UDR, that "he used to spring surprise inspections of the UDR armory at 3 a.m. in an attempt to ensure that weapons were not being loaned on an overnight basis to loyalist paramilitaries".]

Illegal Arms Shipments: Recent arms deals involving thefts of parts and blueprints from Shorts, and sizable shipments of arms, apparently from South Africa, have involved members of the Security Forces, notably Sergeant Alan McGrath (Territorial Army) - a search of his house uncovered arms, including parts of the Javelin missile; Warrant Officer Samuel Quinn (Territorial Army) - arrested with two others in Paris attempting to trade missile parts for arms with a South African embassy official. Subsequently, three other members of the Territorial Army were discharged.

Murders: There is strong suspicion, and in some cases, evidence of security force members being involved in a number of recent murders -viz-

- Jack Kielty (murdered January 1988) - Two UDR members (Peacock and Harris) were convicted of possession of weapons in relation to the murder, while one of those convicted of the murder (Delbert Watson) was a former member of the UDR who was also convicted of possession of security force documents;

- Pat Finucane (murdered February 1989) - strong indications which suggests that RUC interrogators in Castlereagh suggested to the UDA that Finucane, among others, was a member of the IRA and should be targeted for assassination;

- Niall Davies (murdered March 1989) - four of those charged in connection with this murder, and the attempted murder of Mr & Mrs Haughey in Glengormley, have security force connections - Foster (UDR member), Pollock (Territorial Army member), Jackson (discharged from UDR in July), Moffat (on the point of being admitted to the UDR);

- Loughlin Maginn (murdered August 1989) and Liam McKee (murdered June 1989) - Two full-time UDR men (Smith and Brown) have been recently charged with these murders.

- Samuel Patton (murdered March 1988) - an internal UVF murder. Those currently charged include a former member of the UDR, Robert Douglas.

- There are also suspicions of possible security force involvement in the murders of Patrick Feeney (February 1989), John Davy (February 1989), and Gerry Casey (April 1989).

Passing security force intelligence files to loyalist paramilitaries: It is well known that security force files have frequently found their way into the hands of loyalist paramilitaries. A separate note is on the brief containing a list of recent incidents concerning the leakage of classified material from both the UDR and RUC. While a number of these incidents appear to be inspired by elements hostile to the Anglo/Irish Agreement, the scale of these incidents is a cause

for major concern and raises fundamental questions concerning the dissemination and control of classified material within the security forces in Northern Ireland.

While a number of loyalist paramilitaries have faced charges relating to the possession of security force documents (eg: Delbert Watson case above), there have been few cases where this was the only charge being faced by a defendant. In recent times, three people have been charged solely with this offence - Hazel Branker (a UDR Greenfinch), Joanne Garvin (a UDR Greenfinch) and Cameron Hastie (a British soldier). In the case of Branker, notwithstanding possible mitigating circumstances (her youth - 21, and the fact that she had a young baby) she received a six month custodial sentence. By contrast, in the most recent case (Garvin and Hastie), both received suspended sentences and, while Garvin was forced to resign from the UDR, Hastie retained his position in the British Army. [A member of the regular army (Shaun Cunliffe) has recently been charged in connection with the leakage of classified material to the media in recent weeks.]

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