

Note for File

On 25 January I called on D.A.C. Vic Gilbert, M.P.S.B., having earlier mentioned the purpose of my visit so that he could consider the point I wanted to raise with him. Commander Matt Rodger, in charge of M.P.S.B. Operations, was present throughout most of our discussion.

2. I began by saying we in the Security Service were very much aware of the amount of work Special Branch did on our behalf and were most appreciative. I wanted however to explore one aspect in greater detail. I said when Director F. and I had called on him and Colin Woods on 6 December to discuss agent coverage of industrial affairs we had been told of the Commissioner's ruling that Special Branch was not to run agents in this field. During that conversation mention had been made of the fact that Special Branch did run long term agents

Was this correct or did Special Branch regard it as part of their function to run agents in other groups? I drew a distinction between agents acting under direction and control used to penetrate subversive organisations on a long term basis and contacts/informants with whom Special Branch were in touch and who provided information on an ad hoc basis. This distinction was readily accepted by Gilbert and Rodger.

3. After an hour's talk it was apparent that Special Branch run agents, or consider it their task to try to run agents, only in those organisations which they consider might become involved in politically motivated crime or be responsible for outbreaks of public disorder. They were not concerned with running agents in organisations which presented only a political subversive threat. They regarded themselves as the intelligence arm of the uniformed branch and as field officers (making enquiries, attending meetings etc.) working for the Security Service. Their interest in subversive organisations waxed and waned according to the extent they judged an organisation presented a criminal or law and order problem. However, Special Branch regarded the following organisations/groups as currently being targets for long term penetration by agents and likely to remain so.

[REDACTED]

Special Branch penetrate these groups by the Hairy Squad ie Special Branch officers who are given a false identity and background. Gilbert said the Commissioner was concerned about possible embarrassment arising out of this operation and he, Gilbert, felt that the Hairy Squad survived almost from day to day.

Arab Terrorists

Special Branch find this a difficult target and have no agents but they have a number of contacts.

Black Power especially the Black Panthers

Special Branch have no agents but achieve good coverage by contacts, many of whom are on the criminal fringe.

At Appendix A is a list of the organisations discussed.

4. During our conversation Gilbert said that he had no problem about finding money to run his operations and mentioned that he received from the Security Service £100 a quarter as an agent running subsidy. He mentioned three agents who are paid out of this fund, one in the [REDACTED], one in the [REDACTED], and one in the [REDACTED], (not further identified but presumably an anarchist group). [REDACTED]

5. Gilbert also mentioned how difficult he found it to draw a line in deciding to use his Special Branch contacts in the trade unions following the Commissioner's ruling. F.4 [REDACTED] had got wind of this in an off-the-record discussion with Detective Chief Inspector [REDACTED] of M.P.S.B. who attended the F.4 Symposium on 18th January. [REDACTED] said that Gilbert had issued an instruction that he wished to be consulted in future before any approach was made to existing or potential contacts in trade unions.

[REDACTED]

F4 [REDACTED]

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- A. Targets which M.P.S.B. consider they should penetrate by long term agents

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Arab Terrorists

Black Power

- B. Targets about which M.P.S.B. at the moment wish to keep themselves generally informed by means of contacts

Trotskyists especially I.S., I.M.G. and S.L.L.

Maolists

Fascists

- C. Targets in which M.P.S.B. have only a marginal interest, their activities being confined mainly to making enquiries [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Communist Party of Great Britain Headquarters, and Districts

Front Organisations (W.F.T.U., W.F.D.Y.,)

Friendship Societies (British Soviet Friendship Society etc.)

Universities

Alien Groups

Greeks (e.g. Greek Democratic Defence, 20 October Group)

Croats (e.g. Croatian Liberation Front)

Ukrainians (e.g. U.K.R. Youth Association)

Spaniards (e.g. 1st May Group)

Portuguese

Turks

APPENDIX A (Continued..)

Alien Groups Continued

Central and Latin Americans.

South African Communists ✓

Commonwealth Groups

Cypriots

Indians, Pakistanis, and Bangla Desh

Malaysians and Singaporeans.